

Agile Working Policy

‘Work is an activity we do, rather than a place we go’



ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

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Version Control

This document is intended for:

- Council staff only School-based staff only Council & School-based staff

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This document may be reviewed and amended at any time and without consultation in response to legal requirements or in response to an organisational requirement and where the changes do not reflect a fundamental change or affect the spirit or intent of the document.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (the “Council”) recognises the need for modern working practices to enhance employees’ working experience and to maximise performance and productivity and deliver the greatest value to the organisation. This Policy will focus on employee wellbeing by promoting a good work-life balance. In addition, new technologies are making it easy to access information remotely and work from a variety of locations within the community, whilst promoting a more joined up service.
- 1.2 The Council has a modern model of working which assists in improving service delivery as well as realising financial benefits for the organisation. It also links to the Council’s vision for sustainable development, placing emphasis on the importance of sustainable economic growth, de-carbonisation and the health and wellbeing of both staff and the community. The benefits of improved work-life balance, employee engagement and reduced travel make a direct contribution to this strategic priority.
- 1.3 Home/agile working supports the modernisation of our working practices and is part of the continuous change management process. Welsh Government has detailed its clear ambition to see around 30% of the workforce working from home or working remotely.
- 1.4 The Council’s workforce model designates roles in one of three categories:
 - Home Worker
 - Agile Worker
 - Service/Community Worker

Although the nature of most of the roles within the Council cannot be classed as totally flexible, there is considerable scope in many cases for some form of agile working. The different ways in which agile working can be undertaken is dependent on the demands and needs of the role and the service within which the role is based.

2. Benefits of Home/Agile Working

- 2.1 Home/agile working offers benefits to employees, customers, and the Council.

For employees, home/agile working can:

- provide an opportunity to manage their working day more efficiently.
- increase engagement as a result of autonomy and trust at work.
- improve work-life balance.
- enable them to work more effectively on a particular piece of work, where concentration is important, by avoiding the interruptions that are part of the office environment.
- reduce travelling time and related costs; and
- increase their wellbeing, health, and happiness through a better sense of control.

- 2.2 The key benefits for the Council are as follows:

- allows the Council to provide improved services to our customers.

- allows the Council to focus time and money on delivering services.
- reduces unnecessary travel time, which increases productivity and reduces cost.
- creates an environment which allows employees to achieve an improved work-life balance, greater job satisfaction, motivation, morale and productivity.
- results in reduced costs through reduced travel and expense claims.
- lowers our carbon footprint, through reduced emissions from reduced travel.
- improves the recruitment and retention of employees via the Council becoming an employer of choice; and
- reduced absenteeism and related costs.

3. Scope

- 3.1 The Policy applies to all Council employees working at any level within the organisation but will exclude school-based staff under the delegated powers of the Governing Body. The nature and extent of home/agile working will depend upon the role undertaken and considerations will include the impact on the ability to meet customer demand (internal and external) and employee welfare.
- 3.2 The Policy will enable both managers and staff to gain a better understanding of home/agile working and understand the basic principles.

4. Agile Working

- 4.1 The three workstyles are set out below:

Home Worker	Agile Worker	Service/ Community Worker
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Home is the base – defined as the permanent residence as recorded with the Council ❖ All work can be carried out from home ❖ Appropriate workstation and tools to do the job at home ❖ No need to access an alternative base to work on a frequent basis ❖ Occasional attendance at an alternative base for e.g. team meetings/training ❖ Allowance of £26 per month (Part-time worker £15.60 monthly) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Home is the base – defined as the permanent residence as recorded with the Council ❖ Work time split between homeworking and alternative Council locations/community ❖ Work is carried out at home and an alternative base – requiring desk space (e.g. using a booking system) ❖ Appropriate workstation and tools to do the job at home ❖ Could be required to attend meetings in an alternative base ❖ Allowance of £15.60 per month 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Work is carried out 100% from a base in a building or 100% community working ❖ Some roles would require desk space – usually no fixed workstation ❖ Roles/worker not possible to work from home ❖ No allowance will be paid by the Council

- 4.2 Each post has a designated workstyle based on service needs. Review of the workstyle designation will be carried out in line with any service review, redesign or change. Reasonable adjustments must be considered, where necessary. **All relief roles to be designated as a “service/community worker”. In exceptional circumstances and where Managers identify that an employee is eligible for a payment then arrangements can be made to authorise this through the timesheet process.**
- 4.3 In the event that a reasonable adjustment is required due to a change in circumstances for an employee, this should be discussed with the manager and an Agile Working Workstyle Designation Form should be completed (see [Appendix A](#)). Once agreed this document should be forwarded to OD. This will ensure that the relevant contractual/allowance changes are actioned and correspondence is issued by OD. In these circumstances no change will be made to the position designation only the personal designation.
- 4.4 Position designations should only be changed in line with a service review/redesign or business change. If a post(s) is occupied then this will require a contractual change and consultation with the affected employee(s), OD should advise on this process. If a post is vacant the change can be implemented as part of the structure report. In these cases, the business case for the position designation changes will form part of the structural report and approved in line with agreed processes. The implications of any change(s) including finance, accommodation and consistency of approach will need to be clearly set out in the report. OD will implement any changes as part of the structure report.
- 4.5 Where a post becomes vacant and a position designation change is being proposed, this should be approved as part of the recruitment authorisation and approved in line with agreed processes. The business case for the change including any implications as outlined above should be set out as part of the approval process. OD will implement the change as part of the recruitment process.
- 4.6 Managers should consider the best practical and operational arrangements for working in accordance with the workstyle designation including:
- Clear and realistic objectives and expected work outputs for the employee, should be agreed between the employee and their manager and employees will be expected to deliver the agreed outcomes.
 - Regular performance coaching and 1 to 1 discussions.
 - Methods of, and arrangements for, communication and support need to be agreed. Regular communication is imperative to promote employee wellbeing and to ensure that employees do not feel isolated, lonely or frustrated, using a combination of face to face conversations, emails, telephone and team meetings/briefing, etc.
- 4.7 Home/agile workers will not have fixed hours (unless the role dictates this) and will be able to perform their work at times convenient to them in line with the [Flexible Working Scheme](#), however employees must be available for online meetings and to respond to calls and emails, etc. in line with business needs. In particular:
- Employees should ensure that their electronic diaries are up to date so that others are aware of their availability. It is imperative that wherever individuals are

working, others e.g. the manager, the team and other colleagues, know how to contact them.

- When individuals are not working, laptops and phones should be switched off to enable individuals to have a right to privacy out of hours and be able to separate their working and home lives.

- 4.8 Home/agile working must not affect the provision of services and therefore managers must ensure that they have systems in place to maintain the correct compliment of staff, as required, and to monitor the level of available frontline staff working at any one time.
- 4.9 Employees must note that during active work, time at home is not a substitute for childcare or similar carer responsibilities. It is the employee's responsibility to ensure adequate provision is in place although there are other policies, which offer options and support to staff in such circumstances.
- 4.10 All staff must ensure that adequate breaks are taken, whichever workstyle is adopted with a minimum of 30 minutes taken for lunch. Those working at desks should take a short break from the desk/screen and move around often, ideally at least every hour. In addition, as a minimum, all staff must comply with the requirements of the Working Time Regulations 1998. Managers should discuss health, safety and wellbeing at every 1 to 1 session.
- 4.11 For further information on claiming travel expenses please refer to the [Officers Allowances and Expenses Policy](#).
- 4.12 The agile working hubs are the General Offices, Blaina ICC, ViTCC and the Energy Centre.

5. Reporting and other requirements

- 5.1 The Council's policies and procedures apply to all employees, whichever workstyle is adopted. The contractual obligations, duties and responsibilities (apart from place of work) remain unchanged and the Council's workplace policies continue to apply including, but not limited to, GDPR compliance, as detailed in clause 11 of this Policy.
- 5.2 All employees are expected to report to their manager in accordance with an agreement reached. Each employee must also comply with any formal reporting procedures set out in their contract.
- 5.3 All managers must keep in regular contact with their staff, via phone, email, meetings or Microsoft teams conferencing.

6. Illness or injury

- 6.1 If an employee cannot work on a day on which it has been agreed that they will work from home because they are ill or injured, they must follow the procedure set out in the Council's [Attendance Management Policy](#) to report their absence.

7. Payment of Allowances

- 7.1 An employee who is a home/agile worker will be provided with the necessary ICT equipment and technology. The employee should use the Council's equipment whilst home/agile working and will not be eligible to claim expenses for use of personal equipment such as home phone lines.
- 7.2 The Council will pay the following allowances to contribute towards home-related expenses as a result of working from home:
- a. Home workers - £26 per month per employee (which is the maximum amount payable in line with HMRC guidance).
 - b. Part-time home workers - £15.60 per month per employee.
 - c. Agile workers - £15.60 per month per employee.

Employees will not have to pay tax and national insurance contributions on these allowances. Service/community-based workers will not be eligible for payment of these allowances.

- 7.3 These allowances are reimbursement for additional expenses incurred as a consequence of home working and do not therefore count in the calculation of redundancy pay, sick pay, maternity, adoption and other similar family-based pay.
- 7.4 During any periods of continued absence where the employee is not working these allowances will not be paid, this includes but is not limited to maternity and adoption leave. In the case of sickness absence, the allowance will cease at four weeks which is the trigger for long-term sickness absence. Where the absence commences or ends mid-way through the month the allowance payable for that month will be pro rata to the period worked.

8. Allocation of Equipment

- 8.1 The Council will be responsible for determining and providing the equipment and technical requirements for the employee undertaking a home/agile working arrangement. Equipment **must not** be removed from offices for home working purposes.

This provision does not extend to the installation of or subscription for the home broadband connection, which is the responsibility of the employee. All equipment provided will remain the Council's property at all times. Only equipment which the Council has provided to employees, or which the Council has authorised employees to use, may be used for homeworking.

Employees can use their own furniture e.g. desks/chairs, provided that it is compliant with the requirements of the Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Workstation Checklist ([Appendix C](#)).

- 8.2 Additional equipment may be provided for staff who require reasonable adjustments as determined by occupational health.

- 8.3 Personally adapted equipment will be provided to an individual should a workstation assessment deem this necessary; however, this equipment will be provided at the place where they predominantly work and not across multiple sites. Therefore, the individual will be responsible for ensuring that this equipment is available for their use wherever they work. If, as a result of a risk assessment, other equipment is identified as necessary, this will also be provided, subject to the agreement of the employee.
- 8.4 Where the Council has provided equipment, employees must:
- take reasonable care of it;
 - use it only for the purposes for which it was provided;
 - make it available to the Council for inspection at any time if requested, and for collection if homeworking arrangements cease, if applicable, or on leaving employment;
 - promptly report any damage to or malfunctioning of any item to their manager.
- 8.5 The Council will maintain the equipment but employees will be responsible for any damage to the equipment that goes beyond reasonable wear and tear.
- 8.6 If an IT issue or other equipment problem prevents an employee from working effectively from home, employees should contact their manager as soon as possible and agree what needs to happen.

9. Responsibilities

9.1 Corporate responsibilities

- The Chief Executive, on behalf of the Council, carries overall responsibility for ensuring that the Council has the appropriate processes in place, which adequately and appropriately support its employees, regardless of what working pattern or arrangement they have.
- The OD Service is responsible for providing advice and guidance on this Policy and is responsible for reviewing, updating and amending this Policy to reflect changes in legislation or employment practice in conjunction with trade unions.
- Corporate Leadership Team is responsible for establishing their own arrangements to ensure:
 - Effective implementation of the Policy
 - Continued service delivery; and
 - Consultation with their employees on these arrangements.

9.2 Management Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring flexibility in relation to discussions and agreements about home/agile working with employees within their area of responsibility, whilst remaining focused on the needs of the service.
- Ensuring good communication with employees and agreeing clear communication lines, including arrangements for employees to report sickness absence. Making arrangements for both regular individual and team meetings,

ensuring regular communication is maintained between themselves and team members, providing support for employees and implementing ways of measuring and monitoring work output that has been mutually agreed.

- Setting and monitoring defined performance measures in line with the Council's performance coaching and regular 1 to 1 meetings.
- Allowing employees who are using their homes to work from to have a right to privacy out of working hours and the ability to separate their working and home lives.
- Meeting their duties in relation to health, safety and welfare by undertaking appropriate risk assessments and acting on any areas of concern for employees who they are responsible for, as outlined in section 10 of the Policy.
- Any recruitment going forward is based on the designation of the role.
- Undertaking a regular review of the home/agile working arrangements. If it is not working, every effort will be made to resolve any issues.

9.3 Employee Responsibilities

Employees are responsible for:

- Complying with this Policy in a reasonable, constructive and appropriate manner.
- Being flexible, open and constructive in discussing and agreeing home/agile working arrangements, whilst remaining focused on the needs of the service.
- Maintaining regular contact with their manager.
- Working as agreed (appropriate work area for working at home, etc.) and abiding by all the Council policies whilst working in this way.
- Optimising meetings to minimise the amount of travel time.
- Complying with health and safety Policy and procedures by participating in and undertaking risk assessments; carrying out any necessary actions to minimise risk; maintaining a safe working environment and taking reasonable care of their own safety, as outlined in section 10 of the Policy.
- Complying with confidentiality, data protection and information security policies, for example locking laptops using Ctrl; Alt; Delete to prevent unauthorised people from using it. If conversations can be overheard by family members or visitors, employees should take reasonable precautions to ensure confidential information is not overheard. Also, paperwork must be stored away securely at the end of the working day.
- Ensuring that all reasonable care is taken of all Council supplied IT equipment.
- Reporting immediately once known, any loss, theft or damage to Council IT equipment or the loss of confidential information.
- Consulting with any necessary parties, such as landlords, insurance or mortgage companies, regarding home working.
- Ensuring that any personally adapted equipment (e.g. left-hand orientation or widescreen laptop), required in order to undertake their duties, is available for their use wherever they are working under this arrangement.

10. Health and Safety

- 10.1 In addition to the employer, employees have a responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of themselves and others while they are carrying out work activities, regardless of the work location. Home/agile workers have the same health and safety responsibilities as other workers and will be required to take reasonable care

of their own health and safety whilst working from home. All employees must comply with all health and safety instructions issued by the Council.

- 10.2 Where employees use Council locations to work, they should familiarise themselves with the local arrangements for managing health and safety. They should ensure that they are aware of fire safety arrangements to ensure they are fully conversant with the actions to be taken in the event of discovering a fire or on hearing the fire alarm signal and ensure they adhere to the local signing in and out arrangements.
- 10.3 Due consideration to lone working arrangements should be explored fully between the manager and employee to ensure safe working arrangements are in place.
- 10.4 The Council retains the right to check all homeworking areas for health, safety and welfare purposes, including carrying out risk assessments, to consider, for example, work equipment, in cases where reasonable adjustments may be necessary, and display screen equipment. All access requirements will be discussed prior to the visit, and appropriate notice given. The Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Workstation Checklist ([Appendix C](#)) will be carried out for employees required to work from home. This will need to be carried out again if any substantial changes are made to the working environment or arrangements. Employees must fully participate in completing the necessary risk assessment paperwork and review this with their manager.
- 10.5 When working from home, even if only partially, the employee has a responsibility to ensure they have an appropriate workspace with adequate security, storage and screening from activities and noise in the rest of the home. There must also be adequate ventilation and lighting.
- 10.6 Home workers who need to attend site meetings should be aware that the Council has a Corporate Employee Protection Register (“CEPR”), which holds details of any violent individuals/dangerous incidents against Council employees. Any employee whose role involves personal contact with members of the public should initiate a search of the database prior to any visits/interviews in order to make an informed assessment of any potential risk. Employees should also comply with the [Lone Working Policy](#) and departmental procedures.
- 10.7 Employees must not, under any circumstances, give details of their home address or personal contact details to clients/customers or third parties. No formal or informal work-related meetings of any kind are to be held in any employee’s home (save that employees may, of course, attend meetings virtually from their own home).
- 10.8 Employees must report any accident at home to their manager, in line with current arrangements.
- 10.9 Employees should report any health and safety concerns to their manager, as soon as possible.
- 10.10 Managers should focus on, and prioritise, employee wellbeing. Employees should contact their manager if they have any concerns regarding wellbeing. The

employee assistance helpline, [Care first](#), is also available.

- 10.11 Employees working from home should ensure that the general fabric of the home and its fixtures and fittings, including in any area in which they work, is maintained in a safe and functional state for performance of their duties e.g. electrical sockets. Staff should ensure that no equipment is left to charge unattended and that the correct charging device is used in relation to each item of equipment.
- 10.12 Staff working from home will be required to bring equipment into a specified Council building for PAT testing, when requested to do so.
- 10.13 Managers should seek advice regarding any specific concerns around health and safety issues as all health and safety requirements must be appropriately addressed if full or partial homeworking is to occur.
- 10.14 Copies of the completed Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Workstation Checklist (Appendix C) should be submitted to Organisational Development.

11. Data Protection, Security and Confidentiality

- 11.1 The Council provides employees with access to the personal and confidential information they need to do their job. The Council's Information Security and Information Governance Policies including, but not limited to, the [Information Security Policy](#), [Data Protection Policy](#) and the [Acceptable Use Policy](#), apply at all times regardless of the working location. It is particularly important to ensure that non-authorised personnel cannot gain access to confidential or personal information. This includes, but is not limited to, the requirement to prevent unauthorised personnel from:
 - seeing and/or accessing, electronic and/or paper files;
 - being able to overhear telephone/Microsoft Teams conversations, etc.
- 11.2 When working in a mobile manner, the employee is responsible for the security of equipment, files and any other information in their possession, including the transportation of such items whenever outside Council premises.
- 11.3 Employees working from home, whether fully or partially, will be responsible for ensuring the security of all Council equipment, documents and information and must take all necessary steps to ensure that private and confidential information is kept secure at all times. Wherever possible, this should be locked away. At a minimum, all equipment should be stored out of sight of windows and doors to deter equipment from being stolen.
- 11.4 In particular, every employee must:
 - screen lock their computer whenever it is left unattended;
 - store confidential papers securely when not in use;

- ensure the secure disposal of confidential materials by returning items to Council premises for disposal using the contracted confidential waste arrangements. Where this is not feasible, employees should contact their manager or the Data Protection Officer to make alternative arrangements;
 - report any data security breach to their manager immediately and also the Data Protection Officer: DataProtection@blaenau-gwent.gov.uk.
- 11.5 No work-related emails or sensitive data should be sent to the employee's home email addresses. No work-related files should be stored on an employee's personal computer.
- 11.6 All employees should make every effort to minimise the amount of paper records which they use, carry or transfer and should consider using more secure electronic methods wherever possible. Not only is this better for the environment, but it reduces costs for the Council and is more secure.
- 11.7 Where employees do need to print documents and send in the post, the Council's hybrid mail system must be utilised to do this and staff should not print and send documents on home equipment using standard public postal arrangements. Staff are reminded that the Council's Information Security Policy includes the requirement that staff should not connect their own unapproved hardware (e.g. a printer) to their Council devices.

12. Equal Opportunities/Reasonable Adjustments

- 12.1 The Council will ensure that all staff are treated in a fair, equitable and consistent manner. It undertakes to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will identify appropriate reasonable adjustments and options for those employees who may require specific support in planning and undertaking any homeworking arrangements.
- 12.2 Particular reference should be made to the provisions of the Act to ensure that appropriate communication and monitoring is in place to support an employee with any matters arising from the protected characteristics and requirements of the Act.
- 12.3 The employee is responsible for ensuring that they inform their manager of any issues that may need to be addressed under the Act. This is particularly pertinent to home workers where equalities matters may be undetected for a prolonged period.
- 12.4 Where an individual has been assessed as requiring a specific workstation set-up as part of reasonable adjustments made following an Occupational Health referral under the Equality Act they will, should these not be able to be accommodated at home, be provided with a desk allocation at a hub and be expected to consider this their base.

13. Insurance, Mortgage/Tenancy Arrangements

- 13.1 In general, working from home should not give rise to any special difficulties from an insurance point of view. The guiding principle is that good practice should reduce or

eliminate the possibility of injury or loss to employees. Insurance by itself does not prevent injury or loss and good risk management techniques are required.

- 13.2 It is vital that employees and managers adhere to this Agile Working Policy and associated guidelines, in order to maintain the validity of the insurance provision.
- 13.3 Employees' own insurance policies are unlikely to be affected by working from home. However, employees are **strongly advised** to inform their insurers of working at home arrangements. If in doubt, employees should let their insurance company know to ensure there is no risk of non-disclosure invalidating a policy. No formal or informal work-related meetings are to be held in any employee's home as this would affect the employee's home insurance policy.
- 13.4 Liability insurance protects the Council and its employees jointly for accidental death, injury and loss of property where the Council has been negligent. This insurance will operate in respect of employees who are working at home with the knowledge and consent of their manager, subject to the appropriate health and safety risk assessments, together with the appropriate training and support being in place. Employees must comply with Section 10 (Health and Safety) of the Agile Working Policy and any accidents must be reported immediately in accordance with the Council's health and safety guidelines.
- 13.5 Computers provided by the Council as part of the home/agile working arrangement will be covered by the Council's insurance policy. Employees must not do, cause or permit any act or omission which will avoid coverage under the Council insurance policy and reasonable care must be taken to avoid loss or damage to the equipment. If in doubt as to whether particular acts or omissions will have this effect, employees should consult their manager immediately. It is essential that any loss, theft or damage to Council IT equipment is reported immediately. Computer equipment should not be left in an unattended vehicle.
- 13.6 There is no formal insurance cover for work equipment provided aside from a computer however, employees must report promptly any damage to or malfunction of any work equipment to their manager for consideration to enable the Council to ensure that a safe working environment is maintained.

14. Temporary arrangements

- 14.1 If there is the need to temporarily cover a post, if leave is taken (other than sickness absence leave) which lasts for over 4 weeks, including, but not limited to, maternity leave, parental leave, adoption leave, employees who have been provided with Council equipment, should return equipment to a Council location, which will be stipulated by the manager prior to the commencement of their leave. In the case of sickness, manager discretion will apply to the return of Council equipment during any period of absence.

15. Domestic abuse/violence

- 15.1 Any individuals who are experiencing domestic abuse/violence, who do not wish to work within the home, will be accommodated in Council locations and are referred to

the Council's [Domestic Abuse, Violence and Sexual Violence Policy](#), which offers further support.

16. Additional Information

16.1

The Council has an Employee Assistance Programme in place with an independent provider called “Care first” for all employees and managers. Employees can access support on any personal or work-related issues that may be causing concern or distress such as stress awareness, debt management, well-being and relationship issues. Contact details are below and additional information is available on the [intranet](#).

- “**Care first**” is free to use 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year and there is no need for employees to ask a manager to use the service. Employees can call **0800 174319** to speak to a professional counsellor or information specialist **in confidence** about a range of issues.
- The “**Care first Lifestyle**” website offers extensive resources including articles on health, issues at home, issues at work, management support tools, stress questionnaires and online counselling in real-time. Employees should visit the website at www.care-first.co.uk and login using the following details - username: **blaenau** and password: **employee**
- The “**Care first Zest**” app has interactive tools, helpful tips, visual and mental exercises and engaging activities. These include meditation exercises, mindfulness exercises, breathing exercises, toolkits to identify behaviours and monitor progress, mood trackers and much more. To start using the app:
 - Download the app - available on iTunes or Google Play – search for My possible self: Mental Health. Or, if you’d prefer to use the programme from your desktop, follow this link: <https://portal.my-possible-self.com/welshfram/my-possible-self/register> (**the website is not compatible with Internet Explorer**).
 - Enter the registration passcode **WelFram21!** then tick the “I’m not a robot” box and click “Submit”.
 - Create your personal account.
 - Once registered, you can log into the website via www.my-possible-self.com or app using the email and password you created your account with.

16.2 Employees should familiarise themselves with other Council policies to include:

- [Flexible Working Scheme](#)
- [Information Security Policies](#)
- [Display Screen Equipment \(DSE\) Policy](#)
- [Lone Working Policy](#)
- [Attendance Management Policy](#)
- [Domestic Abuse, Violence and Sexual Violence Policy](#)

Appendix A: Agile Working Workstyle Designation



Section 1 - Employee/Role Details

Employee Name:

Position Title:

Contract Type: Permanent Fixed Term Temporary

Position Reference:

Service: Manager:

Current Designation: Home Worker Agile Worker Service/Community Worker

Section 2 - Individual/Reasonable Adjustments

Reasonable adjustments must be discussed between the manager and employee, as any change to a workstyle designation will be a variation to contract. Details of the considerations including any service / resource implications should be detailed below. *Where homeworking is being considered a Home Working Agreement and the relevant health and safety assessments must be completed to ensure that homeworking can be carried out safely and effectively.*

Please outline the change in workstyle being adopted based on the agreed adjustments:

Home Worker Agile Worker Service/Community Worker*

*Please specify the designated base for Service / Community Worker:

The change in workstyle is a result of: Reasonable Adjustment Contractual Change

Employee Signature: Date:

Manager Signature: Date:
(Authorised signatory)

Please forward a copy of this document and where appropriate a copy of the Homeworking Agreement and Health and Safety assessments to Organisational Development

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Appendix B: Homeworking Agreement



Employee Name:

Position Title: Position Ref:

Service: Manager:

Your role has been designated a Home/Agile Worker as defined in the Agile Working Policy, you are therefore required to complete this Homeworking Agreement.

Employee:

- I agree to provide an appropriate safe workspace in my home to enable me to work effectively.
- I am aware of my responsibility to inform as appropriate my landlord/mortgage/Insurance company in writing of my intention to work at home.
- I understand the requirement for me to continue to comply with all Council policies, practices and procedures whilst working from home including all Health and Safety requirements.
- I will maintain regular contact with my manager and inform them of changes to my home or personal circumstances, which could affect my ability to undertake my work effectively including health and safety.
- I understand that I have a duty to ensure, insofar as is reasonably practicable, that I work in a safe manner and follow all health and safety requirements of the Council including participating in and undertaking risk assessments; carrying out any necessary actions to minimise risk; maintaining a safe working environment and taking reasonable care of my own safety.
- I am aware and understand the requirement to report any work-related accidents whilst working at home or other locations.
- I agree to provide reasonable access to my home by an employee of the Council, or their representative to support home working arrangements (but not for meeting purposes). All access requirements will be discussed prior to the visit, and appropriate notice given.
- I am aware of the information security measures required and the sensitive nature of data with which I work. I agree at all times to protect access, maintain and store the data securely and confidentially in line with the Data Protection Acts and Council requirements.
- I understand that I am responsible for the proper care of Council equipment and that the computer and other equipment must be used for work purposes only and will not be used by anyone other than myself.
- Reporting immediately, once known, any loss, theft or damage to Council IT equipment or the loss of confidential information.

- I understand that I may be required to attend an alternative hub (location to be confirmed as appropriate) from time to time for specified communications/meetings/training as defined by my manager.
- I am aware and understand the requirements to notify my manager when I am unable to work or absent from work due to sickness or any other reason. I will also continue to use the My Options flexible working to record my times whilst working at home or otherwise in line with relevant Policy, including taking adequate rest breaks.
- In the event of home or agile working ceasing or leaving the employment of the Council, I will co-operate with the Council in arranging a time for any equipment to be collected or I will return the equipment to the Council within 5 working days of home working ceasing.

Employer:

- The Council has a range of policies and guidance to support employees working from home including the Agile Working Policy.
- Under health and safety legislation the Council is obliged to ensure the health and safety of home workers in the same way as for office-based staff.
- The manager will ensure that the appropriate risk/DSE assessments are carried out in respect of the work that you carry out.
- Reasonable adjustments will be considered and put in place where necessary.
- The standard equipment required to work from home will be provided by the Council and any relevant testing of equipment will be facilitated by the Council.
- An allowance as set out in the Agile Working Policy will be paid by the Council with the employees' monthly salary. This allowance may cease to be paid in certain circumstances as set out in the Policy.
- Regular performance coaching/supervision/reviews will continue to be conducted in line with Council Policy.

Employee Declaration

Please sign to confirm that you have read, understood and agree to the conditions relating to home working in line with the Council's Agile Working Policy.

Employee Signature: Date:

The Agile Working Policy can be accessed on the intranet or from your Manager.

Please forward a copy of this document to Organisational Development

Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Workstation Checklist

Workstation location and number:

User:

Checklist completed by:

Assessment checked by:

Any further action needed? Yes No Follow-up action completed on:

The following checklist can be used to help you complete a risk assessment and comply with the Schedule to the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 as amended by the Health and Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002.

The questions and 'Things to consider' in the checklist cover the requirements of the Schedule. If you can answer 'Yes' in the second column against all the questions, having taken account of the 'Things to consider', you are complying. You will not be able to address some of the questions and 'Things to consider', e.g. on reflections on the screen, or the user's comfort, until the workstation has been installed. These will be covered in the risk assessment you do once the workstation is installed.


Work through the checklist, ticking either the 'Yes' or 'No' column against each risk factor:



- 'Yes' answers require no further action.
- 'No' answers will require investigation and/or remedial action by the workstation assessor.

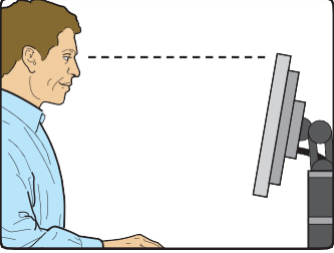
They should record their decisions in the 'Action to take' column.



Managers/Assessors should check later that actions have been taken and have resolved the problem. Remember, the checklist only covers the workstation and work environment. You also need to make sure that risks from other aspects of the work are avoided, e.g. by giving users health and safety training, and providing for breaks or changes of activity.




Watch this short video: [Temporary Working at Home - Workstation Setup - YouTube](#)

Risk Factors	Yes	No	Things to consider	Action to take
Keyboards				
Is the keyboard separate from the screen?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This is a requirement, unless the task makes it impracticable (e.g. where there is a need to use a portable).	
Does the keyboard tilt?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tilt need not be built in.	
Is it possible to find a comfortable keying position?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Try pushing the display screen further back to create more room for the keyboard, hands and wrists. Users of thick, raised keyboards may need a wrist rest.	
				
Does the user have good keyboard technique?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Training can be used to prevent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hands bent up at the wrist; • hitting the keys too hard; • overstretching the fingers. 	
Are the characters clear and readable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Keyboards should be kept clean. If characters still can't be read, the keyboard may need modifying or replacing. Use a keyboard with a matt finish to reduce glare and/or reflection.	
Mouse, trackball, etc				
Is the device suitable for the tasks it is used for?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If the user is having problems, try a different device. The mouse and trackball are general-purpose devices suitable for many tasks, and available in a variety of shapes and sizes. Alternative devices such as touch screens may be better for some tasks (but can be worse for others).	

Risk Factors	Yes	No	Things to consider	Action to take
Is the device positioned close to the user?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Most devices are best placed as close as possible, e.g. right beside the keyboard.</p> <p>Training may be needed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevent arm overreaching; • encourage users not to leave their hand on the device when it is not being used; • encourage a relaxed arm and straight wrist. 	
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">   </div>				
Is there support for the device user's wrist and forearm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Support can be gained from, for example, the desk surface or arm of a chair. If not, a separate supporting device may help. The user should be able to find a comfortable working position with the device.</p>	
Does the device work smoothly at a speed that suits the user?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>See if cleaning is required (e.g. of mouse ball and rollers).</p> <p>Check the work surface is suitable. A mouse mat may be needed.</p>	
Can the user easily adjust software settings for speed and accuracy of pointer?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Users may need training in how to adjust device settings.</p>	
Display Screens				
Are the characters clear and readable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p>Make sure the screen is clean and cleaning materials are available.</p> <p>Check that the text and background colours work well together.</p>	

Risk Factors	Yes	No	Things to consider	Action to take
Is the text size comfortable to read?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Software settings may need adjusting to change text size.	
Is the image stable, i.e. free of flicker and jitter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Try using different screen colours to reduce flicker. If there are still problems, get the set-up checked, e.g. by the equipment supplier.	
Is the screen's specification suitable for its intended use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	For example, intensive graphic work or work requiring fine attention to small details may require large display screens.	
Are the brightness and/or contrast adjustable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Separate adjustment controls are not essential, provided the user can read the screen easily at all times.	
Does the screen swivel and tilt? 	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Swivel and tilt need not be built in; you can add a swivel and tilt mechanism. However, you may need to replace the screen if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • swivel/tilt is absent or unsatisfactory; • work is intensive; and/or • the user has problems getting the screen to a comfortable position. 	
Is the screen free from glare and reflections?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Use a mirror placed in front of the screen to check where reflections are coming from. You might need to move the screen or even the desk and/or shield the screen from the source of the reflections. Screens that use dark characters on a light background are less prone to glare and reflections.	
Are adjustable window coverings provided and in adequate condition?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Check that blinds work. Blinds with vertical slats can be more suitable than horizontal ones. If these measures do not work, consider anti-glare screen filters as a last resort and seek specialist help.	

Risk Factors	Yes	No	Things to consider	Action to take
Software				
Is the software suitable for the task?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Software should help the user carry out the task, minimise stress and be user-friendly. Check users have had appropriate training in using the software. Software should respond quickly and clearly to user input, with adequate feedback, such as clear help messages.	
Furniture				
Is the work surface large enough for all the necessary equipment, papers, etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Create more room by moving printers, reference materials, etc elsewhere. If necessary, consider providing new power and telecoms sockets, so equipment can be moved. There should be some scope for flexible rearrangement.	
				
				
Can the user comfortably reach all the equipment and papers they need to use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rearrange equipment, papers etc to bring frequently used things within easy reach. A document holder may be needed, positioned to minimise uncomfortable head and eye movements.	
Are surfaces free from glare and reflection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider mats or blotters to reduce reflections and glare.	
Is the chair suitable? Is the chair stable? Does the chair have a working:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The chair may need repairing or replacing if the user is uncomfortable, or cannot use the adjustment mechanisms.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seat back height and tilt adjustment? • seat height adjustment? • castors or glides? 				

Risk Factors	Yes	No	Things to consider	Action to take
Furniture				
Is the chair adjusted correctly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The user should be able to carry out their work sitting comfortably. Consider training the user in how to adopt suitable postures while working. The arms of chairs can stop the user getting close enough to use the equipment comfortably. Move any obstructions from under the desk.	
				
Is the small of the back supported by the chair's backrest?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The user should have a straight back, supported by the chair, with relaxed shoulders.	
Are forearms horizontal and eyes at roughly the same height as the top of the DSE?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Adjust the chair height to get the user's arms in the right position, and then adjust the DSE height, if necessary.	
Are feet flat on the floor, without too much pressure from the seat on the backs of the legs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	If not, a footrest may be needed.	
Environment				
Is there enough room to change position and vary movement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Space is needed to move, stretch and fidget. Consider reorganising the office layout and check for obstructions. Cables should be tidy and not a trip or snag hazard.	
Is the lighting suitable, e.g. not too bright or too dim to work comfortably?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Users should be able to control light levels, e.g. by adjusting window blinds or light switches. Consider shading or repositioning light sources or providing local lighting, e.g. desk lamps (but make sure lights don't cause glare by reflecting off walls or other surfaces).	

Risk Factors	Yes	No	Things to consider	Action to take
Does the air feel comfortable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	DSE and other equipment may dry the air. Circulate fresh air if possible. Plants may help. Consider a humidifier if discomfort is severe.	
Are levels of heat comfortable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Can heating be better controlled? More ventilation or air conditioning may be required if there is a lot of electronic equipment in the room. Or, can users be moved away from the heat source?	
Are levels of noise comfortable?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consider moving sources of noise, e.g. printers, away from the user. If not, consider soundproofing.	

Final questions to users

- Has the checklist covered all the problems that exist when working with DSE?
- Have there been any discomfort or other symptoms which can be attributed to working with DSE?
- Are you aware that you can ask for spectacles to wear when working with DSE?
- Regular breaks from using DSE should be taken. Does the user take regular breaks working away from DSE? Take short breaks often, rather than longer ones less often. For example 5 to 10 minutes every hour is better than 20 minutes every 2 hours. Ideally, users should be able to choose when to take breaks. In most jobs it is possible to stop DSE work to do other tasks, such as going to meetings or making phone calls. Breaks or changes of activity should allow users to get up from their workstations and move around, or at least stretch and change posture. See the link below for some ideas about moving:

[Posturite A4-Advice-Sheet Agile-Working-timings 241016.pdf](#)

DSE Arrangement



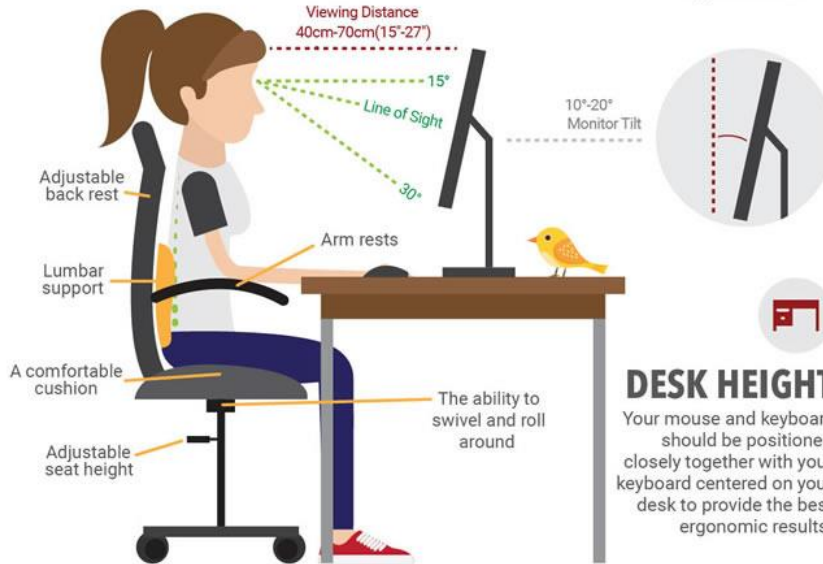
Monitor

Viewing distance 40cm–70cm (15"–27"), line of sight 15°–30°, and monitor tilt 10°–20° is a visually comfortable range for a majority of sitting users.



DESK

Your mouse and keyboard should be positioned closely together with your keyboard centered on your desk to provide the best ergonomic results.



DESK HEIGHT

Your mouse and keyboard should be positioned closely together with your keyboard centered on your desk to provide the best ergonomic results.

Write down the details of any problems here:

August 2023

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