



Oundle Town Council

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HOME WORKING POLICY

1.0 Scope

This policy applies to all staff who may work from home.

2.0 What is Home Working?

Categories of home working:

- a) **Permanent full-time home working**- Where a member of staff is designated a home worker
- b) **Part-time home working**- Where a member of staff regularly works from home for part of the working day or week but still has an office base available on council premises.
- c) **Periodic home working**- where a member of staff can work from home time to time for a particular reason. (e.g. Individual circumstances, nature of work etc) but is normally based on Council premises

3.0 Circumstances for home working

There are several circumstances in which Oundle Town Council will consider home working for an individual member of staff or a group of staff.

- a) In response to government guidelines e.g. Covid19.
- b) In response to a short-term caring responsibility.
- c) To support flexible working arrangements, this could be occasional instances of working from home or extend to a member of staff asking to permanently work from home for part of their contracted hours.
- d) To support staff in the workplace who may suffer from or be recovering from a health condition.

4.0 Benefits of Home Working

There are several reasons why home working is desirable, including:

- a) providing greater flexibility
- b) increasing scope to meet Council's commitment to equal opportunities, (e.g. it may enable a person with disabilities to do a job they otherwise would not be able to do)
- c) reducing energy consumption and pollution from unnecessary car journeys
- d) broadening the traditional recruitment market and gaining access to alternative labour markets
- e) attracting and retaining staff

5.0 How home working arrangements are to be agreed

a) Home Working due to Government Guidelines

Where home working is implemented because of government guidelines, all staff who can work from home will do so. This will be reported to the council as soon as is practicable. Arrangements for home working will be reviewed as government guidelines are amended.

b) Requests for permanent home working arrangements

If a member of staff requests that their post be considered for permanent home working, (either wholly, or for part of their hours to be worked from home on a permanent basis) the request must be made in writing and considered by the personnel committee. The personnel committee would consider the request against operational requirements and in line with other Town Council policies.

c) Temporary home working (request from staff)

If a member of staff requests home working to cover a short-term issue then this can be agreed with the Clerk for up to three days. The Clerk will consider the suitability of the post for home working and if the circumstances of the request mean that it is more appropriate to consider the special leave policy, or to ask the employee to take annual leave.

In the case of the Clerk the request for home working will be considered by the Mayor and Chairman of the personnel committee, or their deputies if they are not available.

If any member requests home working for a period of more than three consecutive days or for more than 10 days in any rolling six-month period then this will be considered by the personnel committee.

6.0 Working from home and sickness

Where a member of staff is home working and becomes unwell they should report their absence in line with the sick leave policy in the normal way.

7.0 Working from home employee responsibilities

Where employees are working from home it is their responsibility to ensure that they have a reliable broadband connection, such that they can connect to the remote desktop and download documents.

The employee will be expected to work their normal hours as far as is practicable, although the Council recognises that some flexibility may be required depending on individual circumstances.

The employee should ensure that they have access to welfare facilities as they would in the normal office environment.

The employee should follow the council's lone working policy.

The employee must take responsibility for considering their own health and safety whilst working from home and highlight any issues to the Clerk for consideration, such as Display Screen Equipment (DSE) requirements.

Where an employee is using their own IT equipment, they must ensure that suitable anti-virus software is installed, the council will reimburse the staff member for this.

8.0 Working from home Oundle Town Council Responsibilities

The Town Council will, where possible, supply IT equipment, e.g. phones and laptops to support home-working, these will be covered under the Town Councils insurance.

The Town Council will support staff in meeting health and safety requirements whilst working from home, e.g. DSE requirements.

When working from home temporarily HSE has advised it not necessary to carry out DSE work Risk Assessments for temporary work at home during the pandemic. However, it is likely that home working may become more common so it makes sense to consider longer term arrangements for home working.

The Clerk will ensure that home-workers are still able to access support from their line manager and team members and hold regular virtual meetings to support anyone home working.

This policy does not form an alteration to any contract of employment.

Policy approved on 17th July 2020