



Belper Town Council

## **HOME WORKING POLICY**

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all Council Staff.

### **Definition**

Home working consists of working based at home rather than at the normal place of work and may involve using IT systems to perform work to remain in contact with the Town Clerk, Councillors and colleagues. It is carried out to an agreed work pattern on a permanent, regular, part-time, temporary or ad hoc basis.

Not all jobs are suitable for home working, however any job maybe considered on its own merits.

Town Clerk must ensure that home working arrangements do not have an adverse effect on any particular group of employees neither should a refusal to agree home working disadvantage any particular group.

### **Expectations of home working employees:**

Employees should be able to demonstrate they can:

- Work independently and on their own initiative
- Motivate themselves
- Complete projects within set deadlines
- Manage workload effectively
- Cope well under any new pressure posed by working at home
- Adjust to new work practices
- Maintain contact

### **Situations where home working may be considered:**

Home working may be considered for many reasons:

- In response to organisational change or business transformation
- At the point of recruitment and selection
- When a current employee requests home working
- When the place of work becomes an unsuitable place for a period of time.



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However, home working cannot be imposed on any existing employee without a proper assessment, consultation and agreement. Posts advertised as “home based” would be exempt from the need for such negotiation and agreement.

### **Suitability of home working**

Home working will be an option for many employees of the Council but due to the nature of home working, it will not be suited to either all posts or all people. In assessing the suitability of a post for home working, consideration will be given to:

- The cost implications
- The suitability of the job
- The suitability of the work location within the home

The decision about whether an employee or group of employees should be allowed to work at home will rest with the Town Clerk. Town Clerk would seek approval from the Council or due to exceptional circumstances the Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor would be delegated the power to make this decision on behalf of the Council. It is not an employee’s right to work from home.

### **Other issues to be considered**

#### **Performance Management**

Employees will be subject to the same performance appraisal measures, processes and objectives that apply to all other employees.

#### **Work Patterns**

Working hours and patterns, contact times and availability should be agreed in advance. Other conditions of employment as set out in the contract apply.

If any employee has any concerns with their working arrangements, they must bring the matter to the attention of the Town Clerk immediately.

#### **Contractual Changes**

The Town Clerk must ensure that revised contract documentation is issued to confirm home working arrangements.

#### **Pay and Benefits**



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Employees that work from home will be entitled to a 'work from home' allowance in line with the current government guidelines.

### **Ending the agreement**

The Council reserves the right to withdraw home working from an employee. Town Clerk will regularly review appropriateness for the Council. If there is a service need requiring home working to be withdrawn reasonable notice will be given.

### **Arranging to work from home**

Consideration must be given to the suitability of the proposed location. The location has to be adequate both for practical working and to comply with health and safety legislation. Ideally, the employee should have a separate room or area set aside for home working suitable to complete the work effectively.

### **Council Equipment**

Equipment required to enable the employee to work effectively at home will be provided by the Council. Items of equipment commonly used for example are PC/laptop, printer, broadband connection, mobile phone, lockable filing cabinet and items of stationery. This equipment will remain the property of the Council. The equipment required will vary from case to case. The Town Clerk will make final decisions on what is required. Where equipment is provided the employee must:

- Take reasonable care of it
- Use it only for official purposes
- Use it only in accordance with any operating instructions
- Return it to the Council when requested
- Use it in accordance with any existing Council policies

### **Use of Personal Equipment for Work Purposes**

The Council is not responsible for the maintenance, replacement or repair of any personal equipment that is used. When using a home telephone for official work purposes a detailed record of official calls should be kept for reimbursement purposes.

### **Communication**



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It is essential that good communication is maintained at all time between the employee and Town Clerk. The Town Clerk and employee should plan and agree how they will communicate effectively with each other. These arrangements should be agreed and regularly reviewed in light of operational experience.

The employee must agree arrangements with the Town Clerk so that every week the Town Clerk is informed of their whereabouts and know what they are doing. The Town Clerk will inform employees of meetings, training sessions and other events they would expect them to attend and will also ensure that the employee is kept up-to-date with information relevant to their work.

### **Security use of the Council's systems**

The employee must ensure that information and equipment is kept securely. In particular private and confidential material must be kept in lockable secure storage at all times. Town Clerk must be satisfied that all reasonable precautions are taken to maintain confidentiality of material.

### **Insurance**

The Councils existing insurance policies (both public and employers' liability) will continue to operate and cover the homeowner.

### **Travel**

Journeys made from home to work/work to home will not be reimbursed, as is the case for all Council employees regardless of where or how they work.

### **Learning and Development**

Working from home is a very different way of working, which requires the employee to adapt quickly to working independently and on their own for most of their working day. There will be less support from colleagues and daily contact with the Town Clerk (although regular communication is essential).

Training that maybe required:

- Appropriate IT skills
- Communications and time management skills
- Cultural change and contact with others
- Personal development for employees working at home
- First aid, fire safety and accident reporting
- Managing stress



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- Information security awareness
- Lone working