
Flexible working and other innovative staff deployment

36. During the pandemic councils needed to make the best use of their existing workforce while continuing to monitor employee wellbeing. Councils continue to look to new ways of working to improve job satisfaction, reduce sickness absence and staff turnover.

37. Home-working and hybrid working (a combination of office and home-based working) have now become commonplace. Some councils are also considering more radical working practices such as a standard four-day working week. However, whatever the working practice, employers need to ensure that service quality and productivity are maintained.

The council acknowledges that effective workforce planning and more flexible approaches to work will help their workforce

38. The People Strategy 2023-2028 recognises that the council must attract and retain talent in an increasingly competitive labour market facing a greater demand for flexible working practices.

39. One of the main themes of the strategy is to ensure employees are empowered and that they have the autonomy, flexibility and accountability to make a positive difference in their day-to-day environment.

40. Within 'Developing Workforce Skills and Capacity' in the strategy, it is noted that the transformation of council services will require changes in workforce numbers and skills. This will require effective planning and more flexible approaches to help their employees be ready for the future.

To support flexible working the council has categorised each post across four different workstyles

41. The council recognises the benefits of flexible working and accommodates flexible working arrangements. The council updated its flexible working policy in February 2024, and to support flexible working each council post has been categorised as being suitable for one of the following work styles

- **Fixed working** - Employees in posts categorised as fixed working will normally be required to work from a designated council location for all hours worked. A suitable council location will be identified in the contract of employment as their contractual work base.
- **Hybrid working** - Employees in posts categorised as suitable for hybrid working may be able to combine work from a council location with