

## **Report to the Cabinet**

**Report reference:** C-004-2016/17  
**Date of meeting:** 21 July 2016



**Portfolio:** Technology and Support Services  
**Subject:** Home Working Policy  
**Responsible Officer:** Paula Maginnis (01992 564536).  
**Democratic Services:** Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

---

### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**(1) That, as requested by the Joint Consultative Committee, the Home Working Policy attached at Appendix A be adopted.**

### **Executive Summary:**

Recently, the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) recommended adoption of the Smart Working Framework, the Flexible Working Policy and amendments to Council's Flexi Scheme, which have all been agreed by the Cabinet.

The Home Working Policy, which is out of date, is the outstanding document which requires consideration by the Cabinet.

Over several meetings the JCC considered the Policy and finally in April considered the final outstanding section, Section 7 – Mileage. The Committee voted separately on the individual paragraphs of the Section and the results are set out in paragraph 8 of the report.

### **Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

The Council is moving towards implementing, home, remote and mobile working options for its employees. The main objectives of the Framework are to establish a more flexible workforce, enhance the service provided to our customers and assist the Council in reviewing its accommodation requirements.

The current Homeworking Policy is out of date and the proposed Policy reflects changes in technology, the Council's thinking and the practicalities of Home Working.

### **Other Options for Action:**

Cabinet could amend the policy further or substitute other processes.

### **Report:**

1. Since June 2015 Management Board and JCC have been considering a number of Policies regarding Home and Flexible Working. In addition, the Leadership Team reviewed the Council's Flexi Scheme in conjunction with employee comments from the 2013 Survey

specifically relating to the Flexi Scheme.

2. Recently, the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) recommended adoption of the Smart Working Framework, the Flexible Working Policy and amendments to Council's Flexi Scheme and all have been agreed by the Cabinet.

3. The current Home Working Policy is over 10 years old and has been updated to give managers more detailed guidance on:

- what should be considered by managers before agreeing home working;
- safety and ICT requirements;
- terms and conditions; and
- manager and employee responsibilities.

4. In addition, the current Policy provides allowances to staff working at home, the new Policy removes these allowances. The Council currently pays an annual, taxable contribution towards the additional costs of heating, lighting and power incurred by staff based at home. This allowance is paid monthly through salary. Currently the allowance is £64.41 for each half day designated to be worked on a weekly basis at home over a year. For example:

An employee is contracted to work at home for 1 day per week;

$£64.41 \times 2$  (1 day = 2 half days) = £128.82

Therefore the employee receives a taxable allowance of £128.82 per annum towards the cost of heating, lighting and power.

An employee is contracted to work at home for 4 days per week;

$£64.41 \times 8$  (4 days = 8 half days) = £515.28

Therefore the employee receives a taxable allowance of £515.28 per annum towards the cost of heating, lighting and power.

5. There are two employees subject to the provisions of the current Policy and are in receipt of this allowance. It is proposed that these employees are formally consulted with and subject to the Council's Pay Protection Policy to move them onto the proposed new Policy.

6. The Council's Pay Protection Policy will provide:

- the first 6 months at 75% of difference;
- the second 6 months at 50% of difference;
- the third 6 months at 25% of difference; and
- at 18 months the new Policy will be implemented.

7. Whilst on Pay Protection the allowance rate will not be increased in line with the NJC pay award for administrative staff.

8. The JCC discussed this Policy a number of times, in particular Section 7 - Mileage. At April's meeting each of the amended paragraphs, 7.1 – 7.4 were voted on separately and the results were as follows:

- Section 7.1 was voted upon and agreed by a majority of the Committee;
- Section 7.2 was voted upon and agreed by a close majority of the Committee;
- Section 7.3 was voted upon and agreed by a majority of the Committee; and

- Section 7.4 was voted upon and agreed by a close majority of the Committee.

9. The Committee wished it to be specifically noted that sections 7.2 and 7.4 were only passed by a small majority of the Committee.

**Resource Implications:**

There are no resourcing issues regarding the implementation of the policies. No budget has been identified for ICT equipment. This will be subject to the annual ICT Capital Report or in some cases from the Invest to Save fund.

**Legal and Governance Implications:**

None.

**Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:**

Not applicable.

**Consultation Undertaken:**

Consultation has been undertaken with staff, the Joint Consultative Committee and Management Board.

**Background Papers:**

7 April 2016 - Cabinet Report - Smart Working Framework, Flexible Working Policy and Flexi Scheme.

18 April 2016 – JCC Report – Home Working Policy and minutes.

**Risk Management:**

If the Council does not have up to date Policies on Smart and Home Working there is a risk that the Transformation Programme could be delayed.

# Due Regard Record

This page shows which groups of people are affected by the subject of this report. It sets out how they are affected and how any discrimination they experience can be eliminated. It also includes information about how access to the service(s) subject to this report can be improved for the different groups of people; and how they can be assisted to understand each other better as a result of the subject of this report.

S149 Equality Act 2010 requires that due regard must be paid to this information when considering the subject of this report.

---

The Smarter Working Framework and associated Policies provides clear guidance to all managers and employees across the authority on the various options open to them regarding alternative working arrangements.

The Policies may assist employees balance their home/work responsibilities which in turn may assist the Council in retaining experienced and valued employees. In addition, by offering flexible working opportunities the Council could be seen as a fair and reasonable employer by potential candidates.