

Hybrid Working Policy

Updated home working policy

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1. Policy statement

Hybrid working is where an employee generally works from two locations, one of which could be home. We have roles that can be carried out mostly from home with some meetings happening in a Council office, we have roles that visit numerous locations with work also carried out at a regular office or home base and we have community-based roles that may also include work at a different location.

We recognise there are benefits for the Council and employees in hybrid working. This includes cost and carbon savings through a reduced office footprint, recruitment of talent from a wider pool of people and greater flexibility and autonomy for employees in managing work demands and other commitments.

Hybrid working will not be open to all roles. Where a job role needs to be carried out in full at a Council location, other location or in the community then there will be no opportunity for hybrid working.

Where hybrid working can be offered, the time working from a home location and in a work location will be determined by business or job need. Employees will be expected to attend a work location to support relationship building, communication, problem solving, planning, training and induction.

Employees will have two work locations: Oxford and home. Work in Oxford may be at one or more sites depending on the role.

2. Scope

This policy and procedure applies to all employees working in a hybrid way.

3. Context and Definitions

We have a number of different work profiles, covering all employees.

Work profiles

Four types of work profile are described below. These are broad definitions. Individuals will agree working arrangements with their manager as job needs will vary, along with individual needs and preferences. Although the frequency of work time in Oxford will be different from role to role, what is certain is that we believe it is important for all employees to attend work in Oxford.

There will be a consistent approach for roles with similar demands.

Fixed

Work is carried out at a specific location because of job requirements, personal choice or personal need. There is one work location at a Council building or office and this is fixed. There is no hybrid working and so this policy does not apply to this group.

Flexible Office

The majority of work can be carried out at any suitable work location and this can include home. There will be a need to attend Oxford to carry out service delivery

and/or attend meetings or events where it is best to do them in person. Time in a Council office can be used to stay in touch or collaborate with colleagues and, for some roles, it will be necessary to meet customers, external partners or contractors at a work location.

Field Based

Work is carried out off site at different locations but there is a need for a work space at a suitable location for desk-based work, which could be at home or at an office location.

Community Based

Work is carried out in community settings with regular in-person contact with customers, partners, contractors and team members. There is still a need for access to a work space which could be in the community or at home depending on the job.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

Employees

- You must complete a DSE (display screen equipment) work station assessment for your main work base and talk to your manager if you need to make any adjustments or need any equipment.
- You will need to comply with our data protection policy whether working at a Council location or at another work base, such as home.
- You will need to make clear your working hours and update your manager and team if you need to change your normal pattern of work.
- Will take a break each day for at least 30 minutes after 6 hours of consecutive work
- Will have a daily rest break of at least 11 continuous hours, between stopping work one day and beginning work the next day

Managers

- Adopt a flexible and inclusive approach to managing teams and individuals to achieve an effective balance to meet both job requirements and individual needs and preferences.
- Set up processes to support effective communication and the setting of clear and achievable objectives and targets, making sure that working arrangements are reviewed and adapted as necessary.

5. Visits to the employee's home

As a condition of home working the Council may wish to attend an employee's home for health and safety reasons, such as to follow up on a risk assessment for example, or to install, maintain and service its equipment. Visits would only occur where necessary and practicable by advance agreement with the employee.

6. Equipment and materials

Equipment will be provided for employees to carry out work at home or in the field in line with job requirements. This may include office furniture such as a suitable chair.

It is the employee's duty to ensure that proper care and security is taken of any equipment and materials provided.

Employees must return all equipment to a Council office on leaving employment unless it is not practicable, for example with office furniture.

On termination of the employee's employment for any reason, the Council may wish to attend an employee's home having exhausted all other options on reasonable notice and retrieve all equipment and documents belonging to the Council that have not already been returned.

Anyone working at home must not allow members of their family or third parties who are not employed by the Council to access or use the Council's equipment.

7. Expenses

The Council will not pay any allowance for employees to work from home except to those who have a protected entitlement to a homeworking allowance as at 31st March 2022 as outlined in the collective agreement effective from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2024. The working from home allowance will be reviewed as part of the Pay and Grading Review.

As the Council provides a mobile phone for employees who are mobile or who work from more than one location, it will not be possible to claim the cost of calls on other devices.

Travel expenses may not be claimed for travel to an individual's work base in Oxford even if the majority of work is carried out at another location such as home. All employees are required to attend work in Oxford when required and this is not classed as a business expense.

8. Health, safety and well-being

The Council is committed to ensuring safe and healthy working practices at any work location. Managers are required to ensure that this includes the home if used for working and they must make sure:

- all work equipment and systems of work in the employee's home are safe
- all articles and substances for work use are handled and stored safely
- a home working DSE self-assessment of the employee's working environment is conducted
- information and training on the safe use of equipment, including display screen equipment, is provided
- additional risk assessments are carried out (when required) in respect of the work the employee is carrying out
- incidents, accidents and near misses are reported

9. Insurance

The home worker is responsible for checking that all home and contents insurance policies provide adequate cover for working from home.

The Council will not meet any additional insurance costs.

10. Contract

Where hybrid working is offered and accepted, this policy forms part of the contract of employment.

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be kept under regular review to ensure it continues to be effective and up to date.

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