West Lindsey District Council The Entrepreneurial Council	**CPR.58 16/17**
	Corporate Policy and Resources Committee
	Date 16 June 2016

Subject: Review of the Homeworking Policy

Report by:	Emma Redwood People & OD Team Manager
Contact Officer:	Emma Redwood People and Organisational Development Team Manager 01427 676591 Emma.redwood@west-lindsey.gov.uk
Purpose / Summary:	To review the current Homeworking Policy and recommend changes to be adopted.

RECOMMENDATION(S):
That Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approve the Homeworking Policy and the policy is adopted for all employees of the council.

Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Resources to make minor housekeeping amendments to the policy in future, in consultation with the chairman of the Corporate Policy & Resources committee and chairman of JSCC.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None

Financial :None FIN/36/17

Staffing : The policy will apply to all staff that meet the requirements for Home working to apply and adhere to the Health and Safety requirements and all council policies.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :
West Lindsey District Council has a commitment to equal opportunities.
It seeks to ensure that no potential or current employee receives less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Risk Assessment :

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities :

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)	**Yes**		**No**	x

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications	**Yes**		**No**	x

1. Introduction

The council has had a Home Working Policy in place for a number of years, however the working environment and IT infrastructure has changed considerably to enable staff to work from other locations, including working at home.

The old policy was reviewed and it was agreed that a thorough rewrite of the policy would be required to bring it up to date and to provide a clear and manageable procedure for the council.

2. Purpose

The council recognises the importance of providing a flexible working environment, which maintains high quality services whilst enabling staff to improve their work life balance.

As with other forms of flexible working there is no automatic right to be able to work from home.

Not all work is suited to working from home so availability will be based on:

- The needs of the service and the council
- Suitability of the employment and person to be able to work from home
- Demonstrable benefits and measurable outcomes for the service
- The nature of the post involved
- The suitability of the proposed work place
- Access to an adequate broadband connection
- The completion and suitability of the working from home self assessment

3. Scope

Whilst this policy applies to all staff regardless of length of service, it is recognised that some roles will be more suitable to allow working from home than others, as outlined above in section 2 and included in the policy.

4. Engagement

The policy has been developed by the People and OD Team Manager in partnership with Team managers. Consultation has also taken place with:

- Health and safety co-ordinator
- Unison and staff representatives

The draft policy has had the full support of the core leadership team, where it was agreed to progress to the JSCC to consider feedback received from that forum before progressing to CP&R committee.

5. Training and Awareness

This policy will be made available to view on the Minerva site and hard copies available at the depot once formally agreed by CP&R.

A clear communication will be sent to managers to make them aware that the policy has been reviewed and adopted and that they are responsible for cascading the information to their staff members, including staff members who do not have regular access to email.

Training and support will be available to managers in the implementation and application of this policy.

6. Recommendation

That Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approve the Homeworking Policy and the policy is adopted for all employees of the council.

Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Resources to make minor housekeeping amendments to the policy in future, in consultation with the chairman of the Corporate Policy & Resources committee and chairman of JSCC.

Attached – copy of draft Homeworking Policy

Attached – Health and Safety Assessment Form - the Health and Safety Assessment was implemented by the Health and Safety Co-ordinator and this has not changed.

DRAFT
23.5.16

JSCC Approved –

P&R Approved –

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District Council
The Entrepreneurial Council

1. Introduction

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- The needs of the service and the council
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Staff that work from home will be treated no less favourably than any other member of staff, with regards to Council policies and procedures or terms and conditions.

This policy presents practical advice for managers considering working from home for members of their team. It sets out key considerations to take into account and answers some of the most common questions.

This policy does not replace the Flexible Working Policy whereby there is legislative requirements in relation to statutory requests. The Flexible Working Policy applies to those staff who wish to make a formal request to contractually change their working arrangements.

2. Key Principles

Working from home is based on the following key principles:

- You remain an employee of West Lindsey District Council wherever you work.
- The needs of the service and the council will always be the paramount consideration.
- Working from home is voluntary and a member of staff cannot be made to work from home.
- Employees who would like their posts to be considered for home working should discuss this with their manager informally in the first instance.
- The Working Time Regulations are complied with and employees are not working excessive hours.
- Employees should be contactable when working at home, especially during agreed working hours.
- Appropriate care is taken to ensure the safety and security of equipment.
- The working environment is maintained to the agreed health and safety standards.

- All data and information produced, accessed or used in the course of performing the duties of the job is the property of the council and is subject to data protection legislation.
- The council's Code of Conduct is adhered to, regardless of where the employee works.
- Working from home should not be seen as a way of managing caring responsibilities at the same time as work. Working from home is not a substitute for child care or care of other dependents.
- All policies and procedures are maintained wherever the employee is working.

3. Definition

Acas – 'What is homeworking?
Office related roles where:
- Some employees work almost entirely at home apart from carrying out regular or occasional duties/meetings at the office or with customers
- Some employees split their time between working at home a few days a week (depending on the agreement with the employer), with the rest of the time spent in the office or with clients
- Some employees work from home only occasionally.'

4. Benefits

Research shows that working more flexibly results in a culture whereby staff are motivated, high performing and engaged.

Potential benefits for the employer can include:

- Increased productivity
- Wider choice when hiring
- More ideas from a more diverse workforce
- Improved recruitment and retention of staff
- More effective use of office and car parking space
- Reduction in sickness absence
- Helping the environment by reducing commuting

Potential benefits for the employee can include:

- Some flexibility whilst meeting business needs
- Improved productivity
- Greater job satisfaction
- Reduced travel costs and travel fatigue as a result of commuting
- Enhanced quality of life by maintaining a work life balance
- More control over their working environment

To employees, working from home can seem like an attractive option when trying to balance work and home demands, but both employees and employers should be fully aware it does not suit everyone.

To be successful, staff working from home need attributes to cope with working on their own, in reality, probably with less supervision.

Staff working from home ideally need to be:

- Happy to spend long periods on their own
- Self-disciplined and self-motivated
- A resilient personality
- Confident working without supervisions
- Able to separate work from home life

5. Health and Safety

West Lindsey District Council has a statutory duty under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 which states that an employer shall ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees. This places obligations on staff themselves to do their work in such a way as to ensure that they and any other person, including members of the household, or the public, will not be exposed to risks to their health and safety.

When employees work from home, close supervision will not be possible. There is therefore a greater responsibility upon staff working from home to ensure that work is carried out without risk to themselves or others.

Any action by the council to implement HASAW Act (and subsequent legislation) will equally apply to employees working at home.

All staff who work from home whether on an occasional or regular basis are required to undertake a self-assessment of their home working provision by completing the checklist at Appendix 1.

Any incident affecting a member of staff working from home needs to be communicated to and recorded by the council. This includes accidents and any near miss occurrences. Staff working from home are instructed to follow the corporate accident reporting procedures.

Access to your home may be required to deal with any health and safety concerns or to install, maintain or repair electrical or other equipment.

6. Manager Responsibilities

When a member of staff is working from home, managers must:

- Ensure that the employee is aware of expectations and the required standard of work, by setting clear, realistic and fair performance targets.
- Ensure that the appropriate health and safety assessment has been carried out and complied with, and any issues dealt with.
- Maintain regular communication with employees, establishing ways of keeping in touch.
- Measure and monitor the work output of the employee.

- Clearly communicate work procedures and involve the employees in any consultation / discussion about work procedures.
- Actively promote a sense of belonging to the team and to the council.
- Discuss any requirements for attendance at the office, for team meetings, training, to cover peak periods etc.
- Provide a regular opportunity for communication which is not solely work-related e.g. participation in social gatherings or outings or telephone conversations which have an element of social chat.
- Ensure that all the usual procedures for appraisal and development are adhered to. One to one meetings must be carried out with employees and they must feel they have as much opportunity for development within the council as other staff.

7. Employees Responsibilities

Employees must:

- Treat working from home as though they are in the office
- Remain contactable at all times during normal working hours unless agreed with the line manager
- Ensure Outlook calendar, Skype and other reporting systems are updated and open to view
- Be able to attend the normal workplace at short notice
- Not let their personal circumstances / home environment interrupt work
- Attend the work place for staff meetings, training, as identified by the manager
- Complete the flexi time sheet as usual and all other council systems
- Ensure that the requirements of the council's Data Protection Policy are met and the Information Security Guidelines are observed.

8. Sickness Absence

The council's normal arrangements for reporting sickness still apply. If an employee calls their manager asking to work from home as they are not feeling well the manager needs to consider whether this is appropriate. The council's general stance is that if an employee is not well enough to be in the office, they are also not fit to work from home.

9. New Employees

Managers should ensure that the council's approach to working from home is shared with applicants and new starters; this should be embedded within the interview process and at the point of induction.

Consideration should be given as to whether home working will apply to new starters straight away or whether this should apply after a specified period of time i.e. after their induction / period of training.

10. Insurance

Items of equipment belonging to the council are covered by the council's insurance whilst they are in the employee's home and when in transit. This equipment needs to

be specifically identified. Employees should also notify their home insurers of the nature and extent of the use of their home for work purposes.

The council will not contribute towards the cost of home insurance.

Employees working from home are covered by the council's Employer Liability Scheme. However, employees do have a duty of care to take reasonable care within their own working environment.

Any personal equipment used by the employee for work purposes shall not be covered by the council's insurance.

11. Costs / Expenses

Other costs such as additional energy costs and furniture will be met by the employee and not paid by the council. This is because these costs are offset by the reduction in travelling time, cost and mileage normally incurred as a result of commuting.

The council will not contribute towards the employee's broadband services. It is likely that most employees would already subscribe to broadband / internet access for personal use in their homes.

When an employee is working at or from home they must claim any mileage/journeys in line with the Travel and Subsistence Policy.

12. Specialist Equipment

The Council will consider requests for working from home where specialist equipment has been provided as a result of a workplace assessment, this will be done on a case by case basis.

If a staff member has been provided with smaller specialist equipment, such as footrests or specialist keyboards, employees can agree with their managers that they take the equipment home should they choose to work at home but that they return it to the workplace when they are working there.

13. Taxation

There should not be any personal or council tax/business rates implications for employees as a result of working from home, however you can seek further advice from the HMRC.

14. Contingency Plans in the Event of System Failure

In the event of a system failure which renders the employee unable to perform part or all of their duties at home, the following options should be prioritised and agreed in advance by the line manager and the employee:

- Travel to the office to carry out the duties or other duties
- Undertake other paper based work, if appropriate and sufficient in quantity

- Use flexi time or take holiday time
- Take the time off and work in lieu (at an agreed time) when the system becomes functional again

15. Monitoring and review

All working arrangements, both informal and formal, should be subject to and be monitored on a regular basis, through one to one meetings and appraisals and other performance management systems.

Where working arrangements are found to be no longer meeting service requirements, it may become necessary for the manager to consult changes with the employee concerned.

If an employee is found to be abusing their working from home arrangements then this will be investigated under the council's Disciplinary Policy.

Policy Statement
West Lindsey District Council has a commitment to equal opportunities.
It seeks to ensure that no potential or current employee receives less favourable treatment than another on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Appendix 2

Managing by Performance and Output

New ways of working will require a need to manage by performance / output as opposed to presenteeism.

The council recognises this may be a change for some who will be more used to staff being in the office regularly or on a daily basis. The basic principles of management still apply but managers will just need to ensure that there are additional protocols in place, some of which are covered below.

Managing Remote Workers

This will not only require creative thinking, but also a good level of communication, organisation, trust and working together in order to ensure that the arrangements put in place do not have an impact upon the quality of work or the targets that the service is required to meet.

Having an adaptable style of management will ensure managers can take advantage of opportunities to improve services offered and support employees with different work styles and methods. Managers cannot expect to gain from flexibility from employees and then to manage in a strict and rigid way.

Managing employees who work remotely should not be radically different from managing them in their specified place of work. However, it is important not to have an 'out of sight, out of mind' approach, whereby just because employees are not physically present, they get overlooked. It is therefore important to establish some ground rules with employees when they move towards remote / home working.

 Manager Responsibilities

Setting Clear Expectation and Outlining Objectives

Agree in advance, what work needs to be completed
Managers may wish to discuss and agree the scope of work that will be undertaken, outlining the expectations and setting deadlines where required, during the period of remote working.

Agree accessibility and contact
Depending on the role, the employee may need to be available to customers and colleagues during certain times in their normal working day or during the entire day, where this is the case; it is important to agree in advance what these times will be and how the employees can be contacted. This may include forwarding work extension numbers to the employee's mobile or from where they are working that day.

Employees should be informed that there may be occasions where they are asked to work from the office to provide cover at short notice due to staff absence etc. managers should consider all available options to cover short term absences.

Maintaining Communications
Regular one to one's / Appraisals
It is important to continue regular one to ones with employees to discuss their progress on the agreed objectives and keeping them informed on developments within the department and organisation. In accordance with the council's appraisal process, clear objectives / targets / deadlines and performance standards should be agreed with all employees including those who are home / remote workers. Ensuring that remote employees are included in personal development opportunities.

Agree 'check-in procedures
Managers may wish to agree in advance the frequency and method for checking in (by telephone, by email or arranging a face to face meeting). How, when and the frequency of meetings, especially where the employee is working remotely on a regular basis. managers should also make themselves available to employees and respond to any questions they may have in a timely manner.
It should be made clear that employees refusing to attend team meetings 'because they are working from home' will not be acceptable.

Employee's Welfare
Just because employees are not physically present, it does not mean that they are no longer part of the team. It is essential to include them in any messages and to invite them to meetings or events, even if they are unlikely to be able to attend. Keeping in touch with employees who work remotely is important so that they feel informed and included.

The employer has a duty of care to the employee. It is therefore important to watch out for signs that they may be switching off, becoming de-motivated or feeling isolated.

Focusing on the Outcomes

Managers should focus on the 'outputs' and not how and when the employee works to achieve what they need to do. For example, an advantage of working remotely can be that the employee chooses the hours worked across the day, if this fits in with the needs of the service. Without the need to travel into the usual place of work, an earlier start can be made, or the employee might choose to work later into the evening. With a focus on outputs, the person should be able to plan their work in the most effective way.

Performance Management
If problems with performance arise, it is important to provide specific feedback on the areas of concerns and provide the employee with an opportunity to discuss any issues that have whilst working remotely and to agree a way forward. Ideally any feedback should be given during a face to face meeting but if that is not possible, this may be done over the phone or via video call at a suitable time taking into accounting the confidential nature of the subject.

Depending on what the concerns are, the situation may need to be further dealt with in line with another policy such as Capability or Disciplinary policy.

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If you would like a copy of this in large, clear print, audio, Braille or in another language, please telephone

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West Lindsey
DISTRICT COUNCIL
The Entrepreneurial Council

Self-Assessment Checklist

Prior to employees commencing working from home or away from their normal office location, this form must be completed by the employee in accordance with directions given by for workplace assessment. Any issues arising from the information given should be resolved by the Manager (with the assistance of the Safety Champion or Health and Safety Co-ordinator) Completed forms must be retained by the Manager and a copy sent to POD

Name:	**Date of completion:**
Address:	**Date of review:** (At least one year after last assessment)

IMPORTANT:
If there are any changes in your health or you make any adjustments to your working conditions i.e. relocate to another room or move furniture around, you should inform your Manager as a new self assessment may need to be undertaken.
Expectant mothers – please notify your Manager as soon as possible of your pregnancy as a risk assessment will need to be undertaken by your Manager with the assistance of the Safety Champion or Health and Safety Co-ordinator
Work Area Layout

Please provide a simple line drawing of your workstation area (this does not need to be to scale), detailing location of desk / table within the room and general layout of room and where possible provide photographs.

Fire	Yes	No	Comments
Is the work area tidy?	🟩	🟥	
Are waste materials regularly disposed of?	🟩	🟥	
Are your exit routes clear?	🟩	🟥	
Do you have an escape plan? (i.e. know exactly what you would do in an emergency	🟩	🟥	
Is a working smoke alarm fitted? (Alarms should be tested monthly)	🟩	🟥	
Electrical Equipment (Please note that the Council is responsible only for equipment it has supplied. Equipment, electrical sockets and other parts of your domestic electrical system are your responsibility.)	Yes	No	Comments
Are there any obvious damage to leads or plugs? (e.g. cracked/loose casing, missing screws, etc.)	🟥	🟩	
Any evidence of overheating? (Look for discolouration.)	🟥	🟩	
Has your PC or Laptop been connected via an anti-surge extension without using multi-plug adaptor?	🟩	🟥	
Are the cables secure in all plugs and have you ensured there are no trailing wires?	🟩	🟥	

Slips Trips & Falls	Yes	No	Comments
Floor coverings sound, and without defects?	🟩	🟥	
Are walkways clear of tripping hazards e.g. trailing cables?	🟩	🟥	
Do you have a suitable work chair with 5 star base?	🟩	🟥	
Working Environment	Yes	No	Comments
Is the temperature adequate?	🟩	🟥	
Is the ventilation adequate?	🟩	🟥	
Do you have adequate lighting, including any necessary task lighting?	🟩	🟥	

Display Screen Equipment	Yes	No	Comments
Do you use your PC or Laptop for a total of more than two hours a day or more than one hour a day continuously?			If yes, complete the separate DSE questionnaire (attached)
Working Alone	Yes	No	Comments
Has the manager/ employee contact been you discussed with you?			

Accidents/First Aid/Sickness Reporting	Yes	No	Comments
Do you know the procedure for reporting any accidents / incidents or work related illnesses?			
Do you have a first aid kit available whilst working at home? (A supply of plasters would be acceptable)			
Are you aware that you must comply with the normal sickness reporting procedures (i.e. as if you were office-based)			
Well-being	Yes	No	Comments
Do you suffer any discomfort or ill health, which you believe, has resulted from your work?			See the separate DSE questionnaire (attached)
Are there any aspects of your working conditions which, you believe, may cause you physical or mental discomfort?			
Security	Yes	No	Comments
What security measures are in place in your home – e.g. are your exit doors secured by a mortise deadlock and/or security bolts?; are your accessible windows secured by key operated window locks?			
Laptop and confidential files locked away when not in use?			
Screensaver passwords should be in place.			
Have you put measures in place to ensure your screen cannot be overlooked by anyone not authorised to see it – from inside or outside the room / property?			

Equipment	Serial No.	Condition	P A tested
Laptop			
Mobile Phone			
Other equipment			

Best Practice Guidelines/Your obligations:	Yes	No	Comments
Have you been made aware of Data Protection issues (e.g. confidentiality of personal information)			
Rest breaks: Have you been made aware the HSE recommends: • a 5-10 minute break / change of activity every hour			
Have you given your manager your telephone number to use in the event of an emergency?			
Have you been given the technical support contact details (name, e-mail address and phone number)			

Any other comments regarding your working environment:

Signature: **Date:**

Thank you for completing this form. The completion of this DSE Self Assessment form will not automatically mean you have been accepted to work away from the office or at home. It will be useful to assist in determining your suitability and ensuring that your working conditions at home comply with current legislation.

Display Screen Equipment Check List

Service Team:	**Employee Name:**
Section:	**Date of Assessment:**

A. <u>**Organisation of Work Time**</u>		
1	Do you regularly use display screen equipment for an hour or more on an average day? If your answer was **Yes** continue to answer all the following questions. If your answer was **No** please move onto **Question D2**.	**YES / NO**
2.	Does the work on the screen alternate with other activities enabling you to move from the screen at least once in every hour?	**YES / NO**

B. <u>**The Equipment**</u>		
3	Does the equipment carry a sticker indicating that it has undergone an electrical safety check?	**YES** / **NO**
4	Can you spot any defects e.g. loose wires or physical damage?	**YES** / **NO**
5	Is the screen flicker free?	**YES** / **NO**
6	Is the desk large enough to enable you to work in comfort and to rest your wrists in front of the keyboard?	**YES** / **NO**
7	Does your chair allow you to adopt a comfortable working posture, and does it have a 5 star base with castors to allow ease of movement?	**YES** / **NO**
8	Is your chair adjustable in height, with a backrest that can be adjusted for height and forwards and backwards?	**YES** / **NO**
9	Do all your adjustments on the chair work?	**YES** / **NO**
10	When your chair is set to the correct height, do your feet rest comfortably on the floor?	**YES** / **NO**
11	If your feet do not rest comfortably on the floor do you have a footrest?	**YES** / **NO**

C. Your Environment		
12	Do you have sufficient space under the desk to change position and vary your movements?	**YES / NO**
13	Is the floor area around and under your workstation free from obstruction i.e. stored boxes etc?	**YES / NO**
14	Is your screen free of reflections and glare from the lighting and windows?	**YES / NO**
15	If not are blinds/ curtains available?	**YES / NO**
16	Is the ventilation at your workstation sufficient without causing uncomfortable draughts?	**YES / NO**
17	Are all the cables to your equipment routed to avoid tripping hazards?	**YES / NO**
18	Is the temperature at your workstation comfortable?	**YES / NO**

D. The Working Position		
19	In general, does the workstation conform to the measurements in **Fig.1** and **Example 1** for laptop use?	**YES / NO**

E. Your Comfort		
20	Do you experience physical discomfort whilst at your workstation?	**YES / NO**
21	Do you suffer from tired eyes or eyestrain?	**YES / NO**
22	Are you aware of your entitlement to eyesight test?	**YES / NO**
23	If your answer to question 20 is **Yes**, please indicate the location of your discomfort and further assistance can be sort from the Safety Champion or Health and Safety Co-ordinator	

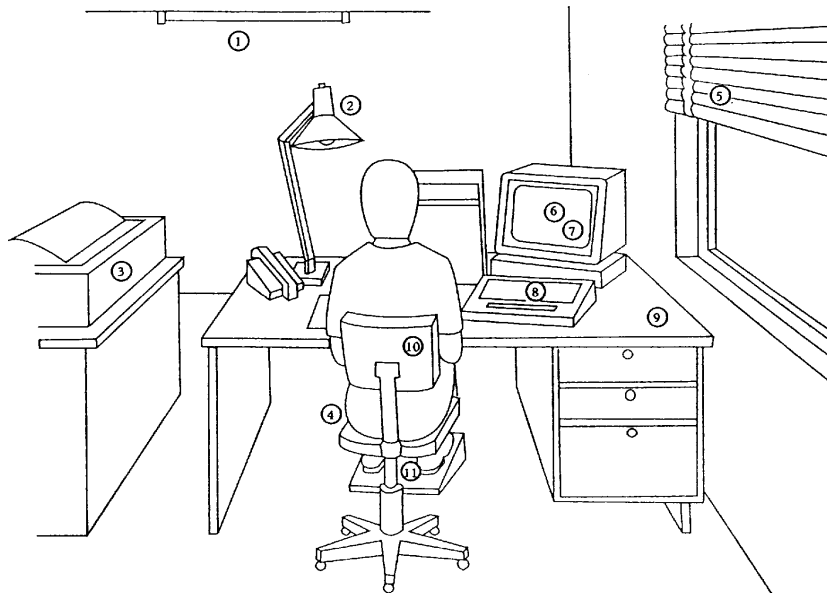| **Items Requiring Attention**	

FIGURE 1

SUBJECTS DEALT WITH IN THE SCHEDULE

① ADEQUATE LIGHTING

② ADEQUATE CONTRAST, NO GLARE OR DISTRACTING REFLECTIONS

③ DISTRACTING NOISE MINIMISED

④ LEG ROOM AND CLEARANCES TO ALLOW POSTURAL CHANGES

⑤ WINDOW COVERING

⑥ SOFTWARE: APPROPRIATE TO TASK, ADAPTED TO USER, PROVIDES FEEDBACK ON SYSTEM STATUS, NO UNDISCLOSED MONITORING

⑦ SCREEN: STABLE IMAGE, ADJUSTABLE, READABLE, GLARE/REFLECTION FREE

⑧ KEYBOARD: USABLE, ADJUSTABLE, DETACHABLE, LEGIBLE

⑨ WORK SURFACE: ALLOW FLEXIBLE ARRANGEMENTS, SPACIOUS, GLARE FREE
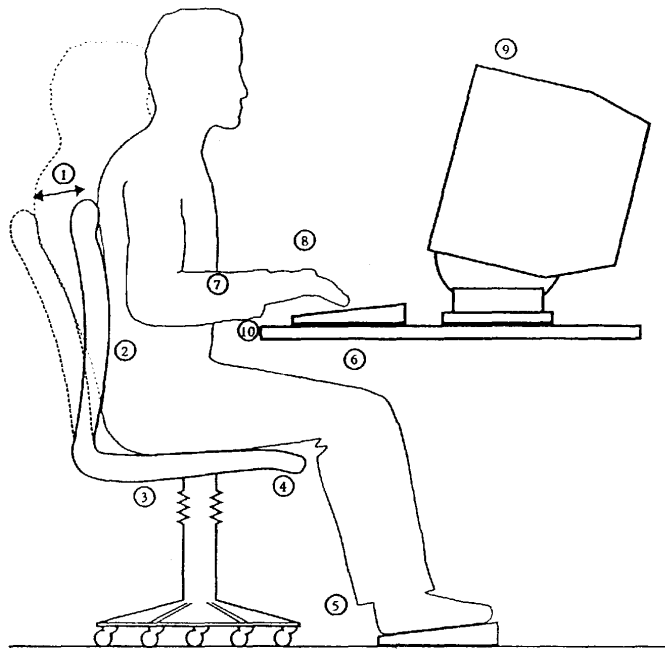
⑩ WORK CHAIR: ADJUSTABLE

⑪ FOOTREST

FIGURE 2

SEATING AND POSTURE FOR TYPICAL OFFICE TASKS

①   SEAT BACK ADJUSTABILITY

②   GOOD LUMBAR SUPPORT

③   SEAT HEIGHT ADJUSTABILITY

④   NO EXCESS PRESSURE ON UNDERSIDE OF THIGHS AND BACKS OF KNEES

⑤   FOOT SUPPORT IF NEEDED

⑥   SPACE FOR POSTURAL CHANGE, NO OBSTACLES UNDER DESK

⑦   FOREARMS APPROXIMATELY HORIZONTAL

⑧   MINIMAL EXTENSION, FLEXION OR DEVIATION OF WRISTS

⑨   SCREEN HEIGHT AND ANGLE SHOULD ALLOW COMFORTABLE HEAD POSITION

⑩   SPACE IN FRONT OF KEYBOARD TO SUPPORT HANDS/WRISTS DURING PAUSES IN KEYING

The effects of working with laptops

This information is intended to provide some suggestions as to how to best use laptop computers in the context of avoiding injury.

In today's business environment laptops are often provided to give a flexible working alternative. However, the convenience of laptops does cause concern to our health, safety and comfort. It can therefore be difficult to adopt good working practices that ensure correct posture and a comfortable working position.

Working with a laptop

Where prolonged office or home use is likely, a separate keyboard and mouse must be used. Also, the laptop itself should be positioned on either a laptop stand or laptop monitor risers. See diagrams below.

Example 1: Good office-based laptop set-up

Example 2: Poor office-based laptop set-up

Working from home with a laptop

When working with laptops the important factor is to avoid poor posture. When using a laptop there are some points to remember:

- Sitting

    - Use a five-castor chair
    - Adopt a good sitting position in order to avoid bending or straining your wrists
    - Adjust the seat height to make sure your forearms are horizontal when your hands are on the keyboard, in order to allow your wrists to be horizontal when typing.
    - Try not to slouch. Do not sit forward and crouch over the keyboard.
    - Ensure the laptop screen is positioned and angled at a comfortable height and viewing distance.

- Reading the screen

    - Avoid glare. Glare and reflected light can affect screen clarity when using laptops.
    - Sit with the laptop screen directly in front of you. Do not work with the screen at any angle other than at right angles to your line of sight.

- If glare occurs, either draw curtains / blinds, adjust your screen – either by means of programme menu controls or move to another position within the room – in order to reduce reflections.
- Do not sit with your back facing a window.
- Regularly clean your screen.
- Adjust screen brightness to suit surrounding light levels.

- Do not:

  - use a laptop whilst sitting on a sofa or easy chair
  - work with the laptop on your lap
  - use a laptop when lying on the bed. This causes strain to the neck and back.

Manual Handling

- Do not carry equipment or papers unless they are really likely to be needed. Consider using a backpack to cut down strain on arms and distribute loads evenly across the body (or wheeled luggage might be worth considering). Remember you may be able to avoid carrying heavy papers by sending them in advance, by post or e-mail, to your destination.