

## Appendix C - Working from home - Guidance

Occasional working at home is a provision which allows employees in some areas and roles to carry out some or all of their duties at home on an occasional basis - it does not replace any other flexible working arrangement or reasonable adjustments that have been agreed.

This guidance should be read in conjunction, and as an addition, to the Council's Flexible Working Policy. The content will help managers to clarify expectations with their team where occasional working at home forms part of the flexible working offer.

Working from home (where the work/role allows) is encouraged across the Council. However, occasional home working is discretionary. Employees do not have the "right" to work from home and, if needed, are expected to attend on any given day - even if they had planned to work from home. Likewise the organisation cannot "require" an employee to work from home unless they are a contractual home-worker.

Working from home will always meet the 'Three Ps' criteria below, it must be:

- Planned
- Present
- Productive

**What the Three Ps mean in practice:**

Planned	Present	Productive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working away from office should be planned in advance with managers' approval.</li><li>• Employees need to be flexible about when they work away and avoid following a pattern. Individual circumstances should be looked at on a case by case basis, however employees must attend work at the office if required.</li><li>• Working from home days recorded in a google team calendar.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use dial in / google hangouts to join meetings.</li><li>• Be contactable during your working day. There should be a clear understanding of when the employee should work and be contactable.</li><li>• Work phones should be forwarded to mobile where possible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Expected outcomes of work agreed with manager beforehand.</li><li>• Should not be used as an alternative to other commitments, such as childcare. Can be used to work around commitments, such as picking up children from school.</li><li>• Individual arrangements for Working from home may be reviewed if productivity reduces.</li></ul>

## **Good practice when adopting ad-hoc/occasional working from home**

Managing employees when working from home compared to when they are in the office will inevitably be different but should not be more difficult. The role of the manager is to be clear on expectations, which includes the work that should be completed. Staff working from home should be contactable, for example, but they should not be expected to respond immediately to every email as this would not be expected in the office.

When working from home employees are trusted to work on their own initiative, plan and manage their own workload, and take responsibility for their health, safety and welfare.

Regular 'check ins' through About You, and raising concerns immediately with staff, will help managers to assess performance and productivity. As working from home (and working from other sites) becomes a regular part of how some areas work, managers will need to continue to focus on adopting measures of performance led by outcomes, rather than presence.

Managing employees who are not physically present in the office may seem daunting at first. Some key points for both staff and managers to bear in mind are as follows:

- Ensure that employees working from home are still included in all team announcements.
- Communicate effectively.
- Agree how work performance will be supervised and measured.
- Homeworking is, in part, intended to optimise the work/life balance of staff. This can only be attained when employees are trusted to manage their own time.
- Employees must confirm that they have a suitable work space and ICT equipment at the address they intend to work from. Any work taken home (e.g. paper documents) must be kept safe and secure.
- Employees must have appropriate antivirus and firewall software installed on any personal devices, and adhere to Internal and Email Policy as well as GDPR policies and guidance.

## **Data Storage**

Employees are often expected to work with confidential and sometimes sensitive personal data. This means that employees must provide assurance that their working environment does not compromise data security.

Employees must read Secure Handling and Transit of Paper Records Policy before taking any physical documents home to work with. This policy sets out the security measures that need to be adopted when transporting or storing papers off-site.

Employees must also read Use and Control of Portable Devices Policy which covers data held on portable devices and removable media.

Sensitive documents should not be printed from home, except in exceptional circumstances with prior permission from the line manager.

## **Withdrawal of Working from Home**

As mentioned previously working from home is not an entitlement. As such, where there are concerns surrounding performance, productivity, attendance or behaviour the arrangement to facilitate working from home can be withdrawn immediately.