



# Ways of Working Policy

## 1.0 Overview

- 1.1 This policy applies to all staff of Adur and Worthing Councils. It sets out the standards for working arrangements to benefit the Councils, their staff and customers.
- 1.2 This policy has been developed from a position of trust acknowledging that all staff members work hard and our ways of working should support us in achieving the best outcomes for the residents of Adur and Worthing.
- 1.3 All members of staff have the duty of familiarising themselves with the Ways of Working Charter outlined in point 10 of this policy ensuring understanding and complying with the standards set out. Non-compliance will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy.
- 1.4 All employees have the responsibility for adhering to this policy. Individual areas of responsibility are:
  - **Corporate Leadership team** – overall responsibility for ensuring that working arrangements are managed appropriately in accordance with Council policies and publishing/promoting the adoption of this policy across the Councils.
  - **HR team** - reviewing this policy to ensure it is effective.
  - **Managers** – the day-to-day management of working arrangements, ensuring staff under their supervision comply with working time regulations, ensuring they comply with the Ways of Working policy, the Ways of Working Charter, responses to flexible working requests and ensuring compliance with this policy.
  - **Employees** - familiarising themselves with, and ensuring that they comply with the Ways of Working policy and adhering to the Working Time Regulations with respect to weekly working hours and rest breaks.
- 1.5 This policy should be interpreted in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010 and shall be applied fairly and consistently to all staff.

## 2.0 Work Styles

- 2.1 All Adur and Worthing staff are assigned one of the below 'work styles' deemed suitable for their role.

- 2.2 **Fixed Work-style** - The fixed worker will be one who works from a single office location. Staff will work from any desk designated for fixed workers unless they have an exceptional reason for staying at the same desk as agreed with their manager (i.e. specialist equipment that cannot be moved).
- 2.3 **Flexible Work-style** - A flexible worker will be one who works from a variety of locations in order to meet the obligations of the role in an efficient and effective manner. This flexible work style aims to reduce the amount of travel and its detrimental time and environmental impact. The locations of work may be any of the council's sites and are subject to appropriate risk/data security assessments, other locations agreed in advance, such as the worker's home or other designated Council building. Staff will be able to work from any desk designated for flexible workers specific areas will be available for flexible workers. Discussion between employees and their line manager may take place to ensure the needs of the service are being met.
- 2.4 **Mobile Work-style** - A mobile worker may be a member of staff who has to undertake on-site inspections and other field based work from any location to meet the obligations of the role in an efficient and effective manner using, where appropriate, portable technology to support the works. This includes those workers who are based at one of the Council locations, but do not require a desk. If a mobile worker is going to work at other locations, such as the worker's home or a designated Council hub, this should be agreed in advance with the line manager.

### **3.0 Changes to Work Styles**

- 3.1 Flexible or mobile working arrangements may be suspended for short periods for operational reasons e.g. to cover staffing in the office or specific project.
- 3.2 Flexibility including the option to work from home will normally cease where:
- (a) Staff are receiving support for performance management.
  - (b) Staff that have a formal warning under the disciplinary procedure.
  - (c) Staff are receiving temporary close supervision in order to obtain data on work output .
  - (d) Where advice from Occupational Health indicates that home working is not appropriate.
  - (e) Where the needs of the service cannot be met through home working.
- 3.3 The Councils reserve the right, at any time, to reconsider the work-style under which a member of staff works, in line with the procedure available on the intranet.
- 3.4 A manager may also discuss and review arrangements for working from home where an individual's working pattern is having an adverse impact on other team members. This may include people coming into work for operational needs.

- 3.5 A pattern of work agreed by a manager can be as detailed or general as the manager determines, at their absolute discretion, to ensure that the needs of customers and the service are met as ensuring clarity for the member of staff.
- 3.6 For any formal requests to contractually change working patterns, please see the Flexible Working policy available on the intranet. Where a contractual arrangement applies and the work style requires reconsideration this will be undertaken in consultation with the individual.

## **4.0 ICT and other equipment**

- 4.1 The Councils will ensure that staff are given the appropriate equipment, defined by the work-style and as necessary to ensure service delivery.
- 4.2 If a flexible or mobile worker is unable to access appropriate ICT systems from their place of work (if not in a Council office) they must communicate this position immediately to their line manager and work on something that does not require IT or come into the office/another location where they can access IT.
- 4.3 If faults arise on Council equipment when working at an external location, it is expected that the member of staff will bring the device to the IT Service Desk.
- 4.4 ICT policies apply to all workers, wherever they may be working. Staff members are expected to maintain the same standards of security of information, system security and security of equipment regardless of their location of work. This includes the Councils' policies on the Data Protection Act , GDPR and the Freedom of Information Act.
- 4.5 Flexible and mobile workers who transport equipment (e.g. laptops, mobile phones) should not, as far as practicable, leave this unattended in vehicles. This applies to sensitive paper records, which should only be taken from Council offices where required for work and should be kept secure and never left unattended. Confidential waste must be disposed of in the appropriate bags/bins at a Council building. For further information, see the Information Security Policy. ([LINK](#))
- 4.6 The line manager will ensure that all equipment supplied is returned to the Councils when the member of staff leaves their employment or moves post, or at such other time as may be required by the Councils.
- 4.7 Working from home requires a working connection to the internet. If any member of staff does not have a suitable desk or chair at home, it will be up to the line manager to consider whether they are in a position to loan these items of furniture for the purposes of flexible or mobile working. If the manager is not in the position to loan the items required, the individual can choose to invest in the necessary equipment that will enable them to work from home or can choose to come into their designated office to work.

## **5.0 Working from home and care for dependants**

- 5.1 Employees are trusted to work from home in an environment that is free from distraction. As such, individuals are not permitted to work from home whilst undertaking any child/dependant care or carer's responsibility which would prevent them from working at usual productivity.
- 5.2 Abuse of this rule will be dealt with under the disciplinary policy and procedure.
- 5.3 Managers may require their staff to confirm their dependant care arrangements where these apply.

## **6.0 Health and safety and risk assessment**

- 6.1 Line managers have a responsibility to ensure that a health and safety risk assessment is undertaken for each member of staff in relation to the work-style, practices and location of their work.
- 6.2 A health and safety checklist is available on the intranet and must be completed by the line manager prior to an individual commencing working from home or at a non-council location.
- 6.3 Staff have a responsibility for implementing any actions identified in order to reduce/mitigate risks to make their work environment safe. The line manager should take reasonable actions to ensure the member of staff has implemented any actions identified.
- 6.4 Line managers should review health and safety on a regular basis and it should be discussed frequently during one to one meetings. Where there are concerns, appropriate advice should be sought. This may include staff being assessed by a trained workstation assessor/Occupational Health practitioner to outline specific equipment needed (e.g. special computer mouse, or a specific type of chair).
- 6.5 For any accidents that occur in the workplace (which includes the home or any temporary workplace if the accident is work related), the member of staff should report this to their manager. In these circumstances, the line manager should inform the Safety and Resilience team immediately and (if this was not done at the time of the injury) complete an Incident Report Form based on the information given.
- 6.6 Where staff are visiting clients/sites etc., the line manager and individual must ensure that an appropriate lone working risk assessment is undertaken and appropriate measures implemented in line with the Councils' Lone Working Policy.

## **7.0 The Office**

- 7.1 It is important that teams are contactable during the hours that members of the public or a colleague could need to contact the team. The line manager will ensure appropriate cover in the office to ensure the needs of the service are met. Our Customer Contact Centre receives

telephone calls from customers between 0900 and 1700 Monday to Friday, so line managers will ensure that their teams log onto soft phones at the start of each day and that phone cover is maintained until 1700, including at lunchtimes. Line managers will also ensure that their teams provide and update phone numbers, including mobile numbers, in corporate telephone directories and that team hunt groups are updated whenever a change to the team occurs.

- 7.2 Each flexible/mobile worker will be allocated a designated building, which is deemed to be their place of work when not working from home or at other locations. Each team is allocated a ‘zone’ – an approximate area where team members can work together.
- 7.3 The Councils will provide staff with appropriate work stations and equipment at their designated buildings. This includes limited filing space in team zones. Managers are responsible for deciding what is stored in these units but it should typically be files and resources that are accessed regularly. The Councils have a Document Retention Policy that should be referred to when storing or archiving any papers.
- 7.4 When working in the designated building, the flexible/mobile worker will be required to use whichever convenient workstation is available. No worker has the right of exclusive use of a particular workstation apart from if a member of staff has been allocated a fixed workstation.
- 7.5 Workstations should be cleared before a worker leaves the office for any period in excess of three hours (including overnight) and materials should not be stored on the nearby floor, window sills or tops of cupboards as this could give the impression that a workstation is in use. Items left on workstations will be removed and/or disposed of. Workstation dividing screens should not be used to display materials; any materials attached to them may be removed and disposed of to enable effective hot desking.
- 7.6 All kitchens will be kitted out appropriately for staff use. As such, staff are not permitted to have personal kettles/microwaves/toasters/fridges/appliances in their zones.

## **8.0 Paper-light practices**

- 8.1 It is expected that there is limited need for staff to work with paper documents. Printing should be minimised whenever possible and paper documents should be scanned and filed electronically as soon as possible.
- 8.2 Work related documents should not be stored in personal lockers. These documents should be stored electronically or filed in a prescribed location so that they are accessible by other members of staff if required.
- 8.3 No printing must be made in colour unless absolutely necessary and any printing of over 50 pages should be sent to Arun District Council as it is less expensive for the Councils and does not hamper other workers requiring the use of the printer/scanner.

## **9.0 Insurance and liability**

- 9.1 Staff are covered by the Councils' insurance policy for employer's liability and personal accident in the same way whether they are office based staff or not.
- 9.2 Equipment supplied to flexible/mobile workers is covered by the Councils' insurance arrangements, providing it is used for work purposes only, and in line with the manufacturer's instructions.
- 9.3 It is the responsibility of those who work from home to contact their own insurance company, landlord and/or mortgage provider to advise that they will be working from home.
- 9.4 The Councils will not reimburse any increase in insurance premium, utility bills or the payment of Council Tax.

## **10.0 Ways of Working Charter**

- 10.1 This charter outlines expectations of working. Underlying all these expectations is the principle of respect for colleagues, recognising the unique skills and qualities each and everyone brings to the organisation.
- 10.2 All staff agree to:**
- Take care of their health, making sure they have completed a DSE workstation assessment.
  - Be contactable on their phone and emails when working regardless of their place of work.
  - Ensure their contact details are up-to-date on the staff directory and in their email signature, including mobile phone numbers where applicable.
  - Keep calendars up-to-date with location and meeting details.
  - Attend meetings, training and provide office cover where needed.
  - Wear their ID card and ask to see another person's ID if they enter a secure area at the same time and are not wearing any identification.
  - Record their hours of work (electronically where possible) and ensure their manager has access to their timesheet.
  - Take action to mitigate any risks outlined in any Health & Safety or lone working assessments.
  - Abide by information and equipment legislation, such as, but not limited to, the Data Protection Act 2018 / GDPR, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Article 8 of the Human Rights Act 1998, The Computer Misuse Act 1990, The Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.
  - Abide by IT and Information Governance policies and take all steps possible to ensure confidentiality regardless of where they work.
  - Make use of the express meeting rooms to reduce office noise and not distract colleagues.
  - Bring in any IT equipment to an Adur & Worthing building for it to be PAT tested annually.
  - Report any accidents which take place during work time (regardless of location) to their manager.
  - Not use mobile phones in a situation that could cause risk (i.e. when driving or walking).

- Not use mobile phones, when having sensitive work related phone calls, in locations where you may be overheard.
- Wherever possible, not leave any Council IT kit or paperwork in their car.
- Not personalise any space in their team zone.
- Treat their colleagues and workspace with respect - this means:
  - Not eating smelly food at their desk
  - Cleaning any desk/meeting room they use before leaving so it is tidy & clean for the next person
  - Ensuring they leave the kitchen tidy after using it (i.e. putting mugs in dishwasher/washing up)
  - Scanning large documents at quieter times of day to not block others from using the printer
- Support paper-light practices by printing as little as possible.
- Scan paper documents wherever possible to cut down on physical storage space needed.
- Recycle any paperwork no longer needed in the confidential recycling bins provided.
- Reduce printing expenses by always printing double-sided (in black and white where possible) and by sending any printing over 25 pages to Arun District Council.
- For any meeting over an hour, use a bookable meeting room, not an express meeting room where possible.
- Store any small specialist equipment in their personal locker when not using it.

### **10.3 Additionally managers agree to:**

- Have one to one meetings at least quarterly with those they manage, regardless of working style. This is to check in with their well-being, discuss work issues and monitor performance towards objectives.
- Regardless of work location, give the team regular feedback and put in place ways of communicating with them (e.g. bulletins, team briefs, team meetings).
- Monitor the hours their team work to ensure they comply with working time regulations.
- Ensure health and safety and lone working assessments are done with all team members who are flexible or mobile workers.
- Ensure all their team have completed a DSE workstation assessment.
- Ensure IT kit is returned to the IT team when a member of staff leaves their team or the organisation ensuring that document ownership is correctly reallocated.
- Determine how filing space is allocated in their team zone and take responsibility for arranging regular 'clear out' days to reduce the amount of paper stored.
- Ensure staff complete all mandatory e-learning training.
- Determine and review working patterns and practices in the team with fairness.
- Ensure work styles and practices are used to enhance business performance.

Date agreed by Joint Staff Committee: 18th March 2019

Date policy formally adopted: 1st April 2019

Date for review: 3 years from formal adoption of policy (1st April 2020)