



BELFAST CHAMBER

‘Returning to the Office’ Survey Findings

THE VOICE FOR BUSINESS
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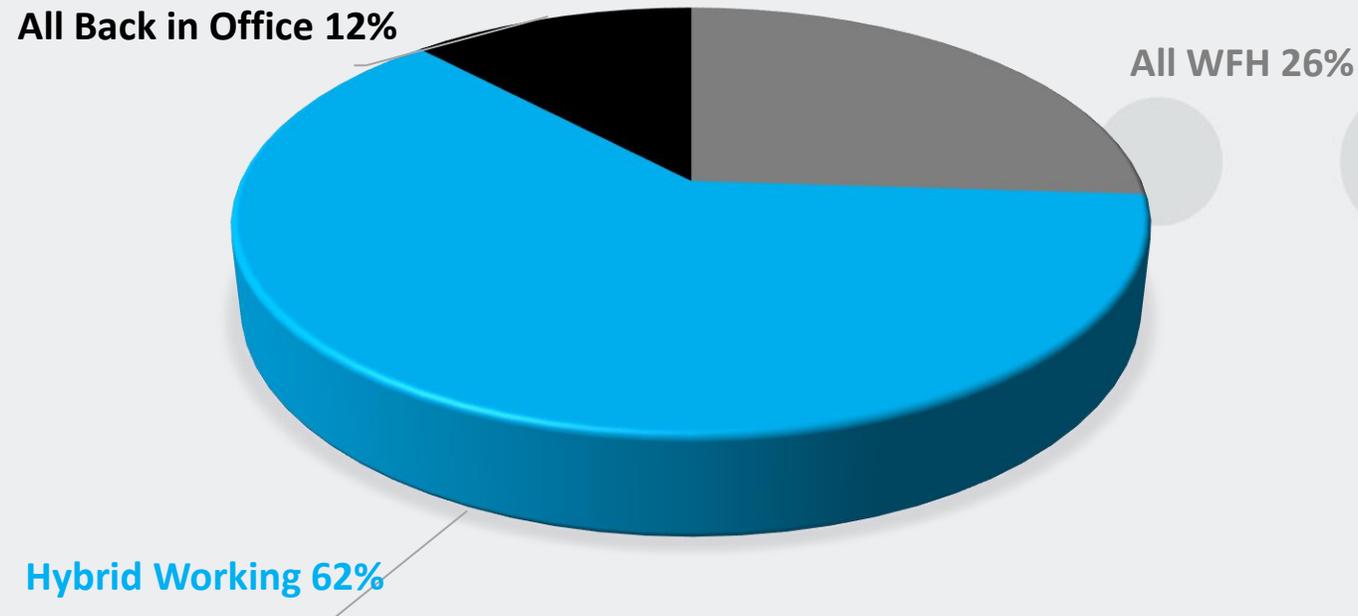
Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, Belfast, and its city centre especially, has been hit hard. Throughout lockdown, our TV screens and newspapers were full of images of normally bustling streets almost totally abandoned with the phrase ‘ghost town’ perhaps the most commonly used adjective.

Many businesses are now open again and Belfast has got some of its buzz back. However, one aspect of the city’s economy that has been noticeably slower to return is its office-based workers.

Between 8 August and 12 August 2021, Belfast Chamber undertook a short, 6 question survey of its members to ascertain what office-based working in the city will look like moving forward, when office workers are planning to return and what the impediments to a return are.

This summary of the 238 responses we received illustrates how much things have and will continue to change and poses a number of serious questions about what the future of the Belfast economy will look like and the potentially significant challenges that will present in the years ahead.

Only 12% of office-based businesses are working full time from the office with over ¼ entirely working from home





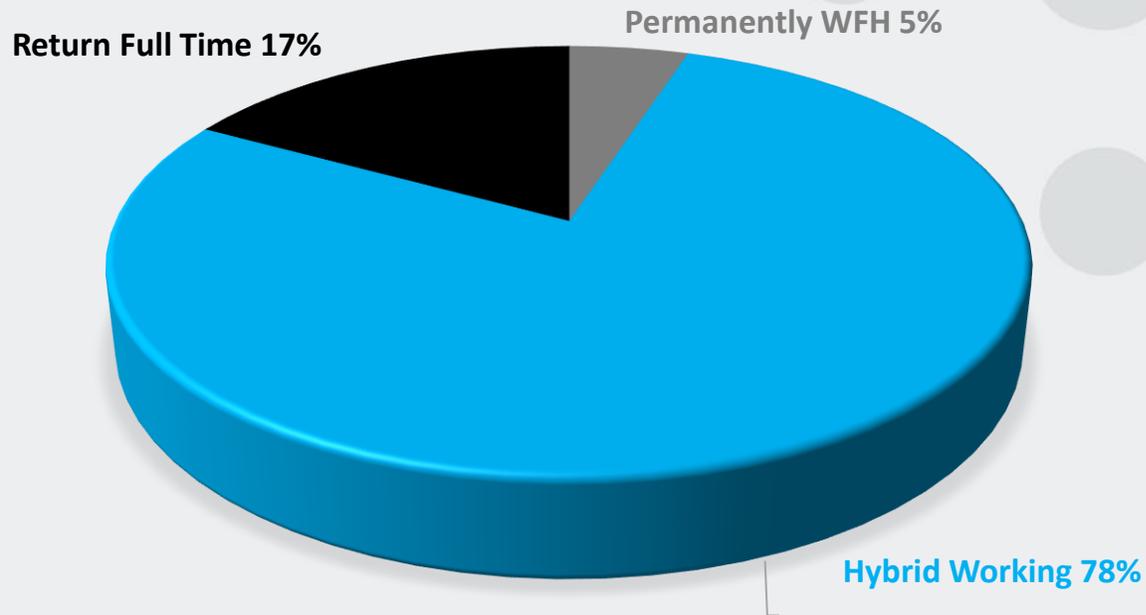
At present, Belfast Chamber members are estimating that around one third of their staff are in the office on a typical day.

35%



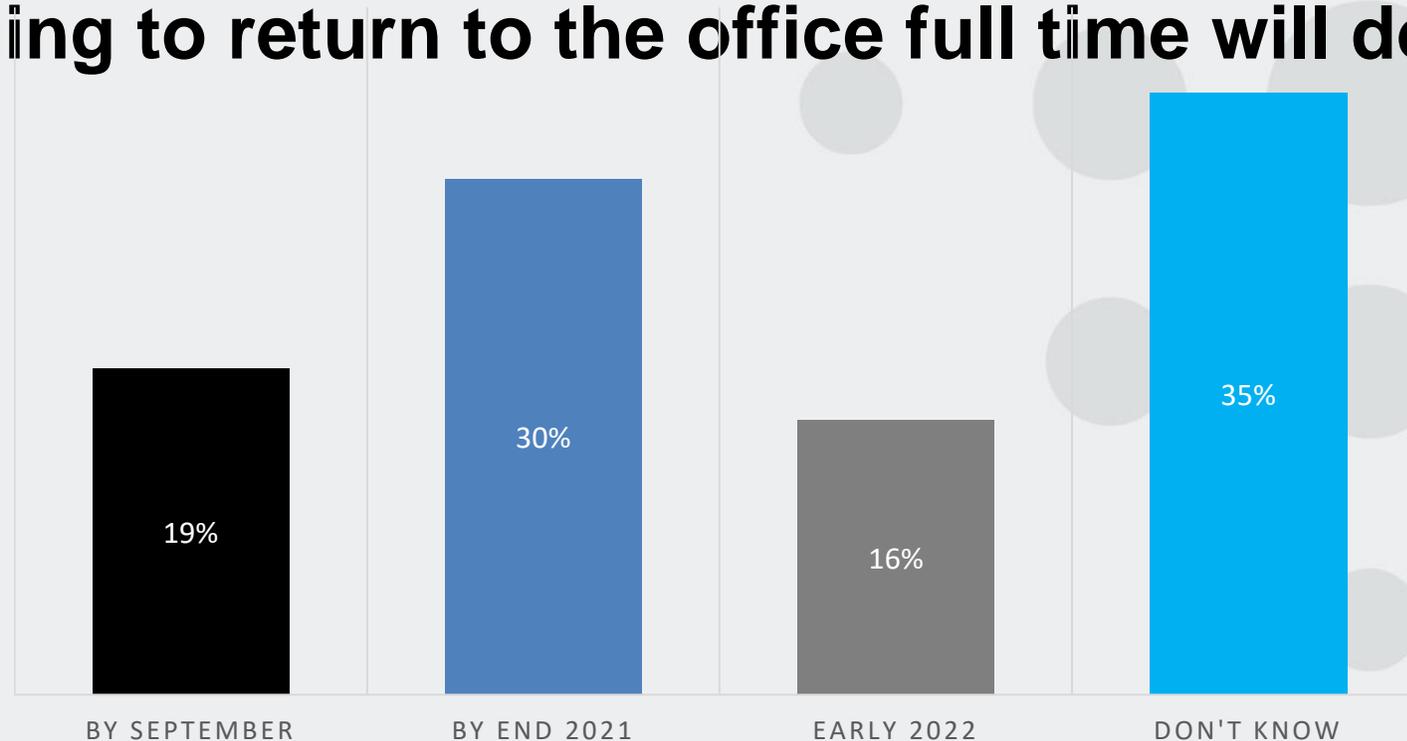
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The overwhelming majority of respondents see hybrid working as the future for their businesses



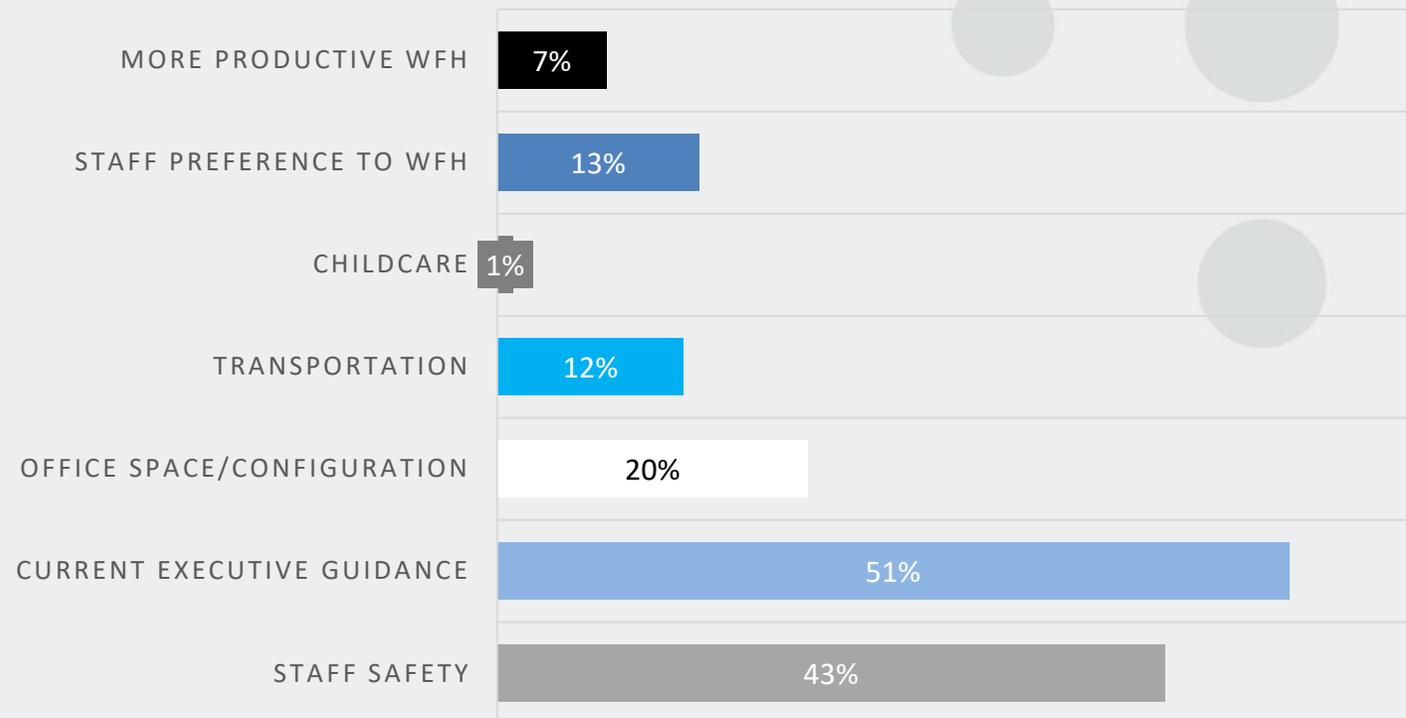
Question: How do you anticipate that working from home/remote working will affect your business in the future?

There is considerable uncertainty as to when those intending to return to the office full time will do so



Question: If your business is intending to return to the office full time, when do you currently anticipate that this will happen?

Staff safety and current Executive guidance are the factors impacting most on return to the office



Question: What factors, if any, are inhibiting a return to office working in your business? (Select as many as apply)



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