



FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

WRITTEN BY:

Mrs Sarah Haydon, Chief Officer

REVIEWED:

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Finance Strategy and Management Committee – 27 July 2021

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REVIEW DATE:

September 2023

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Biddulph Town Council will operate a flexible working hours (flexi-time) scheme to enable employees to choose (within certain limits) the times that they start and finish work, and take breaks.

1.2 The aim of the scheme is to give employees greater flexibility to balance work commitments and personal pressures. For example, it gives the opportunity to take full or half days flexi-leave as well as short authorised absences during the working day (to attend appointments, etc.)

1.3 As a provider of services to the public, Biddulph Town Council must ensure that offering flexibility in working hours to its employees does not detract from service provision or quality.

When a position becomes vacant, or is a newly created position, the possibility of flexible working will be considered and advertised accordingly. The impact upon service delivery will be considered as part of this process.

1.4 The Chief Officer can assist with the interpretation of this policy and will be able to provide advice, guidance and support. The Chief Officer is the person delegated by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee within Biddulph Town Council to manage the implementation of the Flexible Working

Policy effectively. Additional support may be provided by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee, where appropriate.

OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY

2.1 As part of Biddulph Town Council's commitment to promoting equal opportunities, the Flexible Working Policy will be made available to full-time and part-time employees, where possible. Appropriate modifications to the scheme will be considered

PROVISIONS

3.1 The standard working hours (normal office hours) for the purpose of the flexi-time scheme are:

9:00- 17.00 (Monday to Thursday)

9:00- 16:30 (Friday)

Contracted hours and standard office hours may be subject to amendment from time to time in light of any changes that are nationally or locally agreed.

A 37-hour working week equates to five working days of 7 hours and 24 minutes. Half a day is 3 hours and 42 minutes.

A 34-hour working week equates to five working days of 6 hours and 48 minutes. Half a day is 3 hours and 24 minutes.

An 18-hour working week equates to five working days of 3 hours and 36 minutes. Half a day is 1 hour and 48 minutes.

3.2 The flexi-time scheme will allow a member of staff to work between the hours of 6am and 10pm (with the exception being Civic evening receptions, which may finish as late as 1am).

It should be noted that staff have the right to 11 hours rest between working days, e.g. if they finish work at 8pm, they shouldn't start work again until 7am the next day.

3.3 Staff may work within the office or on-site. Care should be taken to ensure they are working in a safe and efficient manner.

Consideration should be given to the **Lone Working Policy** and **Health and Safety at Work Policy**.

3.4 Staff have the right to one uninterrupted 20 minute rest break during their working day, if they work more than 6 hours a day. This could be a tea or lunch break. Staff can work up to 6 hours without a break.

3.5 There is a requirement for staff to fulfil the contractual working hours for their post, averaged over a period of time known as the 'accounting period'.

Accounting periods are 4 weeks in length; the contracted hours will be 148 for full-time employees and pro-rata for part-time employees.

3.6 Two full days or four half days may be taken off in any accounting period. These should be booked in advance. Any deviation from this should be at the discretion of the Chief Officer and will consider current workload.

3.7 At the end of each accounting period, employees who have worked more than the contracted hours for the accounting period can carry forward those accrued hours into the next accounting period. Under normal circumstances, this will be up to a maximum of 20 hours.

If the employee has worked less than the required contracted hours for the accounting period, employees can carry forward a deficit of 8 hours into the next accounting period. Employees should seek to work off the whole of the debit by the end of the next accounting period.

3.8 Paid overtime will not normally be encouraged; additional hours will normally be accounted for under the flexi-time arrangements.

If a circumstance arises where overtime may need to be considered, this will be discussed by the Finance Strategy and Management Committee.

3.9 Staff can attend medical appointments at any time, subject to the needs of the service. Hours will not be credited for standard medical appointments, such as visiting the GP or dentist. However, time would usually be credited back to employees for non-standard medical appointments, such as A&E attendance or consultants' appointments where there is no choice about the time a member of staff can attend.

Crediting non-standard medical appointments will be at the discretion of the Chief Officer.

3.10 An electronic flexi-time sheet should be used; this must be completed on a daily basis.

Improper certification of working hours may result in disciplinary action.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

4.1 Under provisions set out in the **Employment Rights Act 1996** and regulations made under it, all employees have a statutory right to ask their employer for a change to their contractual terms and conditions of employment to work flexibly.

4.2 Reasonable adjustments may need to be made for employees in line with the **Equality Act 2010**, for example, for a disability.

4.3 An employer must ensure that part-time workers are treated consistently with other workers. **The Part-time Workers (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2000** make it unlawful to treat part-time workers worse in their contractual terms and conditions than comparable full-time workers, unless different treatment can be justified on objective grounds.

4.4 The **Working Time Regulations** govern the hours most workers can work and set:

- limits on an average working week
 - statutory entitlement to paid leave for most workers
 - limits on the normal hours of night work and regular health assessments
- special regulations for young workers.