

## Chancellor's comments on office working being the 'default' ignore the huge gains made by businesses and their people, says the CIPD

2 years ago



The UK's Chancellor of the Exchequer has said that the "default" location for workers should be in the office unless there is a good reason to work from home. In response, Ben Willmott, head of public policy at the CIPD, said:

"Office environments provide valuable opportunities for collaboration, learning and social interaction, but the pandemic has also demonstrated the value of remote working in fostering employee well-being, and work-life balance, without compromising on productivity.

"For many employers, this isn't about setting a default but finding the right balance between office and hybrid working that supports people's productivity and wellbeing, while meeting the needs of the business.

"As the Chancellor said, people with caring responsibilities and mobility challenges have benefitted hugely by the shift to greater homeworking, and it will be helping many people get into and stay in work.

"However, many people will have simply preferred this new way of working as it makes them more productive, has reduced commuting costs and improved work-life balance. We have the chance to re-write the rules of how, when and where we work and to roll back on the flexibility gains made in the last few years would be a huge step backwards.

"While protecting flexibility to work from home where appropriate, it's important to recognise that many

workers in frontline roles don't have this option. As well as remote working, employers should consider a range of flexible options that can benefit all their staff, such as flexi-time, compressed and annualised hours, and job sharing.

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