

Working Arrangements Policy



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Version	Date	Detail	Author
0.1	12/01/23	Developed draft for consultation with Joint Trade Unions and Divisional Leads Working Group	Jen Skila/ Pete Buckley
0.2	02/02/23	Final draft following consultation with Joint Trade Unions and Divisional leads	Pete Buckley

1. Purpose

The Council comprises of a diverse set of workforce groups, with the way services are delivered varying across departments. This policy outlines the available working arrangement options when considering how colleagues undertake their roles and provides a framework to support leaders and their teams.

It is not intended to be prescriptive, and leaders should use their judgement to determine the most appropriate way for their teams to operate against the framework.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Derbyshire County Council except those employed in schools where the Governing Board is the employer, who are covered by the relevant policies for schools.



3. Context for Policy Development

Aligned to the Council's People strategy, our people ambition is to be an **employer of choice** and enable our people to be:

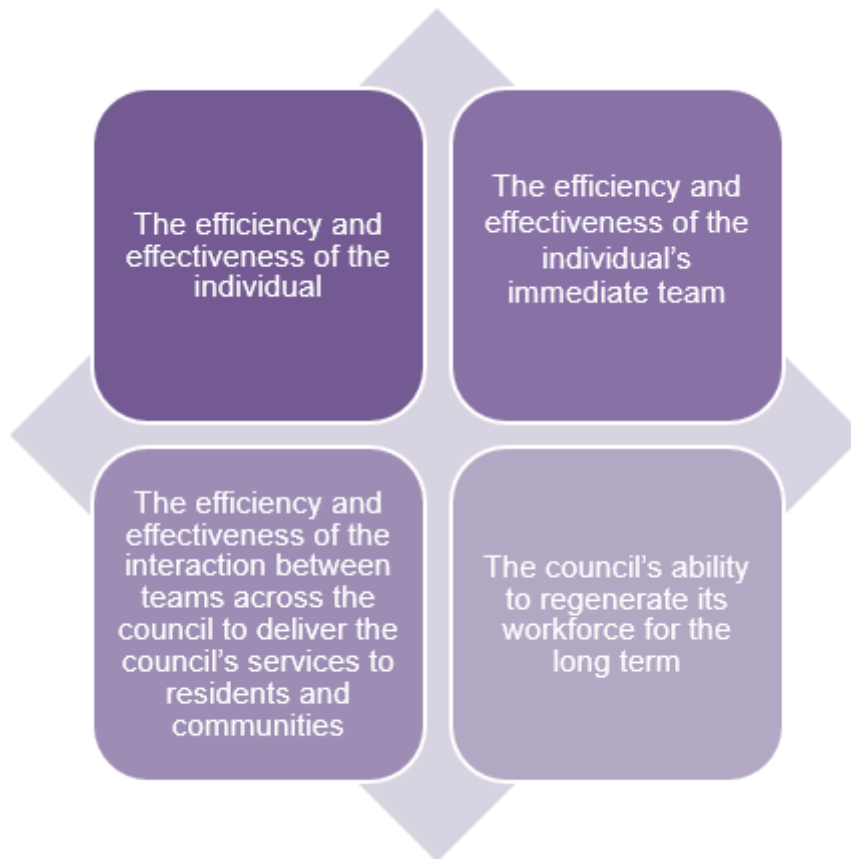
- committed and motivated, being proud to work for Derbyshire and valued for their contribution.
- high performing and engaged, being clear about how their role contributes to the organisation's success and having a voice to participate.
- empowered and challenged to lead at every level, to take opportunities, manage risk and learn from mistakes with regular feedback on their performance.
- valued and trusted to find the right solution based on their knowledge and that of our colleagues, our partners and our wider communities.
- energised to be responsible for their wellbeing and safety and that of their colleagues, supported to create enabling environments to succeed.

Our policy development work enables achievement of our people ambition.

4. Guiding Principles

The pandemic has significantly altered working arrangements across the organisation with many colleagues now working in a more flexible and hybrid way.

Derbyshire County Council is committed to enabling its colleagues to be the best they can be and values both the benefits that remote working has enabled, whilst remaining committed to in-person interaction. Our working arrangements will enable the right balance between the following four key elements;



By ensuring we remain focused not only on the immediate benefits to individuals and teams that flexible working can bring, we will realise the benefits of wider cross organisational working and ensure our workforce is fit for the future through a balance of both in-person and remote working.

As such, the guiding principles that will underpin our working arrangements are as follows:

- Our culture and associated working arrangements are built on **mutual trust**.
- Derbyshire County Council will support employees to adopt working arrangements that are **operationally viable** and enable us to **meet business/service needs**.
- The Council recognises the importance of **flexibility**, the need to reduce our **carbon footprint** and the importance of personal **wellbeing** in delivering its services to residents and communities. The Council must also ensure that it is able to continue to develop its workforce over time through the **mutual understanding, experience and resilient connections between people** which come from interaction in person.
- All working arrangements should be **agreed with an employee's line manager**.

- All employees are expected to work from a **safe** and **enabling** space (whether onsite or working remotely) and will have a **defined contractual work location**.
 - All employees can access and work from **technology enabled workplaces** across the county, considering the most valuable, effective and efficient method of meeting when needed whilst also considering the development of our colleagues.
 - All employees can **reside both within and outside** of Derbyshire (within the UK) but should be **visible and accessible both physically and virtually** to ensure we deliver the **best outcomes** for our residents and communities.
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5. Our Employee Profiles

Working arrangements will be based on employees being considered fixed-base, field-based and flexible. In exceptional circumstances, employees may be home-based. The employee profiles will align to roles and role requirements.

Our Employee Profiles

Fixed Base employee:

- Fixed-based employees have a specified fixed base that they have to work from as their duties are linked to a base location.
- This base is considered to be their defined contractual work location.
- Employees are required to be based at a specified location on full time contracted basis and are unable to deliver their role from home or remotely.

Flexible employee:

- Flexible employees can work from a range of workplaces including working from home in accordance with the needs of the organisation, known to many as hybrid working.
- Employees will have a nominal base or defined locality area within the county and will be expected to work from this for part of their working week. This will be considered their defined work location/locality.
- This working arrangement must be agreed between an employee and their line manager and be operationally viable and enable business/service needs to be met. Such arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis and adapted as required.

Field-based employee:

- Field-based employees will have a defined contractual nominal base location that they will attend infrequently and employees will usually travel from home to work in a variety of different locations dependent upon the activity being undertaken.
- Some field-based employees will have a contractual fixed base location that they are required to report to at the start and/or end of their working day but the nature of their work still requires them to travel and undertake duties at a variety of locations dependent upon the activity being undertaken.

Home-based employee:

- Home-based employees will carry out their duties at home. Home-based employees will also have a nominal base that they may be required to attend.
- Remote home-based roles must be considered in conjunction with the Director of Organisation Development and Policy prior to Executive Director approval.
- Such requests will only be considered where there is a legal obligation to consider flexible working and/or aligned to the Equality Act, or where this supports a genuine business need.

All Derbyshire County Council employees will have a defined contractual work location based within the county.

6. Determining working arrangements

Working arrangements must be agreed between an employee and their line manager, be operationally viable and enable the service operating model to be delivered.

Such arrangements should be reviewed on a regular basis and adapted as required.

Managers should consider the following when determining working arrangements aligned to their service operating model with employees:

- Does the employee have a suitable workplace at home in line with the guidance outlined in section 8 and the Working From Home risk assessment?
- How is the employee's physical and mental wellbeing?
- Is the employee new to the organisation or role and would benefit from more regular office / peer working to support their development? Does it matter where certain role responsibilities are carried out in the short, medium, long term?

- What office equipment is required to deliver role responsibilities and does this restrict the employee's ability to work from home? What support and any required reasonable adjustments can be offered?
- How often does a group of team members need to work collectively/collaboratively on role responsibilities or come together for development and peer learning/support?
- To what degree is input from others needed to deliver role responsibilities?

Employees can reside both within and outside of the county. Employees will be expected to attend their contractual base as required at their own cost in line with the Council's travel claim guidance.

Employees cannot work outside of the UK permanently. However, in exceptional circumstances permission to work overseas for a short, temporary period may be given by the relevant Executive Director.

7. Expectations for flexible employees

Flexible employees are not home-based. Colleagues are typically expected to spend a minimum of one day per week averaged over time, at their nominal base or a defined locality within the County.

It is recognised that that no week is the same for many colleagues and as such, some weeks colleagues may have a higher physical presence in the workplace than others. Similarly, business/service need may dictate the need for colleagues to spend all of their working week in the workplace at times.

Managers have autonomy to determine their service operating model to ensure the most effective delivery of the service. Managers will seek to balance the flexibility of employees and service need, engaging with team members to take into account employees perspectives. However, it is reasonable for a manager to ask an employee to come into the workplace both in line with the service operating model and in addition to usual working arrangements when required.

Attendance at an employee's base may also be for a part of a day, supporting efficiency and productivity whilst also enabling work life balance, providing the needs of the service and the responsibilities of the role are met. Defined 'office cover', both in-person and remotely, may also be required for some services to ensure business need is met.

Aligned to the guiding principles for this policy, collaboration and social interaction is key to enabling the right balance between the four key elements outlined in section 4.

It is an important aspect of employee wellbeing and the opportunity for regular face to face support and dialogue should be incorporated into individual, team and cross-organisational working arrangements. The following in person activities will apply as a minimum:

- Monthly 121s/supervision
- Monthly team meetings
- Regular opportunities for collaboration and networking
- Induction and onboarding of new team members
- Team/individual development

Flexible employees are required to undertake a working from home risk assessment and DSE assessment and discuss this with their line manager.

Employees are expected to dress appropriately for the meetings and interactions planned and aligned to the responsibilities of their role. Managers should support employees to clarify expectations when considering an employee's role and stakeholder expectations

8. Wellbeing support

The Council's wellbeing strategy and associated wellbeing policies and guidance aim to create a healthy and safe working environment as well as a healthier, happier and more productive workforce. Advice to employees on maintaining their mental and physical wellbeing along with access to wellbeing support is available on Our Derbyshire.

To support our new working arrangements, we have produced additional guidance (working from home, working from a flexible office workspace and wellbeing guidance) and a risk assessment to support working at home. These are all available here.

When considering working arrangements, all employees are expected to ensure suitable breaks are accommodated within their working day aligned to the Working Time Directive.

In the main, meetings should not be back-to-back, and leaders and employees are empowered to take suitable breaks between meetings to support colleagues with their diary planning and wellbeing. Where possible, meetings should be held between 09:00 and 17:00 however in exceptional circumstances meetings may be required outside of these hours in line with the Council's flexi-scheme as appropriate or when considering shift/rota patterns.

All employees are encouraged to remain active and plan wellbeing time within and around their diary commitments. In addition, employees are not expected to work

during annual leave and leaders are expected to monitor this and should discuss this with relevant team members if this occurs.

The Council continues committed to our flexible working policy and will support those with caring responsibilities. Our Employee Leave Scheme and Flexible Working Guidance should be considered in conjunction with this policy.

9. Tools for the job

Office workspaces will be equipped with:

- monitor (adjustable height)
- cables to connect the monitor to a laptop
- laptop riser
- keyboard
- adjustable chair
- mouse
- USB hub (to accommodate a mouse, headset and keyboard)
- network cable connected to the USB hub

Expectations for the use of shared workspaces can be found on Our Derbyshire.

Flexible employees will be provided with the following standard equipment:

- Laptop
- Monitor
- Laptop Riser
- Mouse
- Keyboard
- Headset
- Mobile Phone (dependant on role)
- Any other equipment identified through a DSE assessment.

Employees must take care of any equipment provided and regularly review it for suitability. Portable appliance testing will be available for all electrical items provided by the Council.

Equipment will remain as council property, and employees should notify their line manager and the ICT helpdesk of any faults with the equipment. Equipment that resides at home remains the property of the Council and is only available for personal use as outlined within the ICT Acceptable use policy.

Managers must ensure the [Equipment Loaned form](#) is updated and maintained throughout employment for their team. If employees need any additional equipment, they should discuss this with their line manager. As part of the Council's leaver process, all equipment provided for by the Council must be returned as per process and the equipment loaned form completed and stored on the HR file on EDRM.

The Council will not reimburse the costs of gas, water, electricity, internet or telephone charges incurred when working from home.

10. Insurance implications for flexible workers

Employees should contact their insurer if they are unsure if their policy covers them for intermittent working at home. All insurers have different positions on this, however, many have added homeworking automatically to their policies.

Council owned equipment is insured under the Council's insurance policy subject to £250 excess per incident. There are some conditions of cover:

- Whilst being transported in vehicles, computer equipment should be locked in the boot out of sight
- Computer equipment must not be kept in vehicles overnight
- Theft of equipment from the home is only covered where there is evidence of a forcible/violent entry to/from the premises. Walk in thefts are not covered, and neither are unexplained disappearances.

Employees are asked to ensure the security of Council equipment to the best of their ability. If an incident arises, please report this to your line manager and to the risk and insurance section immediately so that a claim can be set-up. riskandinsurance@derbyshire.gov.uk.

11. Information security

Irrespective of the type of working arrangement, all employees must comply with the Council's Information Security responsibilities including undertaking the Information Governance eLearning on an annual basis.

We have a responsibility to ensure that person-identifiable information is held securely and that confidentiality is respected and safeguarded.

Employees are responsible for the security of sensitive paper records or information in their possession. Employees should:

- Remove and return records to their proper location in a secure container, preferably a lockable bag or container - loose bundles of paper, open-top carriers and plastic bags are not acceptable.
- Lock papers away securely and treat them in the same way that personal valuables would be looked after. Ensure that other people for example in the household do not have sight of or access to any confidential or sensitive information.
- Ensure that equipment and work related personal or sensitive information is not left unattended.
- Take all work-related personal information to a council work base for confidential disposal - never dispose of it in household waste or recycling bins.
- In accordance with the Safe Haven Guidance, a formal record should be maintained of all files that are removed from the office.

Any potential risk to security or confidentiality, must be immediately reported to the Council's [Service Desk Online](#).

12. Failure to comply with the policy

Directors will be responsible to ensure all employees and line managers comply with the terms outlined in this policy.

Where a manager or an employee refuse to comply with this policy, advice should be sought from the HR Advice and Support Team in the first instance. Managers will be supported to seek remediation where possible however this may result in action under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure.