

## HOME WORKING GUIDANCE @ June 2024

The Council recognises that there are benefits to be gained, as an employer and for employees, by offering additional flexibility in where employees carry out their duties.

Working from home is the most common way of working remotely. In the Council, this is most likely to be as part of a Hybrid Working arrangement. (See [Hybrid Working Guidance](#)).

Where an employee, whose role has not been identified as suitable for hybrid working, requests to work from home on a one off or occasional basis, [Hybrid Working Guidance](#) should be followed to establish whether the request can be accommodated.

A small number of roles may be deemed suitable for full time Home Working, where an employee can carry out all work from a home base (although there may be limited scope for this type of working within the Council). This type of Home Working will “normally” be for the whole of the employees working week with minimal attendance “on site” and may be agreed for a temporary period or as a permanent change to the employees' contract.

This Guidance can be used by Managers and employees, who receive/make a request to homework, including formal requests from employees under the Council's agreed [Flexible-Working-Framework](#). Requests to work from home on a part time or ad hoc basis should be considered using [Hybrid Working Guidance](#).

### Who Can Be A Home Worker?

This guidance supports all employee groups in the Council in full-time, part-time, permanent and temporary posts, and their managers, where,

- the role has been identified as suitable to be carried out from a home base, or where
- employees/managers of employees who are contracted to work wholly or partly from a Council base, make/receive a request to work from a home base.

Due to the nature of some jobs, particularly those which require employees to provide a service in person to the public or client group, home working may not be appropriate.

Those employees currently classed as fixed base, hybrid or mobile workers may request or be requested to work from home on a temporary or permanent basis.

# Home Working Requests

## Requests from Individual Employees to Homework

A request to homework from an individual may relate to particular circumstances for example, employees who are returning from maternity, adoption, paternity or parental leave, employees who live some distance from work, employees who have been on long term sick leave and wish to ease their return to work and employees with specific domestic or other circumstances. Requests may also be received from new employees or employees changing roles internally.

NB: A formal request may not be required if a hybrid arrangement can be agreed via an informal discussion between the employee and manager.

All formal requests to homework should be made following an initial discussion with the manager, via the flexible working request process following guidance provided in the Councils [Flexible-Working-Framework](#).

Consideration of any request to homework will include an assessment of suitability for hybrid working/review of hybrid working patterns in the first instance.

Requests to homework will only be refused for genuine business reasons. Where a request is refused, the grounds for refusal must be at least one of those listed in the Employment Act 2002. The recognised business grounds for refusal are:

- burden of additional costs,
- detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand,
- inability to reorganise work among existing staff,
- inability to recruit additional staff,
- detrimental impact on quality,
- detrimental impact on performance,
- insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work,
- planned structural changes.

NB: Where an employee is requesting to work from home on an ad hoc or variable part time basis, managers should follow guidance for [Hybrid Working](#).

NB: Where an employee is requesting to work from home where home is distant/abroad, managers should seek guidance from People and Culture **before making any decision**.

## Management Invitation to Home Work

Under a review of the efficiency, effectiveness and economy of service provision, Managers may explore service delivery from home. This will involve considering new and existing posts for home working where this is expected to improve service delivery and/or makes financial savings. It is more likely, however, that this would be on a Hybrid basis.

## **Contract changes**

All requests to homework on a full-time basis must be approved by the Service Manager and/or nominated officer.

All requests to homework on a permanent basis will constitute an amendment to the terms and conditions of employment of the employee.

## **Managing Homeworkers**

Refer to [Hybrid Working Guidance](#).

## **Monitoring & Review**

Services will be responsible for monitoring and reviewing all individual home working arrangements by keeping detailed information on productivity levels, costs and issues arising from home working. This includes reviewing risk assessments periodically to examine if there are any significant changes to the individual home working situation.

The manager may review the home working arrangement at any time.

Reviews could include a change to or the cessation of the home working arrangement. The notice period required to change or withdraw the home working arrangement should be mutually agreed, however, where this is not possible, the [Periods of Notice](#) guidance will apply.

Where an employee wishes to review their homeworking arrangements, this can be done through informal discussion with their manager or via a formal flexible working request (within the statutory limit of 2 requests in any 12-month period).

All Council policies and procedures apply to employees who are home working. Any breach of Council policies and procedures may result in disciplinary action.

People and Culture will be responsible for reviewing guidance periodically and will establish any necessary systems to gather information to assist in this process.

***The Guidance should be considered in conjunction with the Councils Flexible Working Framework and related guidance/policies therein.***