

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

18 May 2011

FLEXIBLE WORKING, FLEXI-TIME AND JOB SHARE POLICIES

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present a harmonised flexible working policy, flexi-time policy and job share policy which will replace the current Ways of Working policy and toolkit.

Background

2. Wiltshire County Council introduced the Ways of Working (WOW) policy in 2006 (revised in 2008).
3. This policy was designed to modernise and introduce flexibility into the more traditional working arrangements prevalent at the time.
4. WOW was also adopted as the term for the ICT arrangements (e.g. cryptocards) required to enable people to access these new working arrangements.
5. Each of the ex-district councils also had their own flexible working policies.

Main Considerations for the Council

6. Since "WOW" was introduced the culture of the organisation has changed. In particular LGR and subsequent workplace transformation projects have led to flexible working becoming "the way we work".
7. The ICT infrastructure has changed to support this with the introduction of laptops, wifi internet connection and voice over internet phones.
8. A new suite of flexible working policies and toolkits have been created. These will replace the current "Ways of Working" policy and "Ways of Working toolkit" which are currently large single documents covering every type of flexible working arrangement.
9. The term "WOW" is no longer appropriate and will not be used within the new flexible working policy and will be phased out as ICT policies and procedures are updated.

Flexible working policy

10. The new “flexible working policy” is the main, overarching document which outlines the council’s approach to flexible working.
11. It is designed to support managers in taking a proactive, team based approach to flexible working, rather than reacting to individual requests, although there is still a process for individuals to apply to work flexibly.
12. This is based on the approach that all employees now work flexibly to a greater or lesser extent (for example sharing “team space”, hot-desking, accessing flexi-time etc.).
13. There is also a toolkit of guidance including:
 - Guidance for managers - Considering a flexible working proposal flowchart
 - Guidance for managers - talking to your team about flexible working
 - Guidance for managers – flexible working checklist
 - Employee form - Proposal for flexible working
 - Flexible working - One to one meeting format
 - Template letter – flexible working proposal agreed
 - Template letter – flexible working proposal declined
 - Flexible working – review meeting format
 - Guidance for managers - Equal opportunities in flexible working
14. Underpinning this are policies which outline and give further details about each of the main flexible working arrangements:
 - Flexi-time scheme
 - Job share
 - Home working
 - Term time working
 - Part time working
 - Compressed hours
 - Annualised hours
 - Time off in lieu
15. The flexi-time policy and job share policy are presented today, with the remaining policies currently being finalised and due to come to future JCC meetings, with the aim to have the whole suite of policies complete by October 2011.

Flexi-time policy

16. The flexi-time policy has been revised having taken into account both the current Wiltshire Council and ex-district policies.
17. The new policy is designed to be flexible around a set of key rules.

18. Managers will work with their teams to agree a flexi-time scheme which meets the needs of their service (agreeing whether the team works non-standard hours, whether there is a requirement for core hours etc.).
19. Managers may not alter the settlement period, debit and credit limits or break requirements outlined in the policy.
20. Following feedback from the unions the recording for training courses has been relaxed to enable employees to claim for additional hour where attendance on the course is a requirement of their role (rather than requested for self development).
21. The policy incorporates a transition period to enable ex-district staff to use up any accrued flexi leave, or to reduce their debit hours down, to come in line with the new policy. This transition period will run for three months from the effective date of this policy.

Job share policy

22. This policy has been revised having taken into account both the current Wiltshire Council and ex-district policies.
23. There were few differences between these policies and the main changes were to format and language.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

24. None.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

25. No negative impacts have been identified.

Risk Assessment

26. None

Options Considered

27. None

Recommendation

28. That Staffing Policy Committee agree this updated policy.

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The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report: None