

# **Flexible Working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees**

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# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

## Version control

This document is subject to regular review due to legislative and policy changes. The latest versions of all our publications can be found on our website. Before contacting us about the content of this document, we recommend that you refer to the most recent version on the website and any relevant guidance.

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# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

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# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

## Introduction

### **Aim – A flexible and effective workforce supported by cost efficient infrastructure**

Denbighshire County Council's corporate priority is to develop modern working practices which help managers and employees to do their jobs in the heart of the community. We know that work performance is better if employees are able to have flexibility in their working arrangements, enabling them to better meet business needs and to improve efficiency and effectiveness, it can also help with balancing work and life demands.

With an organisation as diverse as the council a "one size fits all" approach will not work and as a management tool there will be differing levels of flexibility that can be applied to different posts. There will, of course, also be some roles where flexible working is not possible. Although flexible working is not a right our aim is to apply agile and flexible principles wherever possible.

Flexible Working is the term used to describe how employees can work from any location, whether it is from a council building, in the community, from home or any combination of these.

We want to make sure that working in a flexible way does not mean that service delivery suffers in any way. In fact, we want it to improve our services to customers. We also need to reduce the cost of services by reducing the amount of office buildings, business travel and printing, therefore we need the technology and building infrastructure to enable more flexible working by our employees. Our service provision models will have a clear goal of reducing reliance upon physical space and utilising areas in different ways.

We also want to make sure that employees understand what is expected of them when working flexibly, to ensure that there is fairness and equity and that working arrangements are safe. Vitally important is also the need to maintain teamwork and opportunities for development and learning.

Flexible working is about being able to do your job from a variety of locations. This could be from your usual place of work, a remote office, from home or on the move as long as the service needs are met.

Flexible working is also about how we work, e.g. different working patterns such as annualised hours, 9-day fortnight or even the flexibility to take your lunch break at a different time of day.

Flexible working is about flexibility and as such it is difficult to apply a rigid set of rules around it. Employees are expected to enter into the spirit of this flexibility and to remember that flexible working brings a responsibility to co-operate with managers and colleagues.

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As indicated the extent of flexible working will vary according to the job role, and the main considerations are the impact on access to services by the public and on employee welfare both of the individual and their colleagues.

The Modernisation Programme, through flexible working supports the sharing of office facilities and aims to reduce the amount of corporate office space and to invest in changes to the amount and style of office space, the technology that employees use to work in a mobile way and the policies and procedures to support flexible workers and teams.

## Workstyles

Denbighshire has identified a number of workstyles:

- Desk based - for those predominantly based in the office and working from one desk
- Mobile/flexible - for those who spend some of their time working away from an office base
- Collaborative - a flexible or desk based worker who needs to be able to work from the base of another organisation
- Home based - for those more likely to be based from home.

**Workstyles describe the ways in which staff are supported by facilities provided by the council: office space, technology and management practice.**

For those who do not fit into the above categories, their circumstances will be considered on an individual basis.

## Equalities, Fairness and Consistency

It is essential that managers and employees alike enter into the spirit of flexible working within the constraints of normal service provision. As each service offering is different, a 'one size fits all' approach cannot be applied.

It must be remembered that the final decision will be based on the impact it has on the Service, so although most employees have access to flexible working not all outcomes will be the same and not all roles will be suitable for flexible working.

An equalities impact assessment will be undertaken for new ways of working.

# **Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees**

## **Review**

Not all flexible working arrangements will be successful either from the service point of view or the individual's point of view, so they are open to review at any point.

If problems arise every effort will be made to resolve them.

Managers will only stop flexible working arrangements for sound business or performance reasons and after consulting fully with the employee.

## **Costs and Expenses**

Printing is actively discouraged, but if there is a need to print anything it is expected that employees working remotely will use council facilities. This is particularly relevant for bulk printing or postage as it is far cheaper to use office based Multi-Functional Devices and franking machines.

Employees who want to access the workplace electronically from home will need to use their own broadband facilities and will not be reimbursed for doing so. It works on the same principle as getting to an office base – it is at their expense. The same principle applies to increased energy costs arising from home working.

Very few posts will be designated as dedicated 'home based' and this will apply where the employee infrequently needs to visit an office base or go into the community to work. All employees, except dedicated home based employees, will be given a normal work base to meet with colleagues and this base should be used for travel claims.

It is important that all employees manage their travel and limit it in order to achieve the environmental benefits of flexible working. Video and telephone conferencing is to be used in preference to travelling to meetings.

Mileage claims will be reimbursed under the usual terms and conditions of claiming expenses and subsistence allowance. Travel time between the designated work base and home is not refundable.

## **Accommodation**

All employees will have a designated work base where their team work area is situated, along with shared workspaces and limited storage facilities (electronic storage is the norm). This base will be used for mileage claims.

Physical work accommodation will, wherever possible, be designed in ways that:

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- Respond to opportunities offered by new ways of working;
- Provide flexibility in terms of accommodating differing work styles and functions;
- Stimulate greater productivity;

Open plan work layouts should be implemented wherever practical. Open plan allows more flexibility, particularly when combined with principles of hot desking.

This aspiration will be extended to open plan management suites where possible. Use of cellular offices will be limited to the need for access to small private space for 1:1's, confidential phone calls etc.

In order to reduce demand on the meeting rooms, the integration of informal breakout areas will be encouraged. The location of breakout areas needs to be considered in order to facilitate uninterrupted conversation for the users and minimise potential interruption to surrounding work areas. Wherever possible, breakout areas should be located in central (or at least designated) areas where they can be utilised by more than one service.

Where there is a genuine need for service/customer confidentiality, then this will be determined and appropriately designed in consultation with the service provider. All council employees will be bound by the same rules of confidentiality.

Use of meeting spaces should be restricted to meetings involving large numbers, training events and public meetings etc. In order to facilitate desk sharing and departmental hot desking, a clear desk policy will need to be implemented at service level.

A limited number of corporately available hot desks/drop down spaces will be provided in each office building.

## Enabling Technology

All employees will be provided with suitable ICT equipment depending on their workstyle. This could include laptops, PCs, tablets with IM (Information Management), and video/audio conferencing facilities.

Arrangements should be made for appropriate office cover. Core contact time and office cover arrangements should be agreed between the team and the line manager. Flexible workers must be contactable.

All employees who are able to work remotely will have the ICT equipment to do so.

Mobile phones will be issued where the job role demands it i.e. it is a requirement of the job that the employee is mobile.

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Where employees have their own personally adapted equipment (e.g. left hand keyboard and mouse) they will be able to keep this for their personal use and move it with them when working in any offices or remote sites. For Health & Safety purposes if an employee cannot work safely from remote locations without their specially adapted equipment they will not be able to do so.

Employees will be able to use their ICT equipment in a DCC office or any other remote DCC location. Employees will be responsible for providing their own broadband for homeworking purposes.

## **Information Security**

The Council's Information Security Policy must be followed in relation to protecting information appropriately ([link to Information Security Policy](#))

If handling personal data, the council's Data Protection Policy must be adhered to.

All council paperwork is securely locked away and only accessible electronically to the employee. Employees should make sure that screens and documents cannot be overlooked by other people when working flexibly.

Equipment, software, files and any other information should be taken care of to make sure it is not lost. It is particularly important to ensure that other people (in the home or whilst working off site) cannot access confidential or personal information.

Work files must never be taken off the corporate network and saved to home computers.

## **Health and Safety**

Health and safety Regulations apply to the employer and to all employees. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations requires employers to ensure that a risk assessment of all activities is carried out with the significant findings being recorded and safe working systems developed where necessary.

When "flexible" working, employees must ensure that they have suitable equipment, a suitable workspace with adequate security, storage, seating, ventilation, lighting and space.

## **Property and Insurance**

Computers, laptops, phones and other items of equipment provided by the Council are covered by the Council's insurance policy. However, employees will still need to make sure the equipment AND ANY INFORMATION ON IT is safe and secure.

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Staff should only use equipment that they are competent to use and all equipment should be checked by the user before use to ensure that it shows no signs of fault or damage. Faulty or damaged equipment should be replaced.

Employees are responsible for contacting anyone with an interest in their property (e.g. mortgage lenders, landlords, leaseholders, Building and Contents insurer) to make sure there is nothing they need to consider when home working.

## **Guidance on Managing Flexible Workers**

The right to request flexible working – Changes applicable from 30th June 2014

Please note that this is a statutory right under the Employment Rights Act 1996.

The Government is extending the right to request flexible working to all employees; removing the current statutory procedure for considering requests. Instead employers will have a duty to consider all requests in a reasonable manner; however, employers will have the flexibility to refuse requests on business grounds.

On 30 June 2014 the Flexible Working Regulations will be amended. This will mean that the right to request flexible working will be extended to cover all employees after 26 weeks' service, rather than only those with children under the age of 17 (or 18 if the child is disabled) and certain carers. The criteria that employees will only be permitted to submit one request for flexible working within a 12 month period still remains.

Employees who wish to make a request under the Employment Rights Act 1996 must make this in writing and must include the following information:

- The date of their application, the change to working conditions they are seeking and when they would like the change to come into effect.
- What effect, if any, they think the requested change would have on you as the employer and how, in their opinion, any such effect might be dealt with.
- A statement that this is a statutory request and if and when they have made a previous application for flexible working.

The law requires that all requests, including any appeals, must be considered and decided on within a period of three months from first receipt, unless you agree to extend this period with the employee.

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A written request for flexible working can only be refused for the following reasons (under the legislation):

- the burden of additional costs,
- an inability to reorganise work amongst existing staff
- an inability to recruit additional staff
- a detrimental impact on quality
- a detrimental impact on performance
- detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand
- insufficient work for the periods the employee proposes to work
- a planned structural change to your business

## Denbighshire County Council and The Right to Request Flexible Working

As part of the new 'Flexible working policy' and 'Flexible working guidance for managers and employees' (published 1st May 2014, which are both available on the intranet) we have included the above changes within the policy but we have agreed to relax them to some extent.

As a council, the right to request flexible working will be as follows:

- All employees the right to request flexible working regardless of length of service (Employees do not require the 26 weeks continuous service).
- Employees can make more than one request in a 12 month period.
- Employees must make a formal request for flexible working in writing by completing the 'Right to request flexible working form' which is available on the intranet alongside the policy.
- Managers must seriously consider all written requests from employees and arrange a meeting within 30 working days from the date of application. Managers can only reject a request based on the eight reasons for refusal outlined above under the new changes in legislation.
- Managers must make a decision and respond to the employee in writing within 10 working days of the meeting.
- Employees have the right to appeal any decisions made by their manager and must do this within 10 working days of the receipt of the notification letter.
- Managers must arrange an appeal meeting as soon as possible to ensure that the whole process is completed within the statutory 3 month period.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

## What is Flexible Working?

Flexible working can be described as the ability to perform your duties in the most effective and efficient way from anywhere there is a need, for example at any council location, on the move, in a client's house or from home,

The main things to consider for flexible working are –

- The effect on the ability to deliver public services
- The agreeing of work objectives, output and outcomes
- The effect on individuals and their ability to work safely and healthily
- Fairness and equality.

Although flexible workers do not necessarily have to work regular office hours, they must plan and agree a work programme to ensure that contact is always in place. Employees should be able to separate their working and home lives, and boundaries should be agreed with their managers and colleagues.

Managers and employees should discuss and agree the level of flexibility that is most suited to the job and meets the service need. Both need to have open minds when considering requests. Situations will vary from person to person but it must be fair so it is wise to consider the effect upon –

- Organising rotas for essential services
- Work performance and output.
- Communication across teams and maintenance of team ethos
- The ability to organise work among team members
- Knowing where people are and what they are doing

The key principles for successful flexible working are that:

- A suitable working environment must be created. This includes the provision of a suitable workspace and communication mechanisms to contact colleagues.
- Employees must keep equipment and council information safe and secure.
- Appropriate communication and support channels must be made available e.g. regular team meetings to monitor work programmes and co-ordinate office cover.
- Managers will need to manage workload and outputs, therefore keeping in touch will become a key responsibility

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- Regular communication across teams and maintenance of team ethos even from remote locations will take on a new level of importance.
- Planning and agreeing a work programme with your line manager, and colleagues will be essential to ensure suitable workload cover is provided and equipment is available when needed.
- Adhering to a clear work area policy

It is the responsibility of the line manager to ensure that a proper framework and agreement is put in place, to protect both the Council and the employee. The line manager will also remain responsible for the supervision of the employee.

Prior to the commencement of flexible working, the employee and line manager must agree the following key areas on a regular basis:

- Clear objectives with suitable and realistic targets
- Measurable work outputs
- Security and confidentiality issues
- Health and safety issues
- Monitoring of performance, to include regular feedback and appraisal
- Development and training needs

## Who is Suitable for Flexible Working?

Having established the suitability of the job for flexible working, the suitability of the person will need to be considered. Flexible working does not suit everyone. Personal qualities are likely to include:

- Self-motivation
- Self-disciplined
- Enjoy the challenge of working on their own
- A flexible approach
- Able to organise working time effectively
- Able to work without direct supervision
- Confidence to work away from office environment
- Able to work on their own without day to day social interaction with colleagues
- Able to travel to meetings
- Able to 'switch off' from work and maintain a proper balance between working and non-working hours.

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## Personal Responsibility

There is also a greater emphasis on personal responsibility to achieve outputs and work effectively when working flexibly. Managers will need to consider the points below:

- Preferred working style
- Ability to travel to meetings
- Suitability for homeworking - space, environment, distractions
- Family and home commitments
- Technical competence

## Criteria for Flexible Working

Flexible working may be suitable in the following circumstances:

- To facilitate a more flexible working pattern, perhaps to accommodate other demands.
- Where an individual plans his/her work arrangements to enable the achievement of defined outputs each week/month.
- The job involves regular/frequent outside visits.
- Where possible, to facilitate a reasonable adjustment.
- Where a specific task needs dedicated and focused input or could be dealt with more efficiently e.g. to save traveling time and to prevent interruption.
- Where it is difficult for staff to get into their work location e.g. adverse weather or unavoidable commitment at home.
- The job does not involve a high degree of personal interaction with colleagues.
- The employee is willing and able to attend their department's offices for essential meetings with management and colleagues and any training or development courses required.

The above list covers some of the issues which employees and managers will need to consider before deciding whether flexible working is appropriate and practical.

## Working Arrangements

The employee must agree how they will organise their work and achieve deadlines in conjunction with their line manager.

Arrangements must be made between the employee and their line manager to ensure that he/she is informed of the employee's current duties and their whereabouts for that week. This could be achieved

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by the employee completing keeping their electronic calendar up to date. All employees working in a flexible way must allow their manager (and other relevant colleagues) access to their electronic calendar.

A clear workstation policy must be adopted in the department/service as people will be sharing facilities with other employees and it is not pleasant to work in someone else's muddle.

Lockable pedestals/cabinets will be available for personal effects where facilities are shared.

## IT & Technical

Employees will be responsible for providing their own broadband for flexible working purposes. The council will not supply any additional equipment for employees to work from home, like desks or chairs. It is the responsibility of the employee to provide suitable homeworking conditions.

Mobile phones will be issued where the job role demands it i.e. it is a requirement of the job that the employee is mobile.

If you have a laptop, PC or tablet, electronic diaries are to be used **at all times** and they must be open for colleagues to view.

Employees must ensure that their contact details are up to date, on both the intranet and on their email (contact details should be placed at the bottom of their emails) including the publication of mobile phone numbers. There are no excuses for not doing so. (Please do not give out your personal telephone number for work purposes.)

The default is for electronic file storage. If you are using files they should be stored electronically in designated file shares or EDRMs system and not on your desktop.

Employees will be able to use audio-conferencing facilities to reduce the need to travel to conduct meetings. Information is provided on the intranet to support staff in the various ways that this can be achieved.

Where an employee cannot connect to the central Citrix facilities for any reason, they should contact their manager. If they are unable to connect there may be a need to travel to an office facility where they can work effectively.

The provision of desktop devices will be centrally managed by BT&ICT with the replacement of hardware equipment every 4 years. Each member of staff will have technology assigned to them according to their workstyle: desk-based, flexible, collaborative.

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A new Microsoft agreement will be put in place for the standard desktop software (Office Suite, email and calendar). We are aiming to achieve this by April 2015, every desktop will be on the same standard and email will have migrated from Lotus Notes to Outlook.

Employees who do not have access to technology will increasingly be provided with means to access information and communications electronically.

## **Hours Worked**

Line managers, colleagues and clients need to know when a flexible worker is available to contact. Time periods when the flexible worker is not available and cannot be contacted must also be made clear. (This can be done by putting in unavailable or at lunch in your electronic calendar and or by updating telephone answer machine messages)

Flexible workers will follow the normal procedures within the council for agreeing working hours and patterns. Flexible workers will be required to complete timesheets/ vision time system as appropriate. Any additional hours worked outside of the normal hours of work must be agreed in advance and comply with the council's Terms and Conditions/Flexi Time Scheme/ Working Time Regulations.

## **Training and Development**

Employees working flexibly will have the same opportunities and access to any training and development as fixed based employees. They will also be subject to the routine performance appraisal process.

Employees must make arrangements to attend training when required.

## **Trial Period**

All flexible working arrangements are subject an initial trial period normally between 3 and 6 months in order to ensure that the flexible arrangements are suitable and satisfactory for all parties concerned. Flexible working arrangements should be reviewed annually and monitored by the line manager.

## **Managing Cover**

It is essential that there is sufficient cover in the workplace at all times, line managers should take this into consideration when agreeing any type of flexible working. This can be done by agreeing minimum staff levels or having a "duty workplace" rota where identified employees are based in the workplace at different times to provide adequate cover.

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## Communication

It is essential that good communication is maintained at all times, between the employee and the team, clients and his/her line manager. The flexible worker and line manager must therefore agree all communication procedures prior to the commencement of flexible working and must include the following:

- Appropriate system of regular communication
- Procedures for reporting in to line manager
- How the employee is to be supervised
- How performance and output will be assessed
- Frequency and location of meetings
- Management of personal and welfare needs, training and development opportunities.

Managers must also keep their flexible workers up to date with developments in the Department/Service/Council. They should therefore arrange for flexible workers to:

- Receive all departmental newsletters and circulars
- Be invited to regular team meetings, "Away days" and any social events

Employees who are members of a trade union will need to make their own arrangements for ensuring they continue to receive union circulars and other literature.

## Regular Contact

The line manager must define how often flexible workers will visit and contact their department. This will differ from team to team but is essential to maintain relationships with the team, colleagues and council.

Managers must contact flexible workers regularly to monitor activities and provide feedback on work undertaken. Both the manager and the flexible worker must come to a mutual agreement on when and how this contact should take place.

Lone workers must have an established system in place such as a tracking mechanism to ensure that managers are informed when a flexible worker has returned safely back home from a particular location.

Flexible workers must use the electronic calendar to allow their line manager and colleague's access to their diary whenever necessary. They must also apply the 'Out of Office' message to their email facility if they are out of the office.

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Employee's private home telephone numbers and addresses must not be divulged however, dedicated work mobile numbers should be issued and readily available.

Flexible workers should also have the same access to Trade Unions as office based employees.

## **Individual and Team Meetings**

Managers must ensure that a flexible worker has the same opportunity as other team members to meet with them regularly on a one to one basis.

Employees working flexibly are required to attend team meetings. Managers must also ensure that any flexible working arrangements within their department do not adversely affect other members of team who are not able to work flexibly or vice versa.

## **Sickness Absence**

Return to work interviews can initially take place over the phone and then re-cap at the next one to one meeting if it is not practical to do it straight away. Absence due to sickness must be reported to the line manager in accordance with the Attendance at Work Procedure.

## **Post**

Arrangements will need to be made between the line manager and the flexible worker to collect any post or have it scanned to them electronically.

If the flexible worker needs to send out any post, this should be done either when in the office or via the use of electronic means (e.g. scanning) where possible.

## **Mileage Claims**

For the purposes of mileage claims, flexible workers will have a nominated office location. This will be the main location that their department/service operates from.

Employees will be reimbursed for any additional mileage undertaken. Where an employee is undertaking a business journey which starts or ends at their home, there is a requirement to deduct the normal home to work mileage from the total business mileage incurred.

Fixed homeworkers who do not have a dedicated office base will be able to claim mileage from their home.

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Mobile workers who do not have a dedicated office base will be able to claim mileage from their first call/visit up until their last call/visit. The journey to/from their first/last call/visit will be classed as normal home to work travel and is not claimable.

## Meetings & Hours

- Employees must not arrange meetings in their home, with clients or officers from other organisations.
- Employees must not divulge their home address or telephone number to clients.
- Meetings with other employees must be undertaken at council offices or other suitable/appropriate premises and not in the employee's home. This is to ensure compliance with insurance and council tax regulations and minimise the risk to all parties from claims relating to sexual harassment and bullying.
- Employees who are working alone or visiting private premises, must ensure that they comply with the Service/Department's lone working arrangements.
- Employees need to ensure that they do not work excessive hours. It is part of an employee's responsibility as a flexible worker, to keep their manager informed about the number of hours they work; and do not exceed the limits set by the Working Time Regulations.

## Performance

Work performance can often improve with flexible working arrangements, although where performance issues develop as a result of flexible working, managers must address them with employees, and adapt the arrangements accordingly, which may mean stopping flexible working.

## Termination of Flexible Working

There may be cases where the flexible working arrangement becomes inappropriate. It may in certain circumstances, for personal or operational reasons, be necessary for flexible workers to return to a work based environment within the council buildings.

Managers must discuss any decision to terminate a flexible working arrangement with the employee and clearly state the reason(s) for doing so.

A one-month period of notice (or less if both parties agree) should be given before the post reverts to being work based. However, if a member of staff has been flexible working for some time, it may be appropriate to show some flexibility about the period of notice required.

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## **Flexible Working Hours (Flexi-time)**

### **Introduction, Application/Scope of Guidance**

The Flexible Working Hours procedure (flexi-time) outlines the details of the council's Flexi-time system and how flexible working hours can help the council provide an extended service to its customers and help employees achieve a balance between work and home life.

This guidance will apply to any council employee that uses the flexi system. The flexi scheme however will not be suitable for all groups of employees. Exemptions include:

- Staff appointed by School Governing Body
- Directors and Heads of Service

This list is not exhaustive and may be subject to amendment either in the interest of the Council or where an employee's work pattern does or does not readily lend itself to the principles of the scheme. It should also be noted that there may be scope for employees in some of the groups listed above to work flexibly within the constraints of their contracted hours for example when lunchtimes are taken. Where appropriate, part time working patterns can also be accommodated under this procedure.

### **What is the Flexi time system?**

By operating a Flexi time system the council allows qualifying employees the opportunity to arrange their own working times and manage their workloads in accordance with the needs of the business. All agreed hours worked will be recorded as credit hours and authorised absences including annual leave and sickness absence will be credited as standard hours.

In order to accurately record Flexi time hours, employees will clock in and out of the Vision Time system which will enable individuals to monitor their working hours, accommodate personal appointments and plan annual leave with line manager approval.

### **The Procedure – Flexi time**

#### **Staffing Levels – Core Hours**

Official office hours in Denbighshire County Council are detailed below, however if there is a business need to have longer office hours then this can be agreed locally.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

Official Office Hours – Access for General Public	
Monday – Thursday	9.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m.
Friday	9.00 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.

Line managers must ensure that there are adequate staffing levels to respond to the public either as detailed above or in accordance with local arrangements. There is also a responsibility on employees to ensure, in conjunction with their line manager and colleagues, that there is sufficient cover at all times. All employees must be made aware of the minimum staffing levels which apply for their department and provide office cover in accordance with this level.

In order to achieve adequate staffing levels, managers are able to ask employees to come in earlier or later if there is a need for them to attend at a particular time. This request will need to be reasonable and providing sufficient notice is given, the employee would be expected to attend. Employees failing to comply with minimum staffing levels for their department may be subject to disciplinary action.

## Working Time

There are no set times which the employee should attend work providing they work a minimum of 4 ½ hours on each normal working day (for a full time employee) and the times are agreed by their line manager. Employees can work in accordance with the building's opening hours for their particular place of work, however no special arrangements will be made to open or close the building early or later in order to allow employees to work longer.

Actual working arrangements should be in accordance with the needs of the service and the line manager will be responsible for ensuring that there is adequate cover at all times. Some employees will therefore be asked to be in the office at certain times which may reduce the amount of flexibility they have.

Employees have a responsibility to discuss their normal attendance with their line manager and will be required to consult with him/her if they wish to vary this.

There is responsibility on employees to consult with their line manager and colleagues to ensure adequate staffing levels are in place.

## Flexi Period

Each flexi period is 6 weeks. During this time, employees are expected to account for a minimum of their contracted hours. For a full time employee their contracted hours for the flexi period will be 222 hours. Hours worked in excess of the employee's contracted hours will be banked. Up to 20 hours can be carried forward from one flexi period to the next. Hours in excess of 20 hours at the end of each flexi period will be lost.

# **Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees**

## **Credit Hours, Authorising & Taking Flexi Leave**

Credit hours can be accumulated and taken as flexi leave. Within a flexi period, employees can take up to the equivalent of 2 days flexi leave. Managers should check individual flexi records to ensure that employees have sufficient credit before authorising flexi. Flexi can be taken as whole or half days. All leave must be authorised in accordance with departmental arrangements.

It will be up to the manager to determine whether the 2 days can be taken consecutively or if they should be taken as individual days. It may not always be appropriate, taking into account the business needs of the service and other absences within the Department, to allow the employee to take two consecutive flexi leave days. Therefore, there is no automatic right to 2 consecutive days flexi leave.

Where the manager has a justifiable reason to do so, they can refuse an employee's request for flexi leave.

Where the manager is faced with two requests for leave – one for flexi leave and one for annual leave - the annual leave should take precedence over the request for flexi leave.

Before taking flexi leave, employees must ensure that they have sufficient credit hours to cover the leave. Flexi leave must not be taken if there are insufficient credit hours.

## **Debit Hours**

All employees should aim to be in credit on their flexi hours. If an employee does get into debit, the debit hours at the end of any given day should not exceed 4 hours, and the employee should ensure that they are in credit by the end of each flexi period.

If an employee is in debit at the end of the flexi period for two consecutive periods, they will forfeit the right to work flexible hours for a 3 month period and will be required to work standard hours in accordance with the office hours. In addition, the employee will be required to work additional hours in order to make up the debit hours. This will need to be arranged with the line manager.

In such cases, the employee will continue to use the time recording system in place within their place of work.

In exceptional circumstances only, the employee may be given an extra flexi period to get into credit before the right to work flexible hours is withdrawn. If the employee feels that they have a genuine reason which may warrant an extension, they must discuss this with their line manager.

# **Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees**

If an employee does have personal issues which are affecting their attendance at work, they should discuss them with their line manager as soon as possible.

## **Standard Working Day**

For the purpose of recording adjustments such as leave, sickness, or other authorised absence, the standard working day for employees who are contracted to work 37 hours a week will be 7 hours and 24 minutes.

## **Minimum Working Day**

A minimum of 4½ hours must be worked on each normal working day (pro rata for part time employees).

## **Maximum Working Day**

In order to protect the employee's welfare, a maximum of 12 hours can be worked on any normal working day. The only exception to this is if the employee is required to attend meetings/conferences/seminars/training which require early starts and/or late finishes which may exceed the 12 hours working day. In such cases, the employee can claim the total hours worked subject to the prior approval of the line manager. When agreeing the time to be claimed, the line manager should take into account travel time; time attending the meeting/conference/seminar/training but exclude any leisure time, attendance at social dinners or events. This must be agreed by the line manager prior to accumulating the time.

## **Young Workers**

A young worker is defined as an employee who is under 18. A young worker may not work more than 8 hours a day or 40 hours a week. Managers have a duty to ensure that if they have an employee who is within this age category that they do not exceed the maximum hours stated.

## **Flexible Working Lunch**

A minimum of 30 minutes must be taken for lunch. This can be taken at any time of the working day as long as it is not at the start or end of the day and as long as it fits in with the needs of the service. In order to ensure that there is adequate cover, employees should arrange their lunch break in conjunction with the line manager and/or colleagues.

An employee working 6 hours or more must take a 30 minute break within those 6 hours. Employees must clock out before eating their lunch.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

## Monitoring

Managers should regularly monitor flexi balances to ensure that employees are not in debit or accruing excessive flexi hours which are regularly lost. If either of these are the case the manager should meet with the employee to review the situation and take appropriate action. Managers should also ensure that workloads are appropriate for the number of hours worked.

## Absences

All absence from the office must be agreed with the line manager in accordance with departmental arrangements. Absence due to sickness must be reported to the line manager in accordance with the Sickness Absence Procedure. Annual leave can only be taken in whole or half days (7 hrs 24 min; 3 hrs 42 min respectively). Please see the Annual Leave Guidance for Managers and Employees for more information.

## Personal and Domestic Leave

Employees will be allowed to attend medical or personal appointments during the normal working day subject to adequate work cover. The employee will be required to clock out for such appointments and will not be credited for this time.

An employee attending hospital appointments will be required to clock out for such appointments but will be credited for this time. Hospital appointments which are ½ a day or more will be classed as sick leave.

A pregnant employee attending ante-natal appointments or an employee attending routine cancer screening appointments will be required to clock out for such appointments but will be credited for this time.

Employees attending hospital, routine cancer screening or ante-natal appointments will be required to provide the line manager with proof of the appointment.

In support of the Blood Transfusion Service, employees will be entitled to time off to donate blood and will not be required to clock off for this time as long as it is near where they are working. Please see the Time Off Work Policy for more information.

## Abuse of the Scheme

Any abuse of the scheme may result in disciplinary action being taken and/or the employee being excluded from the flexitime scheme. Examples of abuse are:

- Failure to comply with staffing level arrangements

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

- Operating the clock on behalf of someone else
  - Failing persistently to use the clock
  - Consistently failing to work their contracted hours
  - Consistently in debit hours at the end of the flexi period
  - Making false claims
  - Attending work outside of normal working hours when there is insufficient work to justify this
- This list is not exhaustive.

## Leaving the Council

During the last flexi period (or part period) of employment with the Council, employees may continue working flexi hours on the clear understanding that he/she works his/her contracted hours. Failure to work contracted hours (including debit carried forward) will necessitate the Council in billing the member of staff for the contracted hours not worked. Employees (with their line managers' permission) should ensure that they have a zero flexi balance when leaving the council's employment as no credit hours will be paid by the council.

## Recording Hours

All employees, whether working flexible hours or not, will record their hours using the methods determined by the Council. Employees will be required to record their arrival and departure time to and from work. This includes clocking out/in for personal appointments, lunch, smoking breaks and any other absence from work which is not covered by business absence or authorised leave.

## Termination of the Scheme

The Scheme may be terminated by the council by giving three months notice in writing. The Scheme may, at the discretion of the council, be suspended in circumstances which affect the efficiency of the council's services.

## Vision Time Operating System Instructions

All users will be issued with a personal number for use on the system and a pin number for security. Both are required for using the clock and accessing the system.

It is possible to clock in/out as many times a day as necessary. If the employee is leaving the building for any other reason than business absence, then the employee must clock out for the duration of the absence.

# **Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees**

If the employee fails to use the clock i.e. clock in/out they will be required to submit a correction for authorisation by their line manager via the computer. The correction must be submitted within 2 working days of the error.

Should employees fail to clock off at the end of the day, the system will automatically clock them off one minute after they last clocked in.

If the employee fails to use the clock during lunchtime, the system will automatically deduct 2 hours.

An employee working 6 hours or more must take a 30 minute break within those 6 hours. If the employee is clocked out for less than 30 minutes, the system will automatically deduct up to 30 minutes. No correction can be made to reclaim the difference.

## **Home Working Guidance**

### **Introduction**

Homeworking is a form of flexible working. It refers to arrangements whereby a person's home is their place of work for all or some of their working week.

It is recognised that by the very nature of their duties, not all jobs will be suitable for homeworking. However, with the introduction of technology changing how we carry out our duties on day to day basis more jobs may be suited to some form of home working.

Jobs which may involve an identifiable output, or project work or where technology enables access to information may be suitable for this type of flexible working. Jobs that will normally not be suitable or practicable are those that provide a direct service to members of the public, e.g. Reception or Refuse Collectors.

Homeworking must meet the business needs of the service as well as those of the employee. For employees to be eligible for homeworking they must meet the criteria for homeworking and it must be agreed between the line manager and the employee; and is subject to overall agreement by the Head of Service.

Any agreed request will be on a trial basis (subject to satisfactory Health and Safety Risk Assessments) of between three and six months; with each trial being evaluated. Thereafter, homeworking arrangements will be monitored on a quarterly basis for Health and Safety considerations and reviewed annually.

Employees will be responsible for providing their own broadband for homeworking purposes.

# **Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees**

There may be occasions when a request for homeworking is declined, if this is the case the line manager must clearly state the reasons for the refusal, in writing, within 4 weeks of the initial request. This letter should also clearly state the appeal procedure. Employees have the right to appeal against a decision refusing their application for homeworking. This should be done using the Corporate Appeals Procedure within 10 working days of receipt of the notification.

## **Criteria**

The criteria for homeworking is the same as flexible working please see that section.

## **Fixed Homeworkers**

If a person is to be a fixed homeworker (i.e. works at home on a permanent basis) A 'Homeworking Agreement' (which can be found on the intranet) will need to be completed by the employee so that an amended contract of employment can be issued. Managers should seek advice from HR about this process.

Employees who have been specially appointed on a fixed homeworking basis should have a period of time based in the departmental office before any form of homeworking commences.

Employees working from home will normally need to ensure that they have access to a telephone and the internet.

A fixed homeworker will need to use their own phone line and broadband – however a fixed homeworker could claim up to 50% of either the cost of their broadband or 50% of the standard Council broadband cost whichever is cheaper if the manager is able to demonstrate the business benefit / efficiency of homeworking for the Council. This should take the form of a business case to the Head of Service. If the business case is not approved by the Head of Service, the employee will not be eligible to claim any costs. Where costs are claimed they will be taxable. Eligible employees should claim back broadband costs on a monthly basis.

## **Termination of Homeworking**

Termination of homeworking is the same as for flexible working, please see that section. However, for employees who have been recruited as fixed homeworkers where there have been no substantial changes to the job then there will be no provision to accommodate them in council buildings.

## **Flexible Working Options – The Right to Request Flexible Working**

Flexible working is described as the ability to perform your duties where you need to so for example at another council location, on the move, in a client's house or from home, however there are other type of

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

flexible working available to employees that may or may not be connected with the need to work flexibly. Flexible working options may be needed to support a change in personal circumstances either on a temporary or fixed term bases.

## Types of Flexible Working

Types of flexible working available in the council include:

- **Job sharing** - An arrangement where two part-time employees share the responsibilities of one position, either on a “shared” basis where they both carry out all duties, or on a “divided” basis, where duties are split between the two, each providing cover for the other for holidays and absence. All posts may be considered for job-sharing although certain roles may be unsuitable due to the nature of the work or service requirements. Job sharers will have separate contracts and may operate on a split- day or split-week basis, or any other reasonable arrangement, giving each employee a pro-rata share of the full-time hours of the post. Occasionally the hours may overlap if this meets the needs of the service.
- **Part-time working** - At certain times an employee may wish to reduce their working hours, either on a permanent or temporary basis. Depending on the nature of the role involved, various working patterns are possible; Varying hours and working days  
i.e. full working days, part working days, mornings, afternoons, split shifts, weekend working.
- **Term-time working** - This option allows employees to work either full or part time during term time and not work during the periods of school holidays. The employee’s salary will be paid on a pro-rata basis over 12 equal monthly payments. Annual leave and bank holidays will be calculated on a pro-rata basis, both in terms of hours worked per week and weeks worked per year. Annual leave will not generally be granted in term time, although managers may use their discretion in approving unpaid leave or flexi.
- **Swapping hours** - Employees can swap hours or shifts with colleagues doing the same type of work, with management approval. Family contracts can be set up to allow friends or family members to share and cover each other’s shifts.
- **Annualised hours** - A system where the employee’s contractual working hours are calculated as the total number of hours worked over the year, allowing flexible patterns to be worked during the year, usually according to work demand (e.g. seasonal work).
- 1. **Compressed hours e.g. 9 day fortnight** - An employee’s total number of contractual hours can be worked over fewer working days – usually a 5-day week is compressed to 4 or 4.5, or a 9-day fortnight.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

- **Voluntary reduced hours** - In some circumstances an employee may request a reduction to their working hours. This can work in a number of ways; reducing the working day, reducing the number of working days worked in the week, taking time off in blocks of working days, weeks or months. There is no minimum reduction in the number of hours that an employee can request e.g. An employee may wish to reduce their working day by one or two hours.
- **Staggered hours** - Some departments may benefit from their employees starting and finishing their working day at different times, providing more cover at peak times while allowing employees the flexibility to manage their commitments.
- **Career breaks** - An opportunity for an employee to take unpaid time to fulfil personal ambitions or pursuits while retaining the right to return to their job after an agreed length of time – refer to Time Off Work Policy.
- **Reduced working week prior to retirement (Flexible Retirement)** - In the run up to retirement some employees may wish to reduce their working hours as a period of adjustment.

These are in addition to the flexible working options which are already covered in this guidance like; Flexi time & homeworking.

## Application Process for ‘The Right to Request’ Flexible Working

Some of the types of flexible working described above will have the potential to impact on service delivery and on other colleagues; therefore, employees will need to complete the Right to Request Flexible Working Form and approval should be sought from the line manager. Once a request is received the employee’s manager will arrange a meeting within 30 working days of the application date.

After the meeting the line manager will consider the application and their decision will be sent in writing to the employee within 10 working days of the meeting. If the request is accepted the notification will include: -

- Details of the new working pattern – either the changes proposed by the employee or an agreed compromise
- The start date and agreed duration if temporary
- Review date
- Changes to pay, holidays and pension as a result of the new working pattern

The manager should arrange via HR for a new contract to be issued if the changes are permanent or if the changes to the working pattern involve a reduction in hours worked, pay, holidays and/or pension contributions.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

## Refusal of an Application

If the manager feels that there is a genuine reason to refuse the request for flexible working, the employee will be notified as follows: -

Details of any alternative suggestions the manager may have in relation to the application

- Sound business reasons if the manager refuses the employee's request
- An application may be refused where there are good business grounds. For example:
- A cost is incurred by the Council
- Detrimental effect to the service provided to customers
- Inability to provide cover amongst existing staff
- Inability to recruit additional staff or cover hours
- Performance of work adversely affected
- Detrimental effect on other members of the team
- Insufficient work during proposed new working pattern
- Planned structural changes

Employees have the right to appeal against a decision refusing their application for flexible working. This should be done using the Corporate Appeals Procedure within 10 working days of receipt of the notification.

## Hot-desking

It is the intention to create corporate hot-desking facilities in main buildings (at the time of print April 2014, this project is in it's infancy) throughout 2014 these facilities will be created and publicised.

## Hot-desking Locations, Equipment & Access

All corporate hot-desks will be situated at street level in corporate offices adjacent to reception areas. All desks will meet health and safety requirements and will be fitted with standardised equipment that will include:

- Desk
- Adjustable chair
- Computer port
- Screen
- Keyboard

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

- Docking station
- Mouse
- Wrist rest
- Foot rest
- Power to accommodate laptop / charger

Each hot-desking area will have:

- Guidelines for using hot-desks.
- Health and Safety information and responsibilities
- Hygiene arrangements
- Absence protocols when using the Hot-Desk
- Guidance on eating and drinking at the workstation
- Arrangements for locating toilets, hot drink areas and printing facilities
- Noise levels
- Security requirements

Hot desk will not be bookable as this could lead to employees booking spaces “just in case” they need them or block booking of facilities. Both practices could lead to a shortage of available work-stations for those who genuinely require a hot-desk to work from. Therefore, all hot-desks will be allocated on a first come first served basis. If corporate desks are not available, the receptionist will be able to advise users where other flexible working spaces are available.

## Access to and Around Buildings

Current security fobs are unique to each building and not interchangeable between offices, therefore each reception area will have spare security fobs available so that employees can “sign” for a fob when they arrive in a building and return to reception on departure.

## Corporate Hot-Desking

Hot-desks are to be used as temporary workspace by Denbighshire County Council employees and will be allocated on a first come first served basis. Employees working for other organisations are requested to work within the DCC service team they are associated with.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

## Protocols

- It is the individual responsibility of all employees using a hot desk to undertake a self-assessment and adjust the setup of the workstation to meet their individual requirements
- It is the individual responsibility of all employees to return workstations to the original state in which they were found
- When away from the workstation for 2 hours or more, desks are to be cleared and left accessible for other workers
- Eating at workstations should be kept to a minimum, however, if eating at the workstation care should be taken to prevent debris accumulating on the desk or the equipment
- Please always leave desks clean, tidy and fully equipped when you leave

## Domestics

- Details about buildings can be found on the Intranet. This includes details such as nominated first aiders, fire and evacuation procedures and the contact details of those responsible for the maintenance of this area and equipment
- Signs will be clearly visible for members of staff unfamiliar with the layout of the building
- Hot and cold water is available but any other refreshments are not provided and employees should bring their own provisions
- Kitchen areas are available. Please ensure that they are left clean and tidy after use
- Please ensure that equipment, such as docking stations, screens etc. are turned off and lights are not left on when leaving

## Noise Levels

- Be aware of noise levels and try to keep conversations, either on the telephone or in person to a reasonable level
- Be considerate over the use of mobile phones, particularly for incoming calls where you may have loud, unusual or annoying ring tones. Personal mobile phones should be on silent or vibrate. Do not leave personal mobile phones unattended if possible
- Do not use the area as a meeting space – other facilities are available for meetings

## Security

- Employee identification badges must be worn at all times.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

- Confidential information should not be left on the desk when it is vacated
- Computers must be locked using a password when the desk is vacated even if it is only for a short period.

## H&S

- DSE Assessments – Diagram and instructions on how to carry out a DSE Assessment will be provided.
- Cleanliness and use of room – removal of food waste/use re-cycling facilities will be provided.
- Provision of suitable (adjustable) office chairs will be provided along with instructions on how to adjust them.
- Clear Fire safety instructions, location of nearest first aid trained staff and first aid boxes will be provided.
- Provision of cleansing wipes.
- Provision of a general notice board for each corporate hot-desking room/facility, giving following information:
  - Fire & H&S Instructions/fire escape routes.
  - Access to kitchen areas for hot/cold water.
  - DSE Risk Assessment signage/instructions.
  - Security instructions for personal items/belongings/restricted areas.

## Individual Workspaces & Storage

Individual workspaces will meet the following guidelines unless a compelling case for additional provision can be made:

- As modern working arrangements are rolled out across the council staff will be provided with 1.4m wave desks that will replace the larger L shaped desks.
- All workspaces will have at least 11m<sup>3</sup> to comply with Health and Safety workspace requirements.
- Desk allocation will nominally be on a 7:10 ratio – 7 desks to 10 staff, subject to service specific requirements and development of the Workstyles methodology. A 7:10 desk ratio should be achievable in most instances, with decreased ratios implemented where there is a greater use of mobile and flexible work styles. This form of space allocation maximises use of desk spaces while allowing better use of remaining space for other purposes e.g. meeting rooms or break-out areas.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

- Electronic storage solutions will be utilised wherever possible. Limits will be set on the amount of storage staff can use. These limits will be associated with the member of staff's business needs and in line with the Network Drive Policy.
- Personal and individual business storage (case files etc.) will be limited to 1.0 linear metres per person. Various storage solutions are available and service preference should be considered.

## Information Security

Any flexible worker with access to confidential material will need to take the necessary steps to ensure that this material is kept secure.

The Council's Information Security Policy must be followed in relation to protecting information appropriately ([link to Information Security Policy](#))

If handling personal data, the Council's Data Protection Policy must be adhered to.

Particular attention should be made to ensuring that all personal and confidential data is kept secure. In the majority of cases this should be accessible remotely only by electronic means and paperwork should only be taken off Council premises when absolutely necessary and care should be taken at all times to ensure there is no accidental loss. Employees should make sure that the computer screens and any documents they are in possession of cannot be overlooked by other people when working flexibly.

If there is no alternative but to use paper documents and if they are of a confidential nature they should be transported in a lockable briefcase/receptacle for transit in a vehicle and stored in some form of locked drawer or cabinet when in the home.

Equipment, software, files and any other information should be taken care of to make sure it is not lost. It is particularly important to ensure that other people (in the home or whilst working off site) cannot access confidential or personal information.

Electronic files must never be taken off the corporate network and saved to home computers. Any mobile devices used to store personal data, must be encrypted.

Confidential material (to include lap tops, files etc.) must be returned to the Department if the home is likely to be unoccupied for more than 5 days. This should be arranged with your line manager prior to any leave.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

As well as security, flexible workers need to ensure that they fulfil the Council's requirements on confidentiality. The employee must not disclose official information either orally or in writing to those not authorised to receive it.

Where any breaches of security occur the member of staff must report it to their Line Manager and ICT Service desk as soon as possible.

## Health and Safety

### Introduction

Employers have a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of all their employees which includes flexible workers, so far as is reasonably practicable. Many of the regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HASWA) apply to flexible workers. The most significant are: -

- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations
- Display Screen Equipment Regulations
- Manual Handling Operations Regulations
- Provision & Use of Work Equipment Regulations
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations
- Health and Safety (consultation with employees) Regulations

Flexible workers have the same obligations under Health & Safety legislation as all other employees. They must take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of anyone else, who might be affected by their acts or omissions, they must also cooperate with their employer as they strive to discharge their statutory duties.

### Managing Health and Safety

Health and Safety legislation requires us to carry out risk assessments, put in place measures to minimise the risks, record any significant findings and review them periodically. Safe systems of work should then be developed using the information gained from the assessments.

It is a line manager's responsibility to ensure that risk assessments and safe systems of work are in place for all workers. All employees must follow the resulting agreed safe working practices. Communication is the key to success. If any issues are identified they must be discussed with line managers.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

There is a legal requirement to report all work related accidents or incidents. If a worker is involved in a work related accident or injury they must notify their line manager without delay.

## Lone working

The risk level associated with lone working can vary significantly depending on the work that is being undertaken and the people involved in it. Where lone working takes place in DCC, line managers must ensure that suitable and sufficient risk assessments and safe working procedures are in place. Every employee has a responsibility to work with line managers and ensure that agreed safe working procedures are followed.

A generic risk assessment may be used to identify the common hazards and risk control methods, however, specific individual assessments should be in place to identify and record any significant variations from what has been identified in the generic assessment. Safe working procedures must be developed and recorded from the findings of the risk assessments.

The use of a lone worker monitoring system is usually not a sufficient management control by itself.

Guidance documents on lone working, risk assessment and working procedures can be found in the guidance section of the Health and Safety page on the intranet

## Equipment & Insurance

### Introduction

Computers, laptops, phones and other items of equipment provided by the Council are covered by the Council's insurance policy provided that: -

- The employee has taken all reasonable care to ensure that the equipment is kept safe & secure; whether at home, or in transit to and from Council premises.
- It has been used only in accordance with any operating instructions

Please note the council insurance does not cover equipment that is "lost" or accidentally damaged (e.g. spilling coffee on a laptop) if this happens the service will be expected to pay for a replacement.

However, employees will still need to make sure the equipment AND ANY INFORMATION ON IT is safe and secure. All equipment provided, will remain the property of the Council.

Where equipment is provided by the Council, the employee must: -

- Take reasonable care of it

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

- Use it only for official purposes
- Use it only in accordance with any operating instructions
- Upon request, return it to the Council

All equipment will be PAT tested on installation and annually thereafter. Each individual department is responsible for organising their own PAT testing of equipment through building services. The Council will not take responsibility for any other electrical equipment, sockets or the domestic supply in the employee's home. Staff should only use equipment that they are competent to use and all equipment should be checked by the user before use to ensure that it shows no signs of fault or damage. Faulty or damaged equipment should be replaced.

The use of Council computers/laptops for personal purposes must be in accordance with the Council's ICT and Information Security Policy. The Council is responsible for maintaining equipment supplied to a flexible worker and may need to be given access to an employee's home to check that the equipment is safe and functioning properly. Reasonable notice will be given if access is needed.

Health and Safety risk assessments must be in place for flexible workers to comply with the Councils' liability insurance.

Employees should contact anyone with an interest in their property (e.g. mortgage lenders, landlords, leaseholders, Building and Contents insurer) to make sure there is nothing they need to consider when home working.

## Employer's Liability

Employees working at or from home, are covered by the Council's "Employer's Liability Policy".

## Approval Process for Flexible Working

An employee who wishes to work flexibly must approach their line manager for approval by completing the [Right to Request Flexible Working Form](#). The line manager will then decide if the request can be approved, this may require sign off by the Head of Service.

If a request for flexible working is declined, the line manager must clearly state, in writing, the reason(s) for the refusal within 4 weeks of the initial request. This letter should also give the right of appeal. The Council's normal procedure for appeal will apply

Employees will need to complete the Remote Access Request form to get access to the appropriate equipment & systems once approval has been gained. This form can be found on the intranet.

# Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees

All employees must complete the relevant Health and Safety Risk Assessment before any flexible working arrangement can commence.

If flexible working is approved, managers must agree revised working arrangements with the employee, in advance. Failure to agree on these arrangements will result in the approval of flexible working being withdrawn.

## Guidance on the Use of a Denbighshire County Council Mobile Device

When you receive a mobile device, either a phone, BlackBerry, i-pad or any other device that is the property of Denbighshire County Council, please ensure you adhere to the following:

- Keep the device safe and secure at all times.
- Ensure that the device is locked and the password is applied when you are not using it. This will ensure that it is not used by anyone else.
- Don't share your password with anyone. This is in line with the ICT Information Security policy.
- The device is for your use only unless specifically set up as a shared device by your line manager. Do not permit non- Denbighshire County Council personnel to use it unless it is an emergency situation.
- Please do not put your Denbighshire County Council SIM card into your own mobile device. Denbighshire County Council SIMs are only to be used in Denbighshire County Council supplied devices.
- Personal calls can be made from mobiles and BlackBerrys, however, please ensure that Denbighshire County Council is reimbursed for these calls via monthly Travelling and Subsistence Claim Form. Calls should be identified on the paper/electronic copy of the invoice you receive each month and a copy attached to your claim form. Heads of Service receive a summary of the invoices each month.
- You will be required to reimburse Denbighshire County Council if you exceed your data allowance by using it for non- Denbighshire County Council purposes. If you exceed your data allowance for DCC purposes, you will need to explain the reason to your manager.
- Please do not store personal data on the device e.g. photographs, videos.
- Notify the ICT Service Desk if there are any technical problems with the device and notify them immediately of loss or theft. This will allow the ICT Service to remotely wipe the content on the device to ensure no information security breach occurs.
- If you require any training on the device, please contact the ICT Service Desk.
- Contact the ICT Service Desk if you need to use your phone abroad. Please be aware that charges when using your device abroad can be very high.

## **Flexible working Procedure and Guidance for Managers and Employees**

- Do not use your device to dial Directory Enquiries, as this incurs higher charge rates. Please get the number you require from the internet.
- Ensure that the procedure to deal with unwanted, redundant and re-allocated mobile phones is adhered to when the phone is no longer required by the user.
- Please ensure that your mobile device number is entered correctly onto Denbighshire County Council's intranet telephone directory.
- Please ensure that your device is always switched on when you are mobile working.
- Do not use your device whilst driving, this is against the law.
- Devices provided to employees by ICT will be the current standard devices, any non-standard devices will be charged for accordingly, as will their upgrades.
- If you use a mobile device for sending e-mails, please ensure that your Denbighshire e-mail signature appears at the bottom of each e-mail.