



**Corporate Policy and
Resources Committee**

12 January 2017

Subject: Review of the Flexible Working Policy

Report by:

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Purpose / Summary:

To review the current Flexible Working Policy and recommend changes to be adopted.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approve the Flexible Working 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: Legislation requires the council to have a Flexible Working policy

Financial :None

Staffing : The policy will apply to all staff that meet the requirements for flexible working.

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 Flexible Working Policy in place for a number of years, however legislation has changed and these details have been contained within the reviewed policy.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy has been produced to provide managers and staff with sufficient information in relation to staff requesting flexible working hours.

It applies to all council employees.

This policy aims to detail the employee's rights, the procedure for requesting flexible working and the responsibilities of employees, managers and Human Resources.

West Lindsey District Council is committed to supporting employees to achieve a work / life balance and flexible working is seen as a key driver in enabling employees to achieve this. All requests will be dealt with in a reasonable manner and wherever possible, the employee's needs will be met.

3. Engagement

The policy has been reviewed by the HR & OD Officer in partnership with Team managers. Consultation has also taken place with Unison and Staff Reps

The draft policy has had the full support of the core leadership team and has been discussed and supported by the Joint Staff Consultative Committee on 24 November 2016.

An amendment/deletions and additions sheet has been added below for ease of understanding.

4. Training and Awareness

This policy will be made available to view on the Minerva site and hard copies available at the depot if 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.

5. Recommendation

That Corporate Policy and Resources Committee approve the Flexible Working 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.

Flexible Working Policy - Additions / Amendments / Deletions

- a) **ADDITION:** A table of contents has been added to assist employees find the information they are looking for.
- b) **AMENDMENT: 2.0 Employee rights and eligibility** – (previously section ‘2. Definition’) has been amended in line with new legislation. Now all employees with 26 weeks service have the statutory right to request flexible working for any reason (previously it was for staff with children under 6 (or 18 if disabled) or for carers of adults). The whole process, from request to appeal, should be completed within three months.
- c) **DELETION: 3.0 Types of flexible working** – ‘Flexi Time’ and ‘Late / Early Starting / Leaving’ has been removed, as these are covered by the separate Flexi Time Policy and are generally common practice across the majority of staff within the Council now. They are now included in the list at 3.9 *Additional initiatives provided by the Council*.
- d) **AMENDMENT: 3.5 Voluntary reduced hours / Part time working** has been amended to include this option on a permanent basis. Previously the policy stated it was just a temporary option.
- e) **ADDITION: 3.6 Job sharing** and **3.7 Working from home** have been added to the list of options for flexible working, based on ACAS guidelines.
- f) **ADDITION:** Section **4.0 Needs of the organisation** – a list of things to consider when dealing with a flexible working request has been added to assist managers make decision.
- g) **ADDITION:** Sections **5.0 Employee – Making an application** and section **6.0 Team Manager – Handling the request** have been added to provide easy reference to the process staff and managers need to go through. Previously, the policy had information in lots of different places.
- h) **DELETION: FORM – Flexible Working Request** - Once an employee had submitted a request, the Manager used to have to sign and return an acknowledgement slip to the employee – this is now deemed as unnecessary as it added an extra step into the process and is not required by law.

- i) **DELETION:** The 'Guidelines for employees' has been removed from the back of the policy, as all the information is now included within the policy.

- j) **ADDITION:** Template letters for 'accepting' and 'rejecting' requests will be made available on Minerva as a starting point for managers. It is recognised that each case is individual, so managers are encouraged to add or delete information as necessary – support is available from HR if required.