**Flexible and Agile Working Policy**

***Originally issued October 2016***

***Updated August 2017 – insertion of reference to lockable storage and potential security breaches***

***Updated: August 2018: change of policy title and terminology; insertion of reference to data protection***

[1. Aim 1](#_Toc521508547)

[2 Scope 2](#_Toc521508548)

[3. Responsibilities 2](#_Toc521508549)

[4. Definitions 3](#_Toc521508550)

[4.1 **Flexible working:** 3](#_Toc521508551)

[4.2 **Agile working:** 4](#_Toc521508552)

[4.3 **Hot-desking:** 4](#_Toc521508553)

[4.4 **Allocated desks:** 4](#_Toc521508554)

[5. Flexible working principles 5](#_Toc521508555)

[6. Document management principles 5](#_Toc521508556)

[7. Data Protection 5](#_Toc521508557)

[Links to other policies: 6](#_Toc521508558)

***Policy***

**1. Aim**

1.1 The aim of the flexible working policy is to set out Croydon Council’s approach to flexible and agile working and working in a flexible workspace.

1.2 By working in a flexible and agile way, the council seeks to encourage a way of working which is based on a concept that work is something we do rather than somewhere we go. The aim of flexible working is to create a more responsive and efficient workforce.

1.3 The council will aim to advertise all job roles on the basis that they are open to flexible working options unless there are specific business reasons not to do so. Additionally all employees will be able to apply for formal flexible working from the start date of their employment.

1.4 The council seeks to make more efficient use of its premises and reduce costs. This will involve closing premises where appropriate and maximising occupancy of the office space, particularly at Bernard Wetherill House (BWH). It will be important for all of us to work in a more agile way, which will be enabled by new floor layouts in BWH and provision of new technology to allow greater opportunity and flexibility in how, where and when we work.

1.5 The approaches set out in this document recognise that service needs differ across the council and are designed to support our move towards occupancy to desk ratio in the region of 3:2.

1.6 Our obligations under the Equality Act (2010) for providing reasonable adjustments are also noted.

**2 Scope**

2.1This policy applies to all council employees, except teachers, lecturers and school-based staff who have their own procedures.

2.2Agile working principles as outlined in this policy encompasses the working arrangements for all workers, including agency and temporary workers but only employees are eligible to apply for formal flexible working.

2.3 Where employees have contractual flexible working arrangements already in place these are not changed by the contents of this policy or the supporting documents.

**3. Responsibilities**

3.1 **Employees are responsible for:**

* Familiarising themselves with and adhering to the standards set out in this policy.
* Following the working protocols and guidance relevant to where and how they work.
* Looking after their own health and safety at work and following the advice and guidance referred to in this document.

3.2 **Managers and heads of service (or equivalent) are responsible for:**

* Facilitating, and enabling agile and flexible working, including staff working from other locations where appropriate.
* Ensuring that team members adhere to work style and workplace protocols.
* Promoting a culture where staff are set outcome-focussed performance measures and have flexibility in how these are achieved.
* Agreeing all formal flexible working requests **unless there is a specific business or health and safety reason not to,** andmaking sure that reasons for any refusal of requests is recorded.
* Considering and responding to all requests for flexible working in a fair, equitable and timely manner.
* Advising HR of the outcome of all requests for flexible working including any reasons for refusal, and ensuring that all necessary payroll changes are made for employees changing their working hours.
* Making any reasonable adjustments that may be required in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 or other legislation.
* Ensuring that they don’t agree any working pattern that breaches the Working Time Regulations.
* Ensuring that they don’t contravene the contractual entitlements of any employee.

3.3 **Human Resources and OD (HROD) are responsible for:**

* Providing advice and support to managers and staff throughout the process
* Discussing and confirming with line managers the reasons for any refusal (s) of requests making sure that they are business or health and safety related.
* Recording all formal flexible working requests and their outcomes including reasons any reasons for refusal.
* **Data protection**

***General Principles***

**4. Definitions**

4.1 **Flexible working:**

This means individuals having flexibility of work patterns and/or location, through formal arrangements. The following are some of the arrangements:

* Job sharing
* Part-time working
* Term-time working
* Home-based working ( where the employees place of work is their home address as they work three or more days from home)
* Compressed working week
* Staggered hours

4.2 **Agile working:**

Is about bringing people, processes, connectivity, technology, time and place together to find the most appropriate and effective way of working to deliver a service. It means thinking differently about when and where to work and using different workspaces that are appropriate to the work that needs to be done.

The following are some of the arrangements that can be applied formally or informally, in line with the needs and requirements of teams and individuals:

* Flexible hours
* Ad-hoc home working
* Ad hoc remote working
* Hot-desking
* Flexi-time/TOIL (time off in lieu)

4.3 **Hot-desking:**

This means that staff do not have their “own desk” and all desks are open for use for anyone in the service, or, indeed, anyone using the premises. Hot-desking is the default position in BWH where the number of desks will be approximately two-thirds of the full complement of staff.

At the end of the day, the person using the desk must make sure that it is left clean, tidy, and clear of any files or personal belongings. Staff who are away from their desk for an extended period (e.g. at meetings or on site) should clear the desk and leave it ready for the next user.

Staff must put papers in lockable storage when they are not being used. Information Management regularly conduct security sweeps and any documents that are identified in council buildings, could be seized and identified as a security breach.

4.4 **Allocated desks:**

Some staff with specific needs may have allocated desks. However if they are not present for the day, the desk must be made available to use by other people unless specialised equipment is present to prevent this.

4.5 Everyone should ensure that they are familiar with the following protocols and guidance which set out how we use the flexible workspace in BWH.

* [Agile working basics](https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/resources/croydon-challenge/mission-critical-programmes/agile-working/agile-working-basics)
* [Agile working in practice](https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/resources/croydon-challenge/mission-critical-programmes/agile-working/agile-working-practice)
* [Agile management](https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/resources/croydon-challenge/mission-critical-programmes/agile-working/agile-management)
* [Agile workplace etiquette](https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/resources/croydon-challenge/mission-critical-programmes/agile-working/agile-etiquette)

5. **Flexible working principles**

The following principles underpin Croydon’s approach to flexible working:

* **Flexibility for all –** all employees should have the opportunity to work flexibly and choose a place of work from across our buildings, at home and other locations.
* **Service needs and requirements –** flexible working should respond to business and service needs
* **Shared responsibility -** everyone is responsible for working in such a way which ensures the health, safety and welfare of themselves and their colleagues
* **Outcomes focussed -** work is based on measurable goals, targets and outputs; not on attendance in the workplace.
* **Transparency -** there are agreed communication plans and open Outlook calendars to support flexible working
* **Technology -** employees will have technology that works for them and enables flexible working.
* **Storage -** all employees will have access to a convenient storage system (team and personal)
* **Security -** all employees will have access to secure systems to make information and data safe

6. **Document management principles**

The following principles underpin the Croydon approach to document management which is a critical aspect of working flexibly:

* **Digital first –** all employees to consider digital rather than paper solutions first
* **Store once –** wherever possible store documents once only
* **Shared –** wherever possible store documents in a shared location (e.g. SharePoint)
* **Know your retention rules –** retention rules vary across services, be aware of yours and undertake regular housekeeping
* **Know your filing structure –** know the filing structure of your service, ensure that you store things in the right place

# 7. Data Protection

When managing an employee's flexible working request, the council processes personal data collected in accordance with the **workforce data protection policy.** Data collected from the point at which the council receives a flexible working request is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of managing their request for flexible working.

Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with the council’s workforce data protection policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which will be dealt with under the council’s disciplinary procedure.

# Links to other policies:

* [Health and Safety Policies](https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/working-croydon/hr/health-and-safety/health-and-safety-policies)
* [ICT](https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/working-croydon/information-management/guidance-and-policy-documents)
* [Information Management](https://intranet.croydon.gov.uk/working-croydon/information-management/guidance-and-policy-documents)

­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­End