

Flexible Working Hours Scheme



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SCHEME OF FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

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SCHEME OF FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the main provisions for the operation of Flexible Working Hours. These arrangements have been designed to introduce flexibility in the pattern of working hours and it is agreed that they must at all times operate in accordance with and subject to service requirements.

2. SCOPE

This scheme covers all council employees except certain general categories of staff who are excluded by reason of the pattern of their working hours and/or the nature of the duties that they perform. The Depute Chief Executive will determine the categories of staff in the Service participating in the scheme.

Relevant categories of employees who are excluded from the scheme are set out in the Appendix to this document.

3. APPLICATION

- 3.1 Depute Chief Executives may modify or suspend the operation of Flexible Working Hours in consultation with the Head of Corporate Services if such action is necessary to maintain the level of services.
- 3.2 Depute Chief Executives have discretion to vary or waive the rules of operation of the scheme where, in exceptional circumstances, the interest of services and/or staff would be put at risk. Such discretion would only be exercised during the limited period of the exceptional circumstances.
- 3.3 At all times work locations must be staffed to appropriate levels as determined by Depute Chief Executives. In relation to the determined staffing levels, employees will be required from time to time to adopt flexible working practices. The purpose of this provision is to ensure that, during the flexible band periods, employees will undertake reasonable duties that may not be detailed in their respective job descriptions.
- 3.4 Depute Chief Executives will consult with the appropriate trade unions prior to the implementation of decisions relating to the scheme.

4. MAIN PROVISIONS

4.1 Time Recording

Employees participating in this scheme are required to record their attendance at work by means of one of the following two methods:

- a suitable automatic time meter system; or
- a manual self recording system.

Depute Chief Executives, in consultation with the Head of Corporate Services, will determine which system should be introduced in each situation.

4.2 Hours of Work

Normal Office Hours

Monday to Thursday	0830 – 1700
Friday	0830 – 1600

Flexible Hours

Bandwidth	0800 – 1800
Flexible Starting Period	0800 – 1000
Flexible Lunch Period (minimum of 30 minutes)	1200 – 1400
Flexible Finishing Period (Monday to Thursday)	1600 – 1800
Flexible Finishing Period (Friday)	1530 – 1800
Core Time (Monday to Thursday)	1000 – 1200 1400 – 1600
Core Time (Friday)	1000 – 1200 1400 – 1530

4.3 Flexible Periods

- 4.3.1 Subject to the staffing levels determined by the Depute Chief Executive, employees may vary the start and finish of their working day in accordance with the rules of the scheme.
- 4.3.2 Employees are required to take a lunch break of not more than 2 hours between 12 noon and 2.00 pm and must record the starting and finishing times of their lunch periods. A minimum lunch break of 30 minutes will be recorded.

4.4 Authorised Absences During Core Time

All employees are required to work during specified core times unless absent for an authorised reason. The following list sets out authorised absences during core times subject to normal approval procedures:

- Annual Leave;
- Authorised trade union duties, activities or training;
- Authorised training course, conference or seminar;
- Certified sickness;
- Credit leave (as per terms of the Scheme);
- Examination and study revision release;
- Jury Service;
- Leave covered by the Family Care Policy & Procedure
- Public Holidays;
- Public or National Joint Council duty release;
- Service in non-Regular Forces;
- Special Leave (e.g. preventative medical/dental appointments and other such appointments where absence during core-time is considered to be unavoidable);
- Suspension from duty;
- Any other absences authorised by the Depute Chief Executive.

DATA LABEL: PUBLIC

4.5 **Application of Hours within Accounting Period**

- Accounting Period is 4 weeks;
- standard weekly hours of work are 36;
- standard hours per accounting period are 144 (i.e. 36 x 4);
- standard daily hours of work are 7 hours 12 minutes.

4.6 **Recording Absences from Work**

4.6.1 Absences are recorded as follows:

- A full day is 7 hours 12 minutes;
- A full morning or afternoon is 3 hours 36 minutes.

4.6.2 Where an absence is less than a half-day duration, one of the following alternatives will be applied:

- a) where the absence starts after the employee has completed a period of work and finishes before the end of the half day period, the actual hours of absence will be recorded;
- b) where a period of absence (other than Special Leave) is not covered by (a) above, the start or finish times will be regarded as core time hours;
- c) where Special Leave cases are not covered by (a) above, the Depute Chief Executive will decide whether the period of absence is to be granted as:
 - the start or finish times of normal office hours; or
 - those of core time.

The Depute Chief Executive's decision will depend on the reasons for absence. In any event, the lunch period will be regarded as 1200 – 1400 hours.

4.7 **Credit and Debit Hours**

4.7.1 Employees are permitted to carry forward a maximum of **15 hours time credit** from one accounting period to the next. Hours in excess of 15 will normally be forfeited.

4.7.2 Employees are not permitted to exceed a time debit of 15 hours at any time within an accounting period. Hours in excess of 15 on any day will be unpaid and will be regarded as unauthorised absence from work.

4.7.3 Employees are permitted to carry forward a maximum of **10 hours time debit** from one accounting period to the next. Hours in excess of 10 will normally be regarded as unauthorised absence and will be unpaid.

4.7.4 Time credits cannot be converted into additional annual leave.

4.7.5 In any one accounting period the maximum permitted credit leave is:

- one whole day and one half day; or
- three half days.

- 4.7.6 There is no requirement to have accumulated sufficient time credits in advance, however, a time debit of:
- 15 hours must not be exceeded within an accounting period
 - 10 hours must not be exceeded between one accounting period and the next.

- 4.7.7 Subject to the requirements of the service, flexi leave may be taken in conjunction with annual leave.

4.8 Authorised Overtime

- 4.8.1 Where an employee qualifies for overtime payment, all overtime worked will require to have prior authorisation by the Depute Chief Executive.
- 4.8.2 All overtime hours must be recorded separately from Flexible Working Hours.
- 4.8.3 Overtime payment, for those employees who qualify, will normally only be paid for time worked before 8 am and after 6 pm. However, at the discretion of the Depute Chief Executive, special provision can be made to permit payment of overtime within the Flexi-time working day, but outwith normal office opening hours i.e.:
- Monday to Thursday between 8.00 am and 8.30 am, and/or between 5.00 pm and 6.00 pm;
 - Friday between 8.00 am and 8.30 am and/or between 4.00 pm and 6.00 pm.

5. GENERAL

5.1 New Entrant and Transfers

- 5.1.1 New employees who qualify for participation in the Scheme will be able to participate from a date to be determined by the Depute Chief Executive.
- 5.1.2 Employees participating in the Scheme who transfer to another service or leave the service of the council must clear any debit/credit hours prior to the transfer or termination of employment. Managers should ensure that employees adhere to this arrangement.

5.2 Management of the Scheme

The Depute Chief Executive is responsible for the management and administration of this Scheme at service level and will introduce appropriate monitoring arrangements to ensure that employees comply with the rules of the Scheme. In services where time recording is provided by an automatic time meter system, the Depute Chief Executive will utilise the monitoring facilities available under the system.

5.3 Discipline

The Depute Chief Executive, in accordance with the council's Disciplinary Procedure, will deal with any misconduct relating to the operation of the Scheme of Flexible Working Hours. Any disciplinary action under the Procedure may also be accompanied by the employee's removal from participation in the Scheme.

5.4 **Termination of Scheme**

The Depute Chief Executive, in consultation with the appropriate trade unions, may terminate operation of the Scheme of Flexible Working Hours in a service. Notice of the termination must be made in writing and must include at least three months notice of termination.



SCHEME OF FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

GENERAL EXCLUSIONS FROM SCHEME

- 1 The supervisors of those employees who, for service requirements, are excluded from the Scheme will also be excluded.
- 2 Those employees defined within the following paragraphs of the Scheme of Conditions of Service for former APT & C Staff as:-
 - Paragraph 40(c) - in receipt of Weekend Working Allowance;
 - Paragraph 40(d) - in receipt of Night Working Allowance;
 - Paragraph 40(e)(i) - Rotating Shift Workers;
 - Paragraph 40(e)(ii) - Alternating Shift Workers; and
 - Paragraph 40(f) - in receipt of Irregular Working Hours Allowance.
- 3 Sessional Staff as determined by the Depute Chief Executive.
- 4 Those employed under the former Scheme of Conditions of Service for Residential Staffs.
- 5 Those employed under the former Scheme of Conditions of Service for Nursery Staffs.

The above list does not preclude a Depute Chief Executive, following consultation with the trade unions, from determining further inclusions or exclusions from the scheme on the grounds of efficient service provision.

SCHEME OF FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS

PART – TIME WORKING AND COMPRESSED HOURS

1. SCOPE AND APPLICATION

- 1.1 The council's Scheme of Flexible Working Hours is open to both full-time and part-time employees with the exception of those groups listed in Appendix 1 of the scheme. This guidance note clarifies the application of the Scheme to employees working part-time or compressed hours and should be read in conjunction with the full scheme.

2. DEFINITIONS

Part – Time Employees

- 2.1 A part-time employee is classed as an employee who works less hours than those of full-time employees (36 hours per week), including those who job-share.

Compressed Working Hours

- 2.2 Compressed Working Hours is an arrangement whereby an employee works full-time hours (36 hours) over a reduced number of days. The following are typical examples of compressed working arrangements:

- 36 hours worked over four 9 hour days
- 72 hours worked over a 9 day fortnight

Standard Working Hours

- 2.3 An employee's standard working hours are specified in his/her contract of employment.

Bandwidths

- 2.4 Bandwidth refers to the period between the earliest permitted start of work and the latest permitted finish time.

Core Time

- 2.5 Core time is the period during which all employees must be at work.

3. APPLICATION OF SCHEME BANDWIDTHS

- 3.1 Bandwidths for full-time and part-time employees should be clearly defined to ensure clarity and equality in implementing the Scheme.
- 3.2 For part-time employees who work 7.2 hours or more per day, the flexi bandwidths will be 8am – 6pm in line with those for full-time employees.

- 3.3 For part-time employees who work standard half days (3.6 hours in the morning or afternoon) the flexi bandwidths will be 8am – 1.30pm for mornings and 12.30 – 6pm for afternoons consistent with those for full-time employees.
- 3.4 Out with the standard examples above, bandwidths for part-time employees should be agreed on an individual basis according to hours of work and the needs of the service. Service Managers should specify each part-time employee's flexi bandwidths within 1 hour before the start of the standard working hours and within 1 hour after the end of the standard working hours.
- 3.5 Individual flexi bandwidths must be specified in the Mitrefinch Time Recording System or whichever alternative system is in place.

4. APPLICATION OF CORE TIME

- 4.1 For part-time employees who work standard daily hours (7.2 hours) or more per day, core time will be 10am-12noon and 2pm – 4pm consistent with that for full-time employees.
- 4.2 For part-time employees who work standard half days (3.6 hours) in the morning or afternoon), core time will be 10am – 12 noon or 2pm – 4pm consistent with that for full-time employees.
- 4.3 Out with the standard examples above, core time for part-time employees should be agreed on an individual basis according to hours of work and the needs of the service. Service Managers should specify each part-time employee's core time within 1 hour after the start of the standard working hours and within 1 hour before the end of the standard working hours. Where appropriate core time should also take account of any flexibility around a lunch break.
- 4.4 Individual core times must be specified in the in the Mitrefinch Time Recording System or whichever alternative system is in place.

5. APPLICATION OF CREDIT AND DEBIT BALANCES

Credit/Debit

- 5.1 The maximum number of Credit Hours that a full time employee is permitted to carry over into another accounting period is 15. For part-time employees the maximum should be calculated on a pro-rata basis as follows:
- $15/36 \times \text{number of contracted hours}$
- Flexi-credit hours in excess of individually calculated allowances at the end of an accounting period will normally be forfeited and will not be converted into pay or Time Off in Lieu (TOIL).
- 5.2 The maximum number of Debit Hours that a full time employee is permitted to carry over into another accounting period is 10. For part-time employees the maximum should be calculated on a pro-rata basis as follows:
- $10/36 \times \text{number of contracted hours}$

Flexi-debit in excess of individually calculated allowances at the end of an accounting period will normally be regarded as unauthorised absence and will be unpaid.

- 5.3 The maximum Time Debit that a full – time employee is permitted is 15 hours. A maximum for part-time employees should be calculated on a pro-rata basis as follows:

- $15/36 \times \text{number of contracted hours}$

Time Debit in excess of the maximum on any day within an accounting period will be regarded as unauthorised absence and unpaid.

Authorised Leave

- 5.4 The Scheme of Flexible Working Hours permits employees to use credit hours to take authorised leave. In any one accounting period the maximum permitted number of hours credit leave for a full time employee is 10.8 hours (one whole day and one half day or three half days). The maximum for part-time employees should be calculated on a pro-rata basis as follows:

- $10.8 / 36 \times \text{number of contracted hours}$

- 5.5 To ensure the appropriate application of leave entitlements, flexi-leave for part-time employees must be taken in hours.

- 5.6 It is acknowledged that this calculation will in some circumstances prevent an employee from taking a full day's flexi leave. In such circumstances employees may choose to take annual leave in conjunction with flexi leave. This can be any combination of flexi-leave and annual leave hours.

- 5.7 All leave must be authorised and will be subject to the exigencies of the service.

6. APPLICATION TO EMPLOYEES WORKING COMPRESSED HOURS

- 6.1 The full provisions of the council's Scheme of Flexible Working Hours equally apply to employees who work compressed working hours arrangements.

- 6.2 In practice, employees can accrue flexi hours to be taken as leave in accordance with the relevant provisions of the scheme and subject to the exigencies of the service. Normal bandwidths will continue to apply, although starting and finish times of the bandwidths may be moved (but not increased) with Head of Service agreement. In common with part-time employees, flexi leave for employees working a compressed working hours pattern must also be taken in hours.

Human Resources
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