

## Hybrid Working Policy

### 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy is designed to provide a clear framework for requesting hybrid working and your responsibilities whilst working from home.

### 2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This is a temporary policy, which will apply for 12 months from June 2022. It applies to all employees, **excluding**:

- Employees who have a contract which require a fixed or mobile work pattern and location
- Employees on a Performance Improvement Plan (for the duration)
- Employees following a disciplinary recommendation (for an agreed duration)
- Periods of training or specific meetings
- Employees experiencing sustained technical difficulties not relating to provided equipment, which affects productivity
- Employees who have resigned and are working through their notice period.
- Temporary agency employees
- Self employed contractors

### 3.0 Principles

- 3.1 This policy can be used to deal with any temporary hybrid working request by the employee. The Council will endeavour to apply this policy in a manner which is impartial, reasonable and free from unlawful discrimination.
- 3.2 All confirmed requests will result in an agreement which will be managed by the line manager. The Council's Flexible Working Policy should be utilised to request more formal changes to employment terms.
- 3.3 Hybrid workers must ensure they are compliant with Council Health & Safety Policies whilst working in the workplace or at home.

### 4.0 Responsibilities

- 4.1 **Employment and General Committee** will be responsible for final approval of the policy and any amendments made over time.

- 4.2 **Managers** are responsible for reviewing requests to work from home in a timely manner and for applying the policy fairly and in line with the guidance set out. Managers are also responsible for ensuring that any request is accurately recorded and that a documented note of the agreement is provided.
- 4.3 **HR** are responsible for ensuring that all employees have access to this policy and will be available to provide relevant training, guidance and instruction to managers and employees to ensure requests and a temporary change of terms and conditions of employment is recorded and dealt with in a fair and appropriate manner.
- 4.4 **Employees** are responsible for requesting hybrid working by using the hybrid working request form and signing and adhering to the agreement which is made.

## 5.0 Main Policy

- 5.1 If you wish to apply to work from home for a proportion of each week under this hybrid working policy you should complete an [application form](#) and discuss this with your line manager. If approved, your manager will implement the actions needed to support this informal temporary arrangement.
- 5.2 Any application for hybrid working is role specific and approval will be led by business need.
- 5.3 The role you complete will determine the number of days you can reasonably expect to work from home. The tasks or activities which need to be undertaken within your service area will determine the days that you are expected to be in the workplace. These will be identified in the agreement set out between you and your manager.
- 5.4 The Council expects the following activities as a minimum to be completed within the workplace. This list is not exhaustive and your line manager will provide more information on the activities which apply within your own service area.
- Team Meetings
  - Face to face training
  - PDR reviews
  - Activities which require collaboration
  - Project initiation and review
  - Management of printing and postage
  - Business planning activities
  - Team building

- 5.5 Hybrid working should not negatively impact the service being provided or negatively impact other team members. As a guide, the Council expects that employees will typically spend two to three days in the workplace each week.
- 5.6 Requests for specific days to work from home will be accommodated where possible, but this is not guaranteed as it is dependent on the work which needs to be completed. Use of rotas may be implemented within teams to ensure fairness and parity to all employees. Ad hoc days working from home can also be agreed with your manager.
- 5.7 If you are engaged in hybrid working, you must work your contractual hours, but you may be able to agree to alter when you work those hours with your manager. The needs of the service will take priority and this change cannot be guaranteed. Flexitime may be accrued whilst working in a hybrid way, in line with the Council's flexi policy.
- 5.8 Commuting to or from home to your workplace does not count as working time.
- 5.9 You are unable to increase or reduce your contractual hours using this informal hybrid working policy. You should speak to your manager or your HR Business Partner to request a formal change.
- 5.10 Guaranteed fixed work patterns will only be considered if a formal request for Flexible Working is submitted and agreed, thereby leading to a permanent change in your employment contract. The Council's Flexible Working Policy provides more information on this process.

## **6.0 Equipment**

- 6.1 All IT equipment which is necessary to effectively undertake your role will be provided and will remain the property of the Council. The Council is not responsible for any domestic equipment or electrical equipment in your home environment.
- 6.2 You are responsible for damage to any of the property provided to you which goes beyond ordinary wear and tear. You must ensure you take care of all equipment, to keep it secure and use it in accordance with any operating instructions and in line with the ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

## **7.0 Confidentiality, security and data protection**

- 7.1 Equipment, files and information should only be accessible to Council employees and should be safeguarded from access by anyone else who is in your home environment.
- 7.2 You should ensure the confidentiality and security of any information you are required to work with whilst in your home environment. It is your responsibility

to take reasonable steps to ensure that the property, information and data is kept secure at all times. This includes, but is not limited to, the locking of screens whilst not at your workstation. The Council's Data Protection Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Policies provide more information.

- 7.3 All electronic documents which are accessed in your home environment and which record sensitive personal information or confidential information should be locked away, with passwords and all security measures adhered to.
- 7.4 All documents produced for the Council, or in connection with the duties of your employment, regardless of where these documents were created, remain the property of the Council.

## **8.0 Insurance**

- 8.1 The Council is responsible for the equipment it provides, however this does not cover your home environment and/or your personal possessions (or those of others kept at your home environment).
- 8.2 It should be noted that the Council's insurance policy does not cover equipment you have purchased, borrowed or are using in your home environment to support home working. This equipment is deemed your own and would need to be covered by your household insurance policy.
- 8.3 It is important and recommended that you ensure your insurer is notified to ensure your policy covers you to work from home.

## **9.0 Health, safety and welfare**

### **Working environment**

- 9.1 If you are requesting hybrid working, you must have a suitable space to work and a suitable internet connection. As a minimum you will be expected to work in an area that provides privacy from other members of the household and provides sufficient space to comply with Display Screen Equipment (DSE) and other Health and Safety legislation requirements that apply when the home is used for work activities. All employees should be located in their home environment. Any deviation from this requires Head of Service or Service Director approval and sign off.

### **Portable appliance testing**

- 9.2 You will be required to undertake regular checks (whilst unplugged) of all cables and equipment to ensure they are not damaged, frayed or otherwise of concern. If there is a concern please log an IT support ticket and discuss the problem with your line manager. Formal PAT testing must be completed in line with Council Guidance.

### **Electricity and fire hazard**

- 9.3 You should not leave any Council equipment plugged into the mains socket whilst unattended and should avoid daisy chaining extension leads into extension leads. You should also ensure removal of plugs are done safely. These measures should support the avoidance of fire hazards. You should avoid charging anything overnight and avoid leaving anything plugged in, on flammable material, eg soft furnishings, paperwork.
- 9.4 It is best practice to have smoke alarms fitted and to ensure they are tested and batteries are changed regularly.

### **Accidents and incidents, including slips, trips and falls**

- 9.5 You should review the location of any equipment whilst working from your home environment and undertake regular reviews and ensure cables are tidy, avoiding trailing cables which may result in slips, trips and falls.

### **Display Screen Equipment (DSE)**

- 9.6 You should complete a Hybrid Worker Display Screen Equipment checklist to review your home working arrangements and consider various aspects around seating, desk location, screen position, keyboard, lighting heating and reflection. This supports compliance with the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002.
- 9.7 The outcome of a DSE checklist will identify if additional equipment is recommended. As the sole purpose of this equipment is to enable employment duties to be carried out at your home environment, the Council would not expect any significant private use.
- 9.8 Please refer to the latest Health and Safety Policies which can be found on Aspire to ensure your compliance.

### **Disability / health conditions / pregnancy**

- 9.8 Should you have a situation which results in the need for additional support to work from home, we would ask you to explore this with your line manager and HR business partner. This may result in the completion of additional assessments and support to implement any recommendations. Where reasonable adjustments are in place for disability related reasons, these will not impact on opportunities regarding hybrid working and adjustments will be made available wherever the employee works.
- 9.9 If you have any underlying health condition, please ensure you have engaged with your line manager and HR business partner regarding support that is available and your home working arrangements.

## **10.0 Communication**

- 10.1 Whilst undertaking remote home working you must ensure regular contact with your line manager, team members and other colleagues.
- 10.2 You should ensure productivity expectations are understood.
- 10.3 Your manager will have plans in place for supervision.
- 10.4 You will be expected to join all video calls with your camera enabled.

## **11.0 Reporting of absence**

- 11.1 If you are unable to work due to illness or for any other reason, the absence reporting process must still be followed, in line with the Managing Attendance Policy. Failure to follow the absence recording process may result in disciplinary action.

## **12.0 Council Policies**

- 12.1 All Council policies will continue to be applicable to you whilst home working arrangements are in place.

## **13.0 More Information**

- 13.1 For any other questions or queries relating to home working you should contact your line manager or HR business partner.

Appendix A – Request for hybrid working

Appendix B – Hybrid working agreement

## Appendix A – Request for hybrid working

### Note To Employees

You can use this form to make an application to work from home.

It will help your manager to consider your request if you provide as much information as possible. It is important that you complete all the questions as otherwise your application may not be valid. When completing sections 4 & 5, think about what effect your change in working location will have on both the work you do and on your colleagues.

Your manager will have 28 days after the date of your application to respond to your request. If the request is granted, you will receive a separate letter outlining the specific arrangements that have been agreed.

### Section 1. Personal Details

Name		Employee Number	
Service		Location	
Line Manager		Date of Application	

### Section 2. Information to Support your Request

1. Describe your current working pattern (days/hours/times worked):

2. Describe the working pattern you would like to work from home:

I would like this working pattern to commence from:

3. Reason for Application

4. Impact of the new working pattern – I think this change in my working location will affect my team/colleagues/department/services provision/customers as follows:	
5. Accommodating the new working pattern – I think the effect on my team/colleagues/department/services provision/customers can be dealt with as follows:	
6. Care Arrangements (if applicable) – I have made the following arrangements to ensure that appropriate care provisions are in place during any agreed working hours from home.	
Signed	
Dated	

This form should be emailed to your line manager, with a copy to your designated HR Business Partner.

**Appendix B – Hybrid Working Agreement**



This hybrid working agreement sets out the temporary arrangements that have been agreed between:

Name of Manager:

and

Name of Employee:

**It is expected that you will be in the workplace between two and three days per week.**

The following activities should be completed from the workplace:

(Set out what tasks or activities you expect will be completed from the workplace)

The working arrangements we have discussed and agreed are:

(Consider the expected days in the office, whether a rota will be implemented, whether additional kit is required, how the employee will be supervised, what productivity levels are expected etc)

We will review the effectiveness of these working arrangements on a quarterly basis

Manager's Signature:

Date:

Employee's Signature:

Date: