

Title of Report:	Mobile and Flexible Working Procedure	Item 4
Report to be considered by:	Management Board	
Date of Meeting:	08 October 2009	

Purpose of Report: To secure approval by Personnel Committee for the implementation of the Mobile and Flexible Working Policy and Procedure.

Recommended Action: Personnel Committee are asked to approve the above procedure and associated documentation.

Reason for decision to be taken: As part of the implementation of the Timelord Programme HR have developed the above procedure and guidance for employees and managers to use. The application of which will ensure fairness and consistency in the management of flexible working.

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: None

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Plan Theme:

CPT14 - Effective People

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Plan Priorities and Themes by:

Providing a procedure and guidance for managers and employees in the management of flexible working under the Timelord Programme.

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Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	28 September 2009
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Implications

Policy:	Mobile and Flexible Working Procedure.
Financial:	There are no financial implications arising from this report.
Personnel:	This procedure and guidance is being proposed by the Head of HR.
Legal/Procurement:	n/a
Property:	n/a
Risk Management:	n/a
Equalities Impact Assessment:	An equalities impact assessment is being carried out with assistance from the Principal Policy Officer (Equalities).

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report follows the introduction of the Timelord Programme and the requirement for a procedure to provide a consistent framework for all phases of the Timelord Programme and beyond.
- 1.2 The requirement for this procedure came from the inception of the Timelord Programme. Prior to this mobile and flexible working was managed in an ad hoc manner and there was no formal HR guidance or policy.
- 1.3 A draft procedure was agreed for use in Phase 1 of the Timelord Programme at Turnhams Green by the Chief Executive which had been consulted upon.
- 1.4 The proposed procedure has taken account of comments from Heads of Service, managers, trade unions and employees.
- 1.5 The procedure has been revised in the light of Phase 1 of the Timelord Programme where a review was conducted by HR and appropriate changes were made.

2. Proposals

- 2.1 The Mobile and Flexible Procedure and associated guidance are proposed approval by Management Board and then authorisation by the Personnel Committee to be used in further phases of the Timelord Programme.

3. Conclusion

- 3.1 This procedure will provide appropriate guidelines for employees and managers to work in a consistent way under the Timelord Programme.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The completion of this procedure was brought about by the introduction of the Timelord Programme. It was recognised that a HR procedure was required to provide a framework for employees and managers regarding the responsibilities and standards of flexible working.

2. Consultation

- 2.1 Research was conducted into procedures used in other local authorities in order to benchmark the decisions taken by West Berkshire Council in terms of what standards needed to be included in the procedure.
- 2.2 An initial draft of the procedure was written which was consulted upon with the Timelord Programme Board, the Timelord Reference Group and the Timelord Focus Group. This was agreed to be used in Phase 1 of the Timelord Programme at Turnhams Green following approval by the Chief Executive under delegated powers.
- 2.3 A review of the procedure was taken following the implementation of Phase 1 of the Timelord Programme in June 2009. The review was undertaken with managers and employees involved in this phase, the trade unions and members of the implementation team.
- 2.4 Associated guidance is the Mobile and Flexible Working Policy, Guidance on Health and Safety and a Health and Safety Checklist in order to ensure that employees are working safely whilst they are working flexibly.

3. Key aspects of the Procedure

- 3.1 The Procedure covers a variety of topics setting out the principles and standards for flexible working. It includes sections on the definitions of the three workstyles; expected standards on hours of work, contact and cover, office environment and equipment; the procedure for approving flexible arrangements and changing circumstances; exclusions from flexible working; sickness and care for dependants; health and safety; and security and liability.
- 3.2 Following the review at Phase 1 it was identified that some amendments were required. As a result of consultation, Section 12, Management of Performance was amended and a new section, Section 11, Team Ethos was added due to the recognition that more attention needed to be paid to team identity and appropriate emotional support as well as the induction of new members of staff.
- 3.3 Changes have also been made to Section 15 of the Procedure which is Expenses and Allowances. Previously this gave an allowance to employees who worked 100% from home; however, after further consultation this has been removed as no employees will be allowed to work all their contracted hours from home.

4. Approval

- 4.1 A previous version of the procedure was approved by the Chief Executive by delegated powers in order to be used for Phase 1 of the Timelord Programme.
- 4.2 Endorsement was given by Corporate Board on 15th September 2009.
- 4.3 Following the review of the procedure it is recommended that Management Board approve the use of this procedure, subject to authorisation by the Personnel Committee.
- 4.4 A review of the procedure would then be undertaken every three years unless there is a need to revise the procedure earlier under the Timelord Programme.

Appendices

Appendix A – Mobile and Flexible Working Policy

Appendix B – Mobile and Flexible Working Procedure

Consultees

Local Stakeholders: HR consultation with Timelord Programme Board, Timelord Reference Group

Officers Consulted: As above

Trade Union: Rosemary Culmer (Unison), Dave Pearson (Unison), Eddie Hunter (GMB)



Mobile and Flexible Working Policy

Document Control

Document Ref:	HRMFW001	Date Created:	Sept 2008
Version:	3.0	Date Modified:	July 2009
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Owning Service			
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Corporate Director (Environment)	Sign & Date:	

Change History

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1			
2			
3			

This Policy is not for publication externally

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1. Purpose

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to support the Council's move towards more flexible ways of working for its employees in accordance with the Timelord Programme.
- 1.2. The Timelord Programme will allow West Berkshire Council to introduce a 'Smart Working' environment and practices which make better use of time, space and technology. This is expected to deliver a triple win for the organisation, its staff and its customers.
- 1.3. The Chief Executive and Corporate Board have approved the Flexible Working Policy for the pilot.

2. Applicability

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all non-school based employees working for the Council whose work location may be flexible.
- 2.2. Adherence to this Policy is a condition of working for the council or using its assets.
- 2.3. This Policy has been the subject of consultation with Heads of Service and Trade Unions and has been ratified by the Council's Corporate Board.
- 2.4. In this procedure the term 'working flexibly' covers 'home-flex' and 'free' working styles

3. Policy

- 3.1. It is the Policy of the Council to ensure that;
 - 3.1.1. All relevant jobs are assessed for the potential for flexible working at the point where new ways of working are introduced, under the Council's Timelord Programme. The assessment will determine whether the job is 'fixed', 'home-flex' or 'free'.
 - 3.1.2. All employees whose jobs are assessed as suitable for flexible or free working and are regarded by their line manager as a potential candidate for flexible working are offered the opportunity to work under the arrangements set out in 3.1.1 above.
 - 3.1.3. No existing employee is required to work flexibly if he/she chooses not to do so. For new employees, flexible working may be a contractual requirement.
 - 3.1.4. Flexible working arrangements are not normally approved until the employee has successfully completed his/her probationary period.
 - 3.1.5. Employees are provided with appropriate ICT support, including equipment, software, training and technical support and advice, as appropriate to their work style.
 - 3.1.6. Arrangements are in place to preserve continuity of all ICT systems on which flexible workers rely to carry out their jobs effectively.

- 3.1.7. Employees who work at home as part of their work style are provided with advice and information on appropriate insurance.
- 3.1.8. Employees who work from home will not be entitled to any allowances.
- 3.1.9. Employees working away from the office (at home or at other work locations) are contactable by telephone during pre-defined working hours.
- 3.1.10. All working environments (including the home 'office') are subject to a risk assessment to ensure the health and safety of relevant employees.
- 3.1.11. Council office locations will have adequate arrangements for 'flexi-desks' for employees who work flexibly, which may include laptop docking stations & workstations, meeting spaces, and any other requirements as agreed with the line manager.
- 3.1.12. Other specified Council workplaces may be identified throughout the district to provide 'touch down' spaces for flexible workers.
- 3.1.13. All employees working at home must have suitable child care/dependant care arrangements in place.
- 3.1.14. All equipment provided to support the employee working flexibly and/or from home is for the exclusive use of that employee (i.e. not for use by family/friends).
- 3.1.15. Managers and employees are provided with procedures, training and support, as necessary, to ensure that performance and conduct can be managed for non-fixed workers.

4. Implementation

- 4.1. This Policy will be supported and implemented by the development and publication of procedures and guidance.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1. The overall responsibility for the Flexible and Mobile Working Policy within WBC rests with the Chief Executive.
- 5.2. WBC has established the Timelord Programme to introduce new ways of working which will allow a reduction in accommodation use and an increase in the potential for flexible and mobile working for employees.
- 5.3. All managers are directly responsible for implementing this Policy and any related policies and procedures within their service areas, and for the adherence of their staff.

6. Failure to comply with WBC Flexible Working Policy

- 6.1. This document provides staff and others with essential information regarding flexible working and sets out conditions to be followed. It is the responsibility of all

to whom this Policy document applies to adhere to these conditions. Failure to do so may result in:

- withdrawal of access to relevant services
- informal disciplinary processes
- formal disciplinary action in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedure
- withdrawal of flexible working

7. Review

7.1. This policy will be reviewed to respond to any changes following the implementation of the pilot and at least every three years.

7.2. The Service responsible for reviewing and maintaining this Policy is Human Resources.

Other Relevant Documentation

Mobile and Flexible Working Procedure
Mobile and Flexible Working Information Standards
Checklist for Flexible Working Health and Safety



Mobile and Flexible Working Procedure	Reference:	HRFW002
	Version No:	3.0
	Issue Date:	July 2009
	Classification:	Procedure

Document Control

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Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
2.0	16/12/08	Inclusion of corporate standards	
3.0	01/07/09	Review following Phase 1 of Timelord Programme	

Related Documents

Reference	Title	Tier
HRMFW001	Mobile and Flexible Working Policy	first
HRMFW005	Checklist for Flexible Working Health and Safety	Third

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1. Purpose

1.1. This document sets out the procedure and standards for flexible and mobile working in West Berkshire Council.

2. Applicability

2.1. This Policy applies to all non-school based employees working for the Council, whose work style may be flexible.

2.2. This Policy will be applied fairly and consistently to all staff employed in the Council regardless of gender, race, colour, marital status, national or ethnic origin, nationality, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion, status or number of hours worked.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

3.1. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for ensuring that flexible working is managed appropriately in accordance with these agreed standards.

3.2. The Timelord Programme governance group is responsible for:

- Ensuring that there is effective consultation and communication on related matters.
- Publishing and promoting the adoption of this procedure and standards.

3.3. Line managers, under the overall direction of Heads of Service are responsible for:

- The day-to-day management of flexible working.
- Ensuring compliance with published flexible working standards, procedures, working practices and technology changes.

3.4 All relevant staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and ensuring that they comply with this procedure and standards.

4. Principles

4.1. All jobs will be assessed for the potential for flexible and mobile working at the point where new ways of working are introduced, under the Council's Timelord Programme. The assessment will determine whether the job is considered 'fixed', 'home-flex' or 'free' (see 5 below for definitions).

4.2. Employees whose jobs are defined as open to flexible working will be offered the opportunity to transfer to the appropriate work style. No employee who currently does not have flexible working arrangements will be compelled to work flexibly as they will have the opportunity to opt-out. Employees may request at a later date to transfer to 'flexible' or 'free' working.

4.3. Employees who work flexibly will be expected to do so on a permanent basis or until operational requirements are redefined. Because of the resources (ICT, accommodation etc) required to set up flexible working it will not be possible to allow employees to shuttle between 'flexible' or 'free' and 'fixed' working.

However, it is recognised that there may be exceptional circumstances where a manager may agree to a change back to 'fixed' working, and these should be assessed on a case by case basis (see 6.6, 6.7 and 6.8 below).

5. Definitions

- 5.1. **Fixed** work style – the nature of the work (e.g. acting as a 'hub' for the team or continuously responding to clients from a fixed building) dictates that work must be carried out at the office. Such workers will need to be office based.
- 5.2. **Flexible** work style – workers will have the flexibility to choose where they work based upon current objectives and requirements. There are two main types of flexible worker;
 - 5.2.1. **Home-flex** – workers who can work effectively for part of the week at home and would split their time between home and the office.
 - 5.2.2. **Free** – free workers may either be:
 - 5.2.2.1. Front-line staff working with the public for whom the majority of the working week is spent travelling/visiting clients and therefore need access to relevant applications irrespective of their location.
 - 5.2.2.2. Support Services staff or managers for whom the majority of their working week is spent visiting other sites or in meetings.
 - 5.2.2.3. When free workers are not out travelling/visiting clients then they will either work from home or come into the office.
- 5.3. In this procedure the term 'working flexibly' covers 'home-flex' and 'free' working styles

6. Procedure for approving flexible/free working arrangements

- 6.1. The line manager, in conjunction with the Head of Service, will determine which job roles may be carried out by working under a fixed, home-flex or free work style. This will normally be as a result of the roll out of new ways of working in accordance with the Timelord Programme, and following consultation under the Organisational Change Consultation Procedure.
- 6.2. Each employee whose job falls into a 'flexible' or 'free' category will be notified of the manager's assessment. Employees will commence the new working style under the terms of the WBC Flexible Working Policy and Procedure, (though this may be at a different work location) unless they chose to opt-out and remain fixed.
- 6.3. Where employees are already working flexibly, they will normally be expected to continue to do so, taking into account the provisions and guidelines of the WBC Flexible Working Policy and Procedure.
- 6.4. The line manager will meet individual employees, as necessary, to discuss the implications of transferring to flexible or free working, and will ensure that they have access to the WBC Flexible Working Policy and Procedure and any

associated guidance. HR or ICT can provide further information or answer specific queries.

- 6.5. Once this arrangement is in place, the employee will not normally be able to revert to his/her original working arrangements (but see 7 below). This is because of the significant up-front investment (time and resources) required to initiate flexible working arrangements.
- 6.6. In exceptional circumstances an employee who has chosen to work flexibly may be authorised to return to fixed working arrangements. The decision will be made by the Head of Service, with the advice of the line manager and will depend on the availability of fixed workspace.
- 6.7. Where the employee wishes to cease flexible working he/she must put their request in writing to their line manager giving the reasons. Where their former work space is not available the flexible worker may be transferred to another location where work space is available. Once the flexible worker has had a request to transfer to a fixed office base agreed he/she will not be entitled to apply for flexible working in the future, unless there are exceptional changes to circumstances or requirements.
- 6.8. There is no automatic right of return to the fixed office base and there must be sound reasons and change of circumstances that affect the employee's ability to work flexibly. The service area will incur any cost associated with the transfer to non-flexible arrangements. All relevant equipment will need to be returned by the employee to the service.

7. Exclusions from flexible/free working

- 7.1. The following employees will normally be excluded from working from home;
 - 7.1.1. Employees within the probationary period. This is normally a six month period commencing when the employee first begins work with WBC.
 - 7.1.2. Employees who are subject to formal support arrangements under the Performance Capability Procedure (i.e. following an investigation into alleged underperformance).
 - 7.1.3. Employees who are subject to a formal warning under the Disciplinary Procedure for a breach of this procedure or other relevant terms of their contract.
 - 7.1.4. Employees who are subject to temporary close supervision in order to obtain quantitative or qualitative data on work outputs.
- 7.2. In exceptional circumstances the line manager may, in conjunction with the Head of Service, determine that flexible working may commence or continue. This decision should take account of the operational needs of the service, the nature of the problem, and be subject to suitable management arrangements being in place.
- 7.3. Flexible working arrangements may be suspended for short periods for operational reasons, after consultation with affected employees.

7.4. Agency workers or students not employed by the Council will not normally be assigned as Home-Flex or be able to work from home. However, depending on the nature of the role, they may need to be mobile workers and the service will assess what equipment will be necessary for them to undertake the duties associated with the role.

8. Hours of work

- 8.1. Employees working flexibly must work their hours within the band specified in the Council's Flexible Hours Scheme ('flexitime'), unless the post specifically requires work to be carried out outside these hours or where alternative arrangements have been agreed with your manager subject to service provision. Work should thus be carried out between 7.00am and 7.00pm Monday to Friday.
- 8.2. Full time employees should always be at work between the core hours agreed by the service, and must take a lunch break of at least ½ hour between 12.00noon and 2.30pm unless agreed with their line manager.
- 8.3. For part time employees, the line manager and employee should agree the normal daily working hours during which period the employee should be contactable.
- 8.4. Hours worked should be recorded, preferably on an electronic time-recording spreadsheet, and submitted monthly to the line manager.
- 8.5. The line manager may agree with the employee reasonable 'time out' during core working hours in order to improve work life balance (e.g. to take children from school to an after school activity, walk the dog or attend appointments). This should be recorded in the employee's Outlook Calendar as non-contact time.
- 8.6. All employees have a responsibility to adhere to the Working Time Regulations (WTR) with respect to weekly working hours and rest breaks. Advice is provided by HR (see Guidance on the Working Time Regulations). Line managers should monitor the number of hours employees are working flexibly to ensure that WTR are not breached.

9. Sickness

- 9.1. Employees who are unable to work due to personal sickness should inform the line manager in accordance with the Reporting Absence Procedure, regardless of the location they are working from.
- 9.2. Sickness absence will be recorded in hours where the employee works part time or is able to work part of the day. Otherwise, it will be recorded in full days.

10. Contact and cover

- 10.1. All employees working flexibly should be contactable during their normal working hours or hours specified in their Outlook Calendar by the line managers and other officers of the Council. Where appropriate, they should also be contactable by customers/clients.

- 10.2. Contact should normally be via work mobile phone and officers should ensure that their number is available on the intranet. Employees working from home, or who are issued with a wireless handheld email device (e.g. BlackBerry) or '3G' card for their laptop, should also be contactable at their work email address via Citrix.
- 10.3. Arrangements should be made, for calls made to Council office lines to be forwarded to the flexible/free worker's work mobile telephone/BlackBerry.
- 10.4. All employees should keep their Outlook calendars up to date with their location and times of meetings and make them available to the whole team or service.
- 10.5. Agreed 'work life' time out (see 8.5 above) should clearly be blocked out in the Outlook calendar to indicate that the employee cannot be contacted during these hours.
- 10.6. Flexible workers may be required by the line manager to participate in a rota system to cover office hours or essential services such as customer help lines and duty systems. This requirement will be determined on a case by case basis in each workplace/team.
- 10.7. Flexible and free workers will be required to attend meetings, training, seminars etc. as appropriate to the job, and to provide reasonable cover for absent colleagues at the request of the line manager.

11. Team Ethos

- 11.1. Under flexible working arrangements it will be the manager's responsibility working alongside their team to ensure that they maintain team ethos. Managers will therefore need to consider;
 - 11.1.1. The use of effective communication which may include regular contact and supervisions, updates, team meetings, team breakfasts.
 - 11.1.2. Greater time devoted to team building and team activities.
 - 11.1.3. The induction of new staff members into the team including their socialisation into the team.
 - 11.1.4. Ensuring emotional support is available as required either through access to managers or through the introduction of a buddy system
 - 11.1.5. The creation of opportunities for team working, mentoring and training opportunities
- 11.2. Managers are able to access support and training in maintaining team ethos through training provided on managing a flexible workforce.

12. Management of performance

- 12.1. Managers must put in place arrangements to ensure that the performance of each employee can be managed effectively without continuous direct supervision.

- 12.2. It is recognised that under flexible working arrangements that performance management and regular contact is more important and therefore needs to be more planned and formalised. To do so managers should consider their arrangements in line with the Council's Employee Performance Management Policy and extend these as necessary. This could include;
- 12.2.1. Regular supervision meetings with the employee to discuss work issues, including progress towards objectives. These should occur at least once every 4 to 6 weeks, and give the manager and the employee the opportunity to raise any matters of concern.
 - 12.2.2. The use of updates between managers and employees in between supervision meetings through effective communication.
 - 12.2.3. The use of 'SMART' work objectives in appraisals and supervision meetings.
 - 12.2.4. A Personal Development Plan (PDP) which provides the employee with opportunities to learn and develop in the role, which is regularly reviewed with the manager.
 - 12.2.5. Regular feedback from customers and other data on work output (where appropriate).
 - 12.2.6. Effective communication mechanisms, such as newsletters, team briefs, team meetings, awaydays etc.
 - 12.2.7. Providing support mechanisms and a supportive environment to staff who find flexible working challenging.
- 12.3. Flexible and free working styles require employees to be well-organised and motivated, with clear objectives and timescales for achieving them. Thus the management of such workers must take into account the need for support, and training if necessary, to manage their own workload without direct supervision.
- 12.4. If the line manager has any concerns about the employee's conduct or performance, these should be raised as soon as possible with the employee. The line manager should consider with the employee whether any additional advice or support is required to help him/her to reach the required standards. Consideration should be given as to whether flexible/free working should be suspended after taking advice from HR.
- 12.5. Serious concerns about underperformance should be addressed through the Performance Capability Procedure. Allegations of misconduct should be addressed through the Disciplinary Procedure.
- 12.6. Managers and employees are able to access training, support and advice on the effective management of flexible working through the corporate training programme and HR.

13. Home working and care for dependants

- 13.1. Employees working from home must confirm their childcare/dependant care arrangements with their line manager, where these apply. Home-working must not be seen as a substitute for other childcare/dependant care arrangements, and

employees working from home should not do so whilst in sole charge of children/other dependants requiring care and supervision unless as an agreed 'time out' (see section 8.5).

14. Equipment

- 14.1. The table attached at appendix 1 outlines the ICT equipment (hardware, software and access) and office equipment that each different type of worker may require to support the working arrangements. The equipment provided by WBC will be in accordance with this table.
- 14.2. Where the Council provides a mobile phone/BlackBerry for business calls in the home or on the move this should only be used for business calls except in emergencies.
- 14.3. The Council's ICT service will provide support in accordance with their published service level statement which includes reference to flexible working.
- 14.4. The Council's ICT service is unable to support an employee's home PC or internet connection. The ICT service will provide support and advice to employee's working in Citrix. However, where an employee's home computer does not work and they do not have access to any other equipment they must contact their line manager who should advise them that they need to come into the office to work until the problem is resolved.
- 14.5. 'Free' employees who require a laptop or tablet to be provided by WBC must have broadband installed with a wireless router, in order to work from home. The ICT service will provide one-off support to employees to help with setting up the technology if this is required. Employees who do not wish to purchase broadband and/or a wireless router may not be allowed to work from home. Employees should not use Council-issued 3G cards to access the network when working from home.
- 14.6. 'Home-Flex' employees will require access to their own computer equipment and internet connection.
- 14.7. Equipment supplied by the Council is for business purposes. Employees should refer to the ICT Policy regarding the use of Council equipment for personal use for more information. The computer must not be used by anyone (e.g. members of the family, friends etc) other than the flexible/free worker.
- 14.8. Where Council owned equipment requires maintenance or repair, this must only be carried out by the Council's ICT Service.
- 14.9. For security and support reasons employees will not be provided with a home printer unless in exceptional circumstances a business case for home printing has been investigated and approved.
- 14.10. All WBC mobile workstations (Laptops/Tablets) must be connected to the WBC Network from a Council office at least once every month for an hour to receive updates and patches.

15. Expenses and allowances

- 15.1. Employees will not be entitled to any allowances for working from home.
- 15.2. Travel expenses will be paid in accordance with Council policy; therefore mileage is not payable when the flexible worker attends the designated office base. Any other mileage incurred should adhere to the regulations set out in the Council policy.
- 15.3. The cost of the subscription and calls/emails for Council provided mobile phones/handheld devices will be paid from the service budget. Telephone calls made on a home landline must be recorded in writing and claimed for using the WBC expenses claim form or MyView.

16. Health and safety and risk assessment

- 16.1. Most of the regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 apply to employees working at home as well as to employees working at Council accommodation (see Checklist for Flexible Working Health and Safety).
- 16.2. Managers have a responsibility to ensure that a health and safety risk assessment is undertaken by the employee concerned of the work area in the home to ensure that the work can be undertaken safely without endangering the health of the worker or their family.
- 16.3. The Checklist for Flexible Working Health and Safety should be completed as a joint exercise between the line manager and employee after reading the Health and Safety Guidance for Mobile and Flexible Working which is available on the intranet. Employees have responsibility for implementing any actions identified in order to reduce/mitigate risks in their home and to make their work environment safe.
- 16.4. Managers should be reviewing health and safety on a regular basis and should be discussed on a frequent basis during supervision meetings. Where there are concerns appropriate advice should be sought.
- 16.5. Any accidents whether they occur in the work place, whilst working from home or on a visit should be reported to your line manager as normal and recorded on WebRisk.
- 16.6. Employees with particular needs will be assessed by a trained work station assessor/occupational health. Recommendations will be made about specific equipment needed (e.g. special computer mouse, or a specific type of chair). If the cost of providing additional/specialist equipment for working at home is judged unreasonable, the Council may determine that the worker should be 'fixed' in the office. Prior to making this decision the line manager should seek advice from Human Resources.
- 16.7. Additionally, electrical equipment supplied by the Council should be regularly tested, in line with the annual frequency at the employee's designated office location.

- 16.8. Where employees are visiting clients/sites etc. they must ensure they make frequent contact with their office, usually after each visit in line with the service's lone working policy.
- 16.9. Employees must never use handheld mobile phones or email devices whilst driving. Employees should be stationary when dealing with urgent work issues and should not make or take telephone calls whilst driving. Further information can be found in the ICT Policy.

17. Office environment

- 17.1. Each flexible worker will be allocated a 'designated office' which is deemed to be their place of work when not working from home or at other locations.
- 17.2. The Council will provide workstations (also known as 'flexi-desks') with desktop PCs or the ability to plug in laptops as necessary, within designated offices, for flexible workers to use when they are in the office.
- 17.3. Flexible workers will have access to lockable storage in the designated office for their personal files, papers, ICT equipment and stationery.
- 17.4. When working in the designated office, the flexible worker will be required to use whichever convenient workstation is available. No flexible worker has the right of exclusive use of a particular workstation (but see 17.7 below).
- 17.5. All flexi-desks should be cleared at the end of the working session and left clean and tidy for the next occupant.
- 17.6. Other Council offices/properties throughout the district may also provide temporary 'touch down' workstations with facilities for laptops and access to the Council's ICT systems. These will be available for use on an ad hoc basis by flexible and free workers.
- 17.7. Where an occupational health assessment has determined that a flexible worker requires specific workstation equipment to carry out their work (as set out in 16.6 above), they may be given priority use of a specific workstation if this is the only practical way to provide it. However, this may limit the designated offices at which the worker can work.

18. Corporate standards

- 18.1. All employees should respect others when it comes to the working environment and be aware of how their behaviour might impact on others working in a flexible environment.
- 18.2. It is recommended that locally services agree to a list of standards that are then communicated to employees to follow.
- 18.3. The standards below represent the minimum that is expected from employees, it is not intended to be an exclusive or exhaustive list and should be used as the basis for local agreements:

- 18.3.1. Be aware of noise levels in the office.
 - 18.3.2. Leave all 'flexible' desks clean and clear for the next user.
 - 18.3.3. All 'flexible' desks must be left as they were, i.e. there should be no attempt to 'claim' or personalise desks.
 - 18.3.4. 'Fixed' desks should be left clear when employees are on leave to allow other employees to use them.
 - 18.3.5. Time keeping should be adhered to both at the start and end of meetings as a courtesy to those attending the meeting as well as to the next user of the room.
 - 18.3.6. Use designated walking routes or aisles so as not to disturb others working.
 - 18.3.7. Leave areas tidy, this should for example include the clearing up dirty cups.
 - 18.3.8. Avoid eating smelly foods at desks.
 - 18.3.9. Avoid having meetings at desks as this can disturb others, where possible meetings should be held either in meeting rooms or in break-out areas.
 - 18.3.10. Where problems develop with working environments these should be reported using the management structure in place to resolve issues as they arise.
- 18.4. Managers are responsible for ensuring that a set framework is given to employees for them to use when communicating with clients, partners and colleagues regarding working away from the office that will not damage the corporate image or customer trust.

19. Security

- 19.1. Employees must ensure that all Council data and equipment (including laptops, handheld email devices, mobiles phones etc.) is stored securely, and that it is not at risk of loss or theft. Guidelines for employees on data security when working away from the office is provided in the Mobile and Flexible Working Information Standards.

20. Liability

- 20.1. Flexible/free workers are covered by the Council's insurance policy for employer's liability and personal accident in the same way as office-based employees.
- 20.2. Equipment supplied to the flexible/free worker is covered by the Council's insurance arrangements providing it is used for work purposes only, and in line with manufacturer's instructions.
- 20.3. Flexible/free workers should contact their own insurance company to advise that they will be working from home. This would not usually result in an increase in premium. The Council will not reimburse any increase in premium should this occur.
- 20.4. If an employee is home working he or she should advise mortgagees or landlords, if rented, that they intend to work at home. However, using a room or

part of a room to work in would not normally require planning permission.
Working from home should not affect Council Tax liability.

21. Changing circumstances

- 21.1. When one of the circumstances below arises, the Council reserves the right to reconsider the flexible/free working arrangements under which the employee works. No changes will be made without consulting the individual concerned.
- 21.1.1. The employee moves to a different job role, either permanently or on a secondment or acting up basis. The suitability of the new role for flexible/free working will need to be assessed.
- 21.1.2. The employee moves home. Arrangements for home-working will need to be reassessed.
- 21.1.3. The Council undertakes a reorganisation of the work area. All job roles will need to be reassessed in the light of changes to job descriptions and person specifications.
- 21.2. Managers are responsible for reclaiming equipment where an employee leaves or moves posts in order for it to be reallocated to the next post holder.
- 21.3. Managers are responsible for keeping a record of work styles in their team and ensuring consistency.

Appendix 1 **Equipment requirements for different work styles**

Toolkit <i>Hardware/installation/training where stated are funded by the Timelord Programme for the duration of the Phase. Ongoing revenue costs for mobile telecommunications are funded by Service Budgets</i> This table lists the types of equipment that may be required, depending on the circumstances, for each work style.	Work styles			ICT Support	
	Fixed	Flexible		ICT initial advice/visit/training	ICT ongoing support
		Home-Flex	Free*		
WBC PC on fixed desk at work base (built specifically for user)	✓			Y	Y
WBC flexi-desk with desktop PC at work base (built for range of users) – primarily for home flex staff but also as back up for free staff whose workstation maybe out of action/unavailable for any reason.		✓	✓	Y	Y
WBC flexi-desk (no desktop PC) with power/network point/cable at work base – for “free” staff			✓	Y	Y
Wireless enabled WBC Laptop (built specifically for user) – when external, only enables internet access to WBC citrix external portal and WBC external email from any secure wireless network, including at home OR			✓	Y	Y
Wireless enabled WBC Tablet (built specifically for user) – when external only enables internet access to WBC citrix external portal and WBC external email from any secure wireless network, including at home – costly (consider business case)			✓	Y	Y
Your own home PC with citrix client – pre-requisite for automatic “home flex” approval. Optional for “free” workers		✓		Y	N
Your own home broadband (pre-requisite for home flex or for using WBC workstation in your home)		✓	✓	Y	N
Your own Wireless router (pre-requisite for using WBC laptop or tablet in your home)		✓	✓	Y	N
Citrix Infrastructure – secure platform accessed through a secure internet gateway. Platform provides user with a secure “citrix desktop” which delivers their applications. Requires safeword authentication		✓	✓	Y	Y
External Email site – secure internet “hotmail” access to Outlook mailbox – requires safeword authentication		✓	✓	Y	Y
Printing – Ability to print to any office networked printing/scanning device through Prisma on Citrix desktop. If printing at <i>home</i> is a business imperative (not recommended for security reasons), ICT will install <i>specific</i> printer drivers on WBC laptop/tablet. (Printers for home use are not supplied by ICT or supported by ICT – product info published).		✓	✓	Y	Y
SafeWord Token for secondary authentication/external access from home PC or WBC workstations externally		✓	✓	Y	Y
3G Card for Mobile Remote Access - provides connectivity using 3G network on the move – costly/ problematic (consider business case)			✓	Y	Y
Blackberry Smartphone for phone, email send/receive and diary at all times - costly (consider business case) OR			✓	Y	Y
Mobile Phone – for voice contact at all times		✓	✓	Y	Y

*Line Managers should decide which options from this list are appropriate on the basis of a business case for Free staff to carry out their role - dependent on role requirements.