

FLEXI-SCHEME

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FLEXITIME SCHEME

Document Revision History

Date	Author	Revision	Description
July 2011	HR		Initial Draft
11/10/11	Dawn Melloy	1	Revision to house style and improved content
16/11/11	Dawn Melloy	2	Formatting changes and changes requested by TUs after consultation meeting
14/12/11	Jane Dackiewicz	3	Additional minor amendments made following Policies Working Party
24/08/17	Kate Harley	4	Overall updates and change to

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1.0 Introduction

The Council recognises the importance of helping its employees balance their work and home life by offering flexible working arrangements that enable them to balance their working life with other priorities, including parental and other caring responsibilities, life-long learning, charity work, leisure activities and other interests.

Flexitime is a core element of the Council's flexible working policy. However it is recognised that not all roles within the Council can operate the flexitime scheme. Those roles which are suitable will be designated and the right will be set out in the employee's contract.

It is essential that the flexitime scheme is administered in an equitable and fair manner.

2.0 The core principles of the flexitime scheme.

The core principles of the flexitime scheme are as follows:

- The scheme is open to all employees currently able to work flexitime, but it will be necessary to ensure that the public service is adequately staffed and that as a minimum standard a Service is maintained.
- Use of flexible working hours must not affect the provision of service to the customers of the Council.
- Each four-weekly period, every employee must have completed the number of hours attendance set out in their contract of employment - subject to the provisions of the scheme.
- Employees' work commitments and service delivery must take priority over the use of flexitime.
- Flexi-leave may only be taken at an agreed mutually convenient time and is subject to the requirements of the service.
- Employees should submit their flexi timesheet to their line manager at the end of each four weekly period.
- Managers may request a copy of any employee's flexi timesheet at any time for audit purposes.
- Managers must monitor working time recorded and be alert to working times that appear to have been recorded incorrectly, adjusted since the last record was provided or are not compatible with the business needs in their service.
- Managers must check to ensure employees do not exceed the maximum credit/ debit allowance at the end of each four week period.
- All leave must be authorised in advance by an appropriate manager
- Employees are expected to operate the scheme with common sense, honesty and responsibility. It will be a disciplinary offence to abuse the scheme either through dishonesty or deliberate non-co-operation. Anyone who does abuse the scheme may have the benefit of the scheme withdrawn and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure. The Council reserves the right to monitor the application of the scheme.

- Employees who consider that this scheme is not being fairly applied to them will have recourse to the Grievance Procedure.

3.0 Flexitime Bandwidth

Chesterfield Borough Council has agreed a bandwidth of 7.30am –6.30pm each day worked (may be work on Saturday or Sunday depending on working patterns).

Managers must ensure that employees' arriving/departing at the start (from 7.30am) or the finish (up to 6.30pm) of the bandwidths has appropriate work to undertake, with little or no supervision, at those times.

Adequate cover arrangements must be in place if an employee is going to start at work late or leave early that day or shift. Therefore the earliest and latest start/finish times must be agreed in advance between employees and their managers.

4.0 Core Times

There are currently no universal core times within the flexitime scheme beyond start and finish times. However individual services may need to implement core times to ensure that the service delivery is maintained at all times.

5.0 Working outside the bandwidth:

No overtime will be paid for any work done in the normal job role during the bandwidth of the scheme.

A manager may approve work outside the bandwidth but this will not form part of the flexitime scheme.

Where a manager approves, in advance, work outside the bandwidth it should either be recorded on the employee's leave form as time to be taken in lieu (TOIL) or approved as overtime working which will be paid as per the Council's pay agreement (enhanced rates for employees on band 7 and below only).

Similarly a manager may approve overtime (which will be paid as per the Council's pay agreement, enhanced rates for employees on band 7 and below only) on an exceptional basis if an employee exceeds 15 hours credit in a four-week period but only where this is for a specific pre-agreed reason. Working excess hours must not be a regular occurrence and should be discouraged.

Occasional additional hours worked in a different job role should be worked outside the flexitime scheme and contracted separately.

6.0 Time Recording

Employees are responsible for recording their working hours accurately using a spreadsheet where accessible. Where there is no access to a spreadsheet a manual recording system will be provided.

Employees should ensure they keep a record of working hours up to date. It should be completed every day if possible.

7.0 The Standard Working Day

For full time employees a normal contracted standard working day is 7 hours 24 minutes (37 hours per week). Part-time staff will work pro rata hours.

8.0 The Accounting Period

The scheme operates over a four week period.

9.0 Carry over of hours from one accounting period to the next

A **maximum** of 15 hours credit (pro rata for part-time/job share). Any hours in excess of 15 hours will be lost. Managers should monitor the system to identify any employee who regularly exceeds the 15 hours credit and investigate the reason for the regular working of excess hours as it may lead to ill-health.

A **maximum** of 10 hours debit (pro rata for part-time/job share). Any debit above the limit will be investigated. Any employee persistently over 10 hours in debit may be subject to disciplinary action including removal from the flexitime scheme.

10.0 Breaks

A minimum break of 30 minutes must be taken during the working day and be accounted for. All breaks must be recorded.

Where no break has been recorded after 6 hours the officer must make a debit adjustment of 30 minutes. However no employee should work longer than 6 hours without a break lasting at least 30 minutes and managers should ensure staff take the required break.

The timing of all breaks must be agreed by the manager or in consultation with colleagues, taking account of the minimum number of employees that must be present for service delivery reasons.

11.0 Flexi-Leave

Employees may take 2 days flexi-leave in any four-week accounting period (pro rata for part-time/job share) which should be booked using the same procedure as annual leave.

This is subject to:

- the requirements of the service
- approval by the manager in advance
- debit limits not having been exceeded by the end of the accounting period.

The employee is responsible for ensuring that sufficient entitlement for flexi-leave exists - not the officer authorising the flexi-leave.

12.0 Making Adjustments to Recorded Time

a) *Credits for absences due to annual leave or sickness:*

Employees who are absent due to annual leave or sickness will be credited with the hours specified in their contract for a contracted day or part day.

b) *Credits for absences due to Bank Holidays for part-time employees:*

Flexitime credits should not be used for reconciling Bank Holiday entitlements. Annual leave cards should be adjusted annually for the apportionment of the employees Bank Holiday entitlement - i.e. plus/minus hours. The employee has the option of these being added to/taken from annual leave or working additional hours (additional hours worked being approved by the relevant line manager).

c) *Credits for absences on Council business i.e. on training, conferences, meetings.*

Where the employee is absent from their normal place of work on Council business (e.g.), an additional credit/time off in lieu may be agreed and approved by the line-manager as outlined below:

- (i) If an employee requests training, attendance at a seminar or some other form of CPD and the training is equivalent to a normal full working day (including travelling time)., the credit should be 7 hours 24 minutes (pro rata for full time employees) .

If the training is less than a normal full working day the credit should reflect the actual time spent on the activity and employee should return to work or agree with the manager that the rest of the day is to be taken in his /her own time.

- (ii) When the main beneficiary is the Council and the employee is directed to attend, then credit for actual time out of the office may be given up to a maximum of 11.5 hours This applies to all employees i.e. if a part-time employee who normally works five hours per day is directed to attend a full day event they will also be credited with actual time up to a maximum of 11.5 hours.

- (iii) Where a training course takes place on Council premises the employee should normally 'clock in' or record their actual time as if at work.

d) *Medical appointments:*

Routine appointments with doctors, dentists and opticians will **not** be credited as working time.

However where a medical appointment is in relation to incapacity covered by the Equality Act (e.g. ongoing treatment, hospital appointments, cancer screening etc.) an adjustment may be made to credit the employee for the time taken as a 'reasonable adjustment'. The credit given should not exceed the balance necessary to complete the number of hours in the employee's standard contracted hours for the day.

The employee must agree any absences with their line manager in advance to ensure that minimum staffing levels can be maintained.

e) *Ante-natal Care:*

Employees will be credited for attendance at ante-natal appointments. The credit given should not exceed the balance necessary to complete the number of hours in the employee's standard contracted hours for the day.

Managers should seek to make arrangements to allow partners to attend key appointments (for example scans and any appointments in relation to pregnancy related problems) in their own time by using flexi time or making up the time at a later date.

f) *Off Site Visits:*

Where an employee is required to work off site and is not able to 'clock in' or out, the hours must be recorded by the employee. The employee must make the manager aware of the expected departure and return time in advance.

g) *Other authorised absences (e.g. special leave etc.):*

Where statutory requirements or the policies of Council prescribe paid time-off for such circumstances, the employee concerned will be credited with a standard contracted day or an amount which does not exceed the balance necessary to complete the number of hours in the employee's standard contracted hours for the day. (Please refer to the relevant policy for further details).

h) *External Events (including bad weather adjustments):*

A. Where offices/buildings are open

The assumption is that employees (including variable hours employees) will attend work as expected unless instructed not to do so. Where no such instruction is given, i.e. the buildings are open, but employees cannot get into work, employees are expected to use annual leave, flexitime or reach an agreement with their manager to make up the time

over a defined period.

The flexitime scheme will be relaxed to allow a carry over of more than 10 debit hours at the end of the period.

Conversely, if employees had planned to take flexi time due to reaching the maximum credit and they came into work to maintain staffing levels then the scheme will be relaxed to allow them to carry over more than 15 hours.

If an employee does not have access to the flexi scheme and they are at the end of their leave year with no annual leave to use, the manager should consider allowing any request to bring forward annual leave from the new leave year.

The Council does not credit time for those who cannot get in as this can cause bad feeling amongst employees that make the effort to attend.

Reasonable adjustments will be considered for employees with a disability on an individual basis.

B. Where employees are notified not to attend due to full closure

If employees are notified that they are not required to attend because premises are closed (i.e. the absence is enforced) then they will be credited with the time or paid as normal.

C. Where employees attend and the buildings are closed early

If the Council takes the decision to close the workplace early and employees who have been working normally are sent home, they will be credited with time to make up their standard working day.

If the building remains open and functioning normally, standard flexitime rules apply so if employees choose to leave early then this is done within their flexitime entitlements.

D. Working at home

Where employees had pre-agreed with their manager that they were working at home, a standard contracted day will be credited.

Other Scenarios

Employees who had pre-booked leave will take the leave as normal. If an employee attends work to maintain staffing levels in agreement with their manager, on a day they had approved leave, they will be allowed to take the leave at a later date even if this means the maximum carry over of leave is exceeded.

Employees taking time off due to sickness will discuss the circumstances as normal in the 'return to work interview' and will receive their normal credit/pay as appropriate.

13.0 Employees ceasing employment or leaving the Flexitime Scheme

Where an employee transfers out of a flexitime scheme work area or if they leave the employment of the Council managers will check the current status of the flexitime scheme. Employees must clear all debit hours before the transfer/last day of notice period. If this is not cleared, appropriate adjustments may be made to final pay.

14.0 Abuse of the Scheme

Employees are expected to operate the scheme with common sense, honesty and responsibility. It will be a disciplinary offence to abuse the scheme either through dishonesty or deliberate non-co-operation. Anyone who does abuse the scheme may have the benefit of the scheme withdrawn and will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Employees who consider that this scheme is not being fairly applied to them will have recourse to the Grievance Procedure.

15.0 Review of the Scheme

The Scheme will be formally reviewed jointly by the employer and trade unions following 1 year after its implementation.

Associated Policies

Please refer to the following policies for additional information that may fall outside of the flexi scheme:

- Managing Attendance
- Leave
- Flexible Working Policy
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