

HINCKLEY AND BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

FLEXI TIME POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council recognises that flexible working is essential to the successful transformation of the organisations culture. Flexi time is one element of the Council's overall strategy for flexible working as it helps to increase employee motivation, reduce sickness absence, promotes employee wellbeing and also serves to promote recruitment and retention to the Council.
- 1.2 This policy is offered to staff with the intention of providing a degree of flexibility for employees and for the organisation. The aim is to ensure that individuals can achieve a healthy work-life balance and the Council can benefit from a wider time span of service delivery.
- 1.3 This policy should be read in conjunction with the council's Time off in Lieu (TOIL) policy.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for the consistent operation and monitoring of the flexi time scheme.

3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all staff working under the NJC Terms and Conditions of Employment and JNC for Chief Officers. Some employees however, whilst being eligible to participate in the flexi time scheme, will have restrictions on their working hours to ensure that services are delivered effectively to our customers i.e. shift work or fixed hours to cover front line services and therefore will not permit them to participate in the scheme. An individual's written particulars of employment will specify whether or not they are eligible to work flexi time.

4. Principles of Implementation

- 4.1 This policy is underpinned by the Council's values: Being your Best; Customer Focus and Team Working. The spirit of the policy is based upon trust and positive working relationships within teams to ensure effective service delivery.
- 4.2 As there are no core hours, managers will ensure that the needs of the service have priority at all times and that services are adequately staffed throughout normal office hours.
- 4.3 Employees should communicate their working hours to colleagues and use 'out of office' facilities on email and voicemail whilst away from office. This will ensure that service delivery is maintained.
- 4.4 The overriding principle with regard to the operation of the Flexi Time Policy is business need. Flexi time does not imply an automatic right to accumulate credit hours. Employees do not, for example, have the right to work early and stay late irrespective of whether or not work is available.

- 4.5 The employer has to comply with working time limits and ensure that workers who do flexi time do not exceed reasonable working hours. The council is committed to ensuring that workers' working patterns do not compromise their health.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 Each line manager is responsible for the proper operation of the scheme and for resolving any related problems.
- 5.2 Employees are responsible for managing their time and workload effectively.
- 5.3 Senior management in consultation with HR will regularly review the Flexi Time Policy in regard to its impact upon organisational objectives.

6. Operational details

6.1 Service cover

As there are no specific core times all employees must arrange, within their own teams and following approval of their manager, start and finish times in order to ensure adequate service cover. Periodically, there will be a need to change such arrangements owing to staff absences such as annual leave, sickness etc.

6.2 Flexi time hours - Bandwidth

Maximum bandwidth for flexi time will be 7.30am to 7.00pm hours for all staff except those specifically required to attend at other hours. If your manager asks you to work outside of this time then this will be on a TOIL basis or overtime where TOIL is not practicable. If you want to work outside of this time then this is subject to your manager's agreement. Support services such as IT support may not be available through the whole of the band width.

6.3 Lunch breaks

Full time staff **must** take at least a 30 minute break but may, subject to service cover, take up to a maximum of 2 hours. For part time staff, who work more than six hours a day a 20 minute must be taken.

6.4 Flexi time period

The scheme is based upon accounting periods, which for this scheme, is on a monthly basis. Within this period, employees may vary their hours; however it is intended that, by the end of the accounting period, employees are expected to have reconciled the actual hours they have worked with their contractual hours. During this period, the scheme allows for employees who have accumulated enough hours in excess of their contractual hours 'credit hours' to be accrued and carried forward or taken as flexi leave, subject to approval of the line manager. See conditions below.

6.5 Credit hours - carry forward restrictions

Any hours in excess of 15 hrs at the start of each month will be lost (if part time this should be pro rata, see addendum or contact HR).

If an employee is constantly in excess of 15 hrs and as a consequence loses those excess hours, the manager should investigate and if necessary, review the workload, objectives and working methods of the employee.

In certain circumstances managers may exercise discretion to allow employees to exceed the carry over limit. This is only limited to cases where employees have been prevented from using credit hours due to sickness and acknowledged work demands within the team.

6.6 Debit hours - carry forward restrictions

Where debit hours are built up (where an employee has not worked enough hours) this should not exceed by 10 hrs and should be recovered in the next month (if part time this should be pro rata, see addendum or contact HR).

If an employee is constantly in debit or exceeds the limit of 10 hrs the manager would require the employee to make up the deficit. Managers may tackle minor offences and discourage such behaviour. In exceptional circumstances, disciplinary action may be considered or the right to withdraw the scheme if the problem persists or the debit limits are exceeded beyond reasonable limits. At all times HR advice should be sought.

6.7 Flexi Leave

The credit hours can be used, subject to line management approval, to take flexi leave. Employees can request up to 2 full working day's flexi leave (or 4 working half days) per month. Any flexi leave request must also be balanced against the employees annual leave entitlement and line managers should ensure that annual leave is also taken throughout the year.

Staffing levels should also be considered before flexi leave is granted; particularly if teams have other staff working on other forms of flexible working arrangements that may have an impact upon capacity e.g. TOIL, compressed hours, home working etc. Annual leave and TOIL also takes priority over flexi leave if too many members of staff want to book leave at the same time. Credit hours must also be accrued prior to making a flexi leave request.

Flexi leave may be substituted for annual leave at a later date, subject to line manager approval.

6.8 Leavers

All debits and credits must be cleared before an employee leaves the authority. The Council does not pay outstanding credit hours as part of the final pay.

7.0 Recording Procedure

7.1 Recording hours worked

All employees participating in the scheme are required to record their actual start and finish times, lunch breaks and total hours worked on an electronic flexi timesheet. The timesheet must be signed (either manually or electronically) and submitted to their line manager who will check, monitor and counter sign at the end of each month.

Start or finish times which are away from an individual's normal work base (i.e. training course or meeting at another location) and, where the journey from home to the external location is greater than the journey from home to their work base, the difference in time taken should be recorded as travelling time.

Times recorded on flexi timesheets must be entered as soon as possible and should never be entered in advance.

A minimum of 30 minutes lunch break (if the contractual hours are full time 7 hours 24 minutes or more) or 20 minutes lunch break (if part time and working over 6 hours) must be taken and recorded each day.

7.2 Recording Absences

If you are absent from work due to sickness, annual leave or to attend training you must record your contractual hours for that day. If you leave work during your working day you must also adjust your timesheet to reflect your contractual hours for that day.

If additional hours are accrued over and above the contractual hours in order to attend a training course, this can also be recorded subject to the line manager's approval.

7.3 Other flexible working patterns

Where employees are contracted to a pattern under the Flexible Working Policy which means they may for example, be working compressed hours or variable working patterns, they should credit the appropriate pro rata hours for their contracted pattern.

7.4 Sickness Absence – Part Days

Employees who fall sick after starting work shall be credited with the remaining hours to make up to full contractual hours.

7.5 Medical Absences

The benefit of extending the hours of the scheme means that employees can make appointments to suit their own personal circumstances. Medical absences, such as visits to the GP, physiotherapy, dental, optician, chiropody appointments etc, should be taken in an employees own time and before or after working hours. When this is not possible appointments may be taken within normal working hours with the time to be made up by the employee.

Time off for ante natal appointments, hospital appointments/treatment which has been as a result of a formal occupational health referral or arising from a recognised disability (i.e. appointments relating to rehabilitation, assessment, treatment and counselling), shall be classed as work time within the scheme and therefore no time is to be made up. Paid time off will be granted for cancer screening. This is subject to evidence of such visits to be provided to the line manager in advance.

7.6 Bad Weather/Travel Problems

Employees who arrive late at work or have to leave early as a result of adverse weather conditions or travel related problems should record their actual start and finish times. In exceptional circumstances, when the building is closed early, management will exercise discretion to honour time lost as a result of the closure of the offices.

7.7 Emergency Leave

Emergency leave is designed to help employees deal with emergencies that are unforeseen and for short term absences only. To support our employees, the Council will grant up to one day's paid leave; this is subject to approval by the line manager. Wherever possible, managers should consider utilising excessive holiday accrual or flexi credit before granting the provision of one day's paid leave.

8.0 Monitoring of flexi time

The employee's line manager will monitor the employee's flexi time to ensure that:

- it does not result in overtiredness or underperformance;
- it continues to fit into the organisation's business needs;
- it does not place too much extra burden on his/her colleagues; and
- the employee is not abusing the flexi time arrangement.

The manager reserves the right to review and, if necessary, require the employee to change his/her working patterns.

9.0 Disciplinary action

Any abuse of this policy will be a disciplinary offence that can result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Appendix 1

Part Time Working

The same flexi rules apply to eligible part time staff but all entitlements should be calculated on a pro rata basis. Please see examples below.

Employee 1

Work 18.5 hrs per week which is 0.5 of a full time equivalent (FTE). Therefore they would be able to carryover a credit of $.5 \times 15 = 7.5$ hrs and a debit of $0.5 \times 10 = 5$ hrs

Employee 2

Work 25 hrs per week which is 25 divided by 37 (FTE) = .68 FTE

0.68×15 (FTE) = 10.2 the most credit to be carried over

0.68×10 (FTE) = 6.8hrs the most debit to be carried over

Please contact HR for further guidance