

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE – 11 JANUARY 2012

Report of the Director of Corporate Services

Part A

ITEM 4 AMENDMENTS TO THE HOME WORKING POLICY

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to set out the proposed amendments to the Home Working policy together with the consultation steps taken to date and to request that the Personnel Committee approves the introduction of the amended policy.

Recommendation

That the revised Home Working Policy, as submitted to the JCC, be approved by the Council's Personnel Committee.

Reason

To regularise and cap monthly broadband allowances payable to staff.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

Background

An audit of home working in 2009/10 established that there was a lack of clarity and consistency in the approach to 'Home working' and 'Flexible Working from Home' at Charnwood Borough Council. This included major anomalies in monthly allowances paid which varied between £7.59 per month and £47.04 per month.

The proposed amendments to the Home Working policy are targeted on this particular issue.

Summary of key proposed amendments

The Home Working policy has been amended to ensure it reflects the proposed changes to the payment of broadband allowances to home workers. There are no major changes in terms of the content of the policy; the revisions mainly clarify the following:

- Where Managers/Heads of Service have approved an application from an employee to work from home and a claim for a broadband allowance:

- i. If the employee can submit a bill showing the cost of their broadband connection, the cost will be reimbursed up to a maximum of £17.99 per month;
- ii. Employees paying in excess of £17.99 per month for their broadband connection will receive an allowance capped at £17.99;
- iii. Where broadband is received as part of a package and the amount is not itemised on the bill, at the discretion of the Managers/Heads of Service, an allowance will be available to employees at a flat rate of £5.00 per month.

The 'cap' of £17.99 per month has been selected as this is consistent with the standard monthly broadband allowance payable to members.

The complete report presented to the JCC is included as 'Part B' to this report.

Previous decision – JCC meeting of 14 September 2011

Proposals to amend the Home Working policy were presented to the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) on 14 September 2011. The approved minutes of that meeting included the following in respect of the Home Working discussion.

A report was submitted on the outcome of the consultation held regarding broadband allowances available to employees registered as home workers and presenting a revised Home Working Policy in that respect.

Information was provided and discussion took place on this matter as follows:

- (i) The Council's internal audit of home working had discovered a number of anomalies across service areas with regard to policies followed and allowances and it was felt that value for money and the rationalisation of compensation in line with Members' Allowances needed to be addressed.
- (ii) It was suggested that the proposed flat rate recompense of £5 for staff that purchased broadband as part of a package was insufficient, especially in comparison to the generous £17.99 maximum monthly allowance.
- (iii) Staff would be required to reapply annually and a copy of a contract that gave a detailed breakdown of the cost of each element of a package would not be accepted in lieu of an itemised bill.
- (iv) It was anticipated that broadband would become free as part of most available packages in the future and in response to the Consultation Document some staff had indicated that they thought that to receive any recompense at all was generous.
- (v) All staff should be made aware that broadband allowances were available to be claimed.
- (vi) Staff had been invited to attend a consultation meeting but only two had turned up and only two responses via email had been received.

- (vii) The Member's Allowances Scheme permitted claims of up to £17.99 per month for broadband, a figure that had been based on supply costs at the time of consideration by full Council and which would be reviewed periodically. It had to be recognised that Councillors were not provided with offices but still required the same equipment as officers.
- (viii) It was important to set a timeframe for the renewal of the Policy to ensure that currently unrecognised anomalies are addressed, as well as to reconsider the scale and flexibility of home working.

AGREED – That the revised Home Working Policy, as submitted, be recommended for consideration by the Council's Personnel Committee

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions

All due consultation and preparatory administration work has been completed. It is envisaged that broadband allowances calculated in accordance with the amended Home Working policy will be paid to staff on 25 January 2012 in line with regular payroll processes.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

Currently, the payments to staff for broadband allowance amount to approximately £24,000 per annum.

It is possible that the consultation process relating to broadband allowances raises awareness amongst all staff such that the number of applications to receive allowances increases. However, the amended policy will restrict allowances payable and the requirement for all existing recipients to reapply for broadband allowance (should they wish to continue to receive it) will afford managers the opportunity to consider whether allowances should still be payable.

Overall, it is likely that the amended policy will result in a reduction in costs.

Risk Management

The risks associated with the decision Cabinet is asked to make and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

Risk Identified	Likelihood	Impact	Risk Management Actions Planned
Some negative impact on staff morale may arise	High	Low	Staff consultation process

Equality and Diversity

The equality and diversity assessment undertaken (see Part B) did not identify any significant equality and diversity issues.

Background Papers: None

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Part B

Report submitted to JCC – 14 September 2011



CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

14 SEPTEMBER 2011

HOME WORKING POLICY

Purpose

2. The purpose of this report is to present to the Joint Consultative Committee the outcome of the consultation held regarding the payment of broadband allowances available for employees who are registered as home workers and to present a revised policy:

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|---|------------|
| • Consultation Document | Appendix A |
| • Consultation feedback and response | Appendix B |
| • Revised Home Working Policy | Appendix C |
| • Revised Home Working Application Form | Appendix D |

Background

3. The recent consultation regarding revisions to the Council's policy on broadband allowances relating to the Home Working policy has set out proposed changes to the payment of broadband allowances. All those currently in receipt of the allowance were notified by letter of the forthcoming consultation 23rd July 2011. Details of the proposals were outlined to all staff through the publication of the Consultation Document in an article in One Charnwood 11th July 2011. A copy of the Consultation Document is attached at Appendix A
4. As a result of the consultation, and at the request of a number of staff, a group meeting was held 25th July 2011. At this meeting a number of questions and comments were made. These can be seen along with other feedback received via email in response to the publication of the Consultation Document in Appendix B.
5. Consultation ended 29th July 2011. Given that this is now entering the peak holiday period, the decision was taken to postpone the commencement of the 3 month notice period from 8th August to 1st September 2011.

Revised Home Working Policy

6. This policy has been revisited to ensure it reflects the proposed changes to the payment of broadband allowances to home workers. There are no major changes in terms of the content of the policy; the revisions mainly clarify the following:
 - Where Managers/Heads of Service have approved an application from an employee to work from home and a claim for a broadband allowance:
 - i. If the employee can submit a bill showing the cost of their broadband connection, the cost will be reimbursed up to a maximum of £17.99 per month;
 - ii. Employees paying in excess of £17.99 per month for their broadband connection will receive an allowance capped at £17.99;
 - iii. Where broadband is received as part of a package and the amount is not itemised on the bill, at the discretion of the Managers/Heads of Service, an allowance will be available to employees at a flat rate of £5.00 per month.
7. The revised policy will also state that re-application for home working will be required on an annual basis or sooner if an employee's job should change or if the cost of the employee's broadband changes.
8. To qualify the section of the policy relating to 'Additional Costs' which states that the 'cost of the additional information and communication technology including a lap top, broadband access, postage and stationery will be provided by the council', the revised policy will state that 'Applications will be agreed on a case by case basis and only approved where there is an appropriate business case'.
9. The approval or otherwise of an application for home working and its associated broadband allowance will be at the discretion of Managers/Heads of Service. There will be no set criteria against which to assess an application, and so the Manager's/Heads of Service's knowledge of the types of work and the job requirements will enable them to determine firstly whether or not the job is suitable for home working, and secondly whether an entitlement to a broadband allowance to facilitate home working is both necessary and justifiable.
10. The majority of the Home Working policy has not been altered or revised as part of this review, as the focus has primarily been to redress the imbalance and disparity in the amounts being claimed for the broadband allowance by some of those registered as home workers. However, a wider review of Charnwood's Home Working policy is also being considered in conjunction with the CMT review of Charnwood's office accommodation, and a full scale review of terms and conditions is to be carried out in conjunction with LCC HR at some point in the future.

Recommendations

11. The revised Home Working policy is commended to the Joint Consultative Committee for adoption by the Council. That is:

- Home Working Policy Appendix C
- Home Working Application Form Appendix D

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Consultation Document

CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL-WIDE IMPLICATIONS

**ACTION PLAN FOR REVISIONS TO THE COUNCIL'S POLICY ON
BROADBAND ALLOWANCES RELATING TO THE HOMEWORKING
POLICY**

8th JULY 2011

**This consultation document should be read in conjunction with the
related policies.**

I. Background

An audit of home working in 2009/10 established that there is a lack of clarity and consistency in the approach to “Home working” and “Flexible Working from Home” at Charnwood Borough Council. The current Home Working Policy defines “Home working” as “where an employee works permanently from home” and “Flexible Working from Home” as “where an employee spends part of his or her time at home and part of his or her time at the work site”. For the purposes of this document the term “home working” or “home worker” will refer to both ways of working.

The audit noted that there is no central record of who is a home worker or who has applied to be a home worker; that the arrangements in place for home workers are not clearly defined, enforced or monitored and that there are wide variations in the allowances claimed for broadband connections to home workers.

It was identified that 69 employees currently claim an allowance for a broadband connection. The audit also noted that there are employees who work from home and who do not claim this allowance. The current Home Working Policy states that

“The cost of the additional information and communication technology including a lap top, broadband access, postage and stationery will be provided by the council. (This will be agreed on a case by case basis). Other costs including additional energy costs and furniture will be borne by the employee.”

There is therefore no limit on what costs an employee can claim for broadband access and the amounts claimed vary significantly from £7.59 per month to £47.04 per month.

The audit also noted that the current policy that applies to employees of Charnwood Borough Council is significantly different to a successful approach used by elected members where monthly allowances for broadband are paid at a standard rate of £17.99.

The audit identified the need for consistency in broadband payments and given the ongoing awareness of the need to generate savings and ensure efficient public money, proposed a change to the Home Working policy to cap the monthly broadband allowance paid to staff at £17.99. An SMT report was presented and the proposal agreed on 23rd March 2011 and this will also be raised at the TUKIT (Trade Union Keep In Touch) meeting in May 2011.

This consultation document proposes to change the Home Working policy to cap the monthly broadband allowance paid to staff at £17.99.

A wider review of the Home Working policy and processes is also being considered in conjunction with the CMT review of our accommodation.

2. Formal Consultation

The Council is committed to full and meaningful consultation with employees and with our recognised Trade Unions. Consultation will be undertaken with a view to reaching agreement and any representations or counter proposals made will be fully considered.

It is proposed that the following steps will be used to facilitate full and meaningful consultation with directly affected employees:

- A pre-consultation letter will be sent to all directly affected staff at least one week before the start of formal consultation during the week commencing 20th June 2011.
- A consultation document will be prepared for discussion with Trade Unions.
- Consultation documentation will be distributed to all staff during the week commencing 11th July 2011. This will mark the start of the formal consultation period.
- All directly affected employees will be given the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals and/or have a one-to-one meeting with a Strategic Director and appropriate Head of Service.
- Two group meetings will be arranged – the first on Thursday 21st July 2011 at 10am and the second on Monday 25th July 2011 at 2pm if a reasonable number of staff confirm their attendance. Unions will also be invited to these meetings.
- A facility will be made available to enable anonymous feedback and comments to be given.
- Feedback and comments may be made via Trade Union representatives.
- The consultation period will last for 3 weeks and will end 29th July 2011.
- The final document setting out the confirmed details of the changes and the implementation arrangements will be sent out within ten working days of the end of consultation.
- An 'all user' email or an article in One Charnwood will be used to disseminate the information to all staff.

3. Posts and Post Holders Affected

A list of those receiving a broadband allowance (excluding Councillors) was obtained from Payroll and through a review of the payments made for broadband expenses. The list shows that there are 69 recipients of the allowance.

Staff in the following service areas are in receipt of the allowance:

Service Area	Number of employees in receipt of home working allowances	Males	Females
Building Control	3	3	0
Chief Executives Team	1	1	0
Cleansing	1	0	1
Cleansing and Open Spaces	1	1	0
Committee Admin	1	1	0
Conservation and Landscape	1	1	0
Contact Centre	1	1	0
Crime Reduction	9	4	5
Customer Service Centre	1	1	0
Development Control	11	4	7
Environmental Protection	3	1	2
Flood Prevention	1	1	0
Food Hygiene and Safety	5	1	4
Housing Renewal	1	0	1
ICS	10	9	1
Leisure and Environment	2	0	2
Legal Services	2	1	1
Local Plans	3	2	1
Occupational Health	1	0	1
Programmes and Project Support	3	1	2
Property Services	3	1	2
Register of Electors Services	2	0	2
Street	3	2	1

Management			
TOTAL	69	36	33

4. Proposals

1. Following the consultation period, those in receipt of the allowance will be given 3 months notice that their allowance will cease after this date;
2. Those who wish to re-apply under the revised policy will have the opportunity during the notice period to do so;
3. Applications for broadband allowances will be made through the appropriate Heads of Services or Director
4. Applications for broadband allowances will be considered on a case by case basis and only approved where there is an appropriate business case.
5. Reapplication is required:
 - on an annual basis, or
 - if the employee's job changes, or
 - if the cost of the broadband changes (increases or decreases) for the employee
6. Broadband allowances can only be claimed where a specific broadband bill (or bill with specific broadband costs) can be produced (ie where broadband connection comes as part of a package, unless the broadband element can be separately identified, no allowance will be paid).
7. Broadband allowances will be based on the specific cost of broadband shown on the bill and capped at a maximum of £17.99 per month.
8. Broadband allowances will be paid "net" meaning that the amount claimed will be that taken home – Charnwood Borough Council will ensure that tax/NI implications do not affect the take home pay value of the allowance.

5. Implementation

Following the consultation period, there will be a week during which the outcome of the consultation will be confirmed and then those in receipt of the allowance will be given 3 months notice that their allowance will cease after this date. The revised application process will be made available to all staff no later than 6 weeks before the end of the notice period along with information on deadlines for reapplications to enable payments to continue.

6. Timescales

Three weeks consultation to start 11th July 2011
One week to confirm the outcome of the consultation
Three months notice to start 19th September 2011
Reapplication from 7th November 2011
New policy to come into effect 19th December 2011.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

The equalities impact of this proposal is considered minimal:

- Staff who currently work at home will continue to be able to do so;

- Benchmarking suggests that an adequate broadband service can comfortably be acquired for £17.99 per month or less;
- Review of those currently receiving the allowance does not reveal a preponderance of staff of any particular sex or ethnic origin.

This proposal will not apply to those members of staff for whom special provisions have been made to allow them to mitigate a disability.

Consultation Feedback and Response in brief

I. Feedback

Against the allowance in general

- Provision of an allowance of up to £17.99 is unjustifiable.
- Some staff known to claim the allowance but do not work from home regularly.
- A number of people have not been able to find their fobs (provided to home workers to enable access to CBC networks) or have said that they do not use it – that they only access their emails from home. This calls in to question what work people are doing from home and whether they need internet access to do this.
- The allowance serves as a disincentive for people to get a better rate or the best deal from their broadband.
- Employees that have not previously had a broadband package that is itemised on their bill, may find an option for £17.99 and apply for the allowance.
- Should there be a requirement that people have to work so many days from home in order to qualify for the allowance?
- Introduction of the allowance dates back 8 or 9 years ago when it was offered as a perk. Do people still need to be paid the allowance?

Against the proposals set out in the Consultation Document

- Joint users will be penalised by the scheme.
- Higher broadband options are required to enable access to Charnwood Borough Council networks and cost more than the cap of £17.99.
- Members are paid a capped standard rate of £17.99 regardless of actual costs. Council staff on the other hand are required to produce a bill itemising the broadband.
- Arbitrary to require the payment to be identified specifically. Not all bills show the broadband element separately if purchased as part of a tv/phone/broadband package.

For the proposals set out in the Consultation Document

- It is acknowledged that most people now have broadband anyway so even getting some allowance rather than the full amount paid is beneficial.

Alternative solutions suggested

- Put the onus on the employee to claim the allowance for each day that they work from home, and pay an allowance of £1.00 for each day of home working. This will more than cover the daily cost of a broadband provision. Claims can be verified against Trent entries and the allowance paid through the salary payments on a pro-rata basis.
- The standard rate as paid to Councillors (£17.99) is more appropriate – without the condition of providing an itemised bill.
- If the costs associated with the fobs that allow access to the VPN when offsite is £50 (paid corporately) and these last for 3 years, wouldn't it be better to scrap broadband allowances but provide more fobs as part of a new home working strategy? £50 over 3 years is cheaper than paying out £17.99 per month.

2. Response

We would like to thank those who participated in the consultation process and would like to offer the following in response to the comments and queries raised:

Broadband Options

Having forwarded several queries regarding the technological aspect of the broadband requirements to ICS, we would like to clarify that:

To facilitate working from home:

- A stable internet connection is all that is required;
- This means a laptop PC that is able to connect to the internet via the Firewall/Router connected either by wireless or preferably by Ethernet cable;
- Charnwood Borough Council used to provide a hardware Firewall/Router if the employee's internet service provider (ISP) did not provide one. As **ALL** known ISPs provide Firewall/Routers these days there is no special requirement as to the type of internet or broadband connection that is required by those working from home.
- However, ICS **do not** recommend the use of mobile internet using USB dongle type devices (3G/GPRS/EDGE).
- Only the most basic of broadband provision comparable with BT Option 1 is required. This is typically an up to 20MB solution with 10GB of usage. This is far more than required for CBC use. Any requirement beyond this is at the user's discretion. Even the use of two computers is easily achievable within this scope. Consideration may need to be given if the other user makes high use of video streaming at the same time, but this would be the case regardless of the broadband package.

Payment of allowances

Views on the payment of allowances have been taken into consideration and the following has been decided:

For those whose applications to work from home and to claim an allowance for broadband are accepted:

- On provision of a bill which clearly specifies the broadband charge, the employee will be reimbursed the value of their broadband charges **UP TO** a maximum of £17.99 per month.
- Where the costs of broadband to the employee are in excess of £17.99, the allowance will be capped at this amount.
- Where broadband is purchased as part of a package with TV and/or telephone expenses and the bill does not separate out the broadband element, employees may be offered a flat rate of £5 per month, where this is approved by their Manager/Head of Service.
- Managers/Heads of Service are to consider exceptional circumstances put forward by employees when approving allowance claims. Variation from the rates set out above will be at the discretion of Managers/Heads of Service.

Home working – the wider issues

The outcome of this consultation should be seen as the first step towards the implementation of a revised home working strategy.

A CMT task group is to be set up to review the wider implications of home working in conjunction with the office accommodation strategy to consider the part that home working has to play in the future working arrangements of the Council's employees.

There is the possibility that, as a result of a wider review of the home working strategy, home working allowances may be revisited and revised again in the future. The measures set out above in response to the consultation are to be effective until such a time.

Home Working

1. Introduction

Charnwood Borough Council recognises that flexible working has an important role to play in sustaining and improving service delivery and the need to balance employees work and family life and environmental factors.

Home working agreements will be entered into on a voluntary basis between the employee and their manager.

This policy sets out how flexible working can be applied in a structured way. All requests made in accordance with this policy will receive full consideration by managers. While Charnwood seeks to support alternative ways of working, all decisions as to their appropriateness will be made in the light of the operational requirements of the Council, the impact on customer service, the needs of other employees and the practicability of the revised working arrangements.

Home working and flexible working from home is working at home rather than at the normal place of work. It could mean working permanently from home, working on a set pattern of days in a week, a fortnight or in a month on a formally agreed basis, or it could involve an employee working at home for occasional days/part days on an informal basis but with management approval.

2. Definitions

- Home Working - is considered to be where an employee works permanently from home.
- Flexible Working from Home - is where an employee spends part of his or her time at home and part of his or her time at the work site.

For simplicity all these forms of working will in future be referred to as home working.

3. Scope

The policy and procedure potentially applies to all employees. However, it is recognised that not all posts or individuals will be suitable for this type of working. Managers will initially assess those posts which are likely to be suitable for home working.

4. Eligibility

It is not possible to give a definitive list of occupations suitable for home working. However, certain job characteristics lend themselves to home based working. The characteristics of these jobs are:

- Where a high degree of written rather than manual work is undertaken.

- Where there are clearly defined areas of individual work e.g. project work, research, report writing and policy analysis.
- Work where the location is unimportant.
- Work that does not require frequent personal input from other people.
- The work undertaken has measurable outcomes.

The characteristics of employees who are likely to cope with home working are as follows:

- Self motivated and able to work without direct supervision
- Able to complete work to scheduled deadlines
- Possess good time management skills
- Able to cope with reduced social contact and isolation
- Able to balance the needs of family and working life.
- Managers' Responsibilities

5. Managers' Responsibilities

Managers have the following responsibilities in respect of home working to ensure that:

- The job is suitable for home working.
- Employees clearly understand the arrangements for home working.
- There is no adverse effect on service delivery.
- There is no adverse impact will this have on other team members.
- The applicant has the right personal qualities to cope with home working.
- The home site is suitable and a health and safety risk assessment has been undertaken.
- Steps are taken to agree effective communication and involvement links e.g. attendance at team meetings.
- An effective management process is in place to monitor, supervise and evaluated home working arrangements.
- Home working employees are not disadvantaged e.g. in terms of training and development and promotion opportunities.
- The arrangement is cost effective and any additional costs justifiable.
- Appropriate information and communication technology is provided.
- The requirements of the Working Time Regulations are complied with and employees are not working excessive hours.

6. Employees' Responsibilities

Employees have the following responsibilities in respect of home working to ensure that:

- Suitable and sufficient time is set aside for work responsibilities and arrangements made for minimal home related disturbance.
- Reasonable care will be taken to ensure the safety and security of equipment.
- A suitable room and furniture are provided and the working environment maintained to the agreed health and safety standards.
- Sufficient support is arranged for any dependent care.
- Any equipment supplied by the Council should be used primarily for work related purposes and in accordance with the Council's existing policies on private use.

- There are suitable security arrangements for confidential Council information. Only encrypted USB devices approved and issued by ICS should be used as a means of data transfer.
- Security of information is considered before logging on to public-access wi-fi networks when working on Council business.
- Whilst working from home the Council's code of conduct is adhered to.
- Contact is made with the manager when support or guidance is required.

7. Terms and Conditions

The terms and conditions and policies that apply to employees working from home will primarily be unchanged from those they received when working in the work place. Any changes e.g. changed hours of work, will be agreed and included in the home working agreement.

Employees working from home will be eligible to receive travel expenses and/or car allowance in accordance with the criteria for all other employees.

8. Health and Safety

While working at home both the employee and the council are subject to the provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act etc 1974. The Council must, as far as is reasonably practical, ensure the employee's health, safety and welfare at work.

A home working health and safety questionnaire will be completed by employees whose applications for home working are approved. In addition, a home assessment will be carried out for a percentage of applicants (approximately 10%). If, after following the assessment, there are health and safety issues that cannot be satisfactorily resolved; this could result in the refusal of the application to work from home. The employee and the manager will retain a copy of the completed assessment as part of the home working agreement.

Any changes, such as the movement of any equipment, must be reported to the manager as this may necessitate a review of the risk assessment. If a work related accident occurs whilst the employee is working from home, this must be reported in accordance with the usual procedures.

9. Work Location

The proposed work site should be adequate for both practical working and in terms of health and safety. Ideally, employees should have a separate room or area which would be sufficient in terms of accommodating all necessary furniture and equipment and which is free from interruptions by family and friends.

10. Taxation

It is not anticipated that there are any personal or council tax implications for employees as a result of working from home. However, employees may wish to contact the Inland Revenue or their local council to confirm their individual circumstances.

Broadband allowances will be paid at a 'net' figure meaning that the amount claimed will be that taken home, Charnwood Borough Council will ensure that tax/NI implications do not affect the take home value of the allowance.

11. Insurance

Items of equipment belonging to the council are covered by the Council's insurance arrangements whilst this is in the employee's home. This equipment needs to be specifically identified. Employees should notify their home insurers of the nature and extent of the use of home for work purposes as this may have an affect on their cover and on insurance premiums. The Council will not contribute towards additional home insurance costs unless home working has been initiated by the Council or agreed as part of a reasonable adjustment package under the Disability Discrimination Act.

Employees working at or from home are covered by the Council's Employer Liability Scheme. However, employees have a duty to take reasonable care within their own working environment.

12. Additional Costs

The cost of the additional information and communication technology including a lap top, broadband access, postage and stationery will be provided by the council. Applications will be agreed on a case by case basis at the discretion of the employees' Manager/Head of Service and only approved where there is deemed to be an appropriate business case.

Upon submission of a specific broadband bill (or a bill with the broadband element itemised), broadband allowances can be claimed based on the specific cost of the broadband shown on the bill, capped at a maximum of £17.99 per month.

Where an employee's broadband connection comes as part of a package and the broadband element is not detailed separately on the bill, at the Manager's/Head of Service's discretion, a broadband allowance may be claimed at a flat rate of £5.00 per month

Other costs including additional energy costs and furniture will be borne by the employee.

13. Travel Costs

During home working, mileage will be payable on business journeys from home to work site subject to this not exceeding the mileage that would have been incurred to these sites from the normal office base. All arrangements must comply with the Car Allowance Scheme.

14. Operation of the Scheme

An application will be completed by employees requesting home working. All home working applications must be considered and where appropriate authorised by the Manager or Head of Service. Where home working is considered appropriate a Home Working Agreement will be prepared together with an amended contract of employment.

If either the post or the individual is not considered suitable for home working, the reasons for this will be explained to the individual and recorded on the home working application form. Employees will be required to demonstrate that they do not have dependent care responsibilities within their stated working hours.

A reapplication to the scheme is required on an annual basis and sooner if the employee's job changes or if the cost of the broadband changes for the employee.

15. Home Working Agreement

The home working agreement will cover:

- the working arrangements i.e. time spent at home
- equipment requirements
- health and safety risk assessment
- contact arrangements
- any agreed changes to terms and conditions

16. Termination of Home Working Agreement

Either party may terminate the agreement by giving one months notice in writing. However, the parties may agree a shorter period by mutual consent. The Council reserves the right to withdraw the scheme immediately and at any time should an abuse of the scheme be identified. Any abuse of this policy and procedure will also be subject to the usual disciplinary actions.

Any equipment provided by the Council during the home working arrangements must be returned to the Council with immediate effect upon the termination of the arrangement or if the employee leaves the council.

APPLICATION AND AGREEMENT FOR HOME WORKING

Once the application has been completed it will need to be signed by you and the appropriate Manager or Head of Service. If you intend to claim an allowance for broadband and your Manager or Head of Service has approved your claim, you should present this application along with proof of the internet charges you incur as a result of home working i.e. broadband costs to the Payroll team. The Payroll team will make arrangements for re-imburement of these on a monthly basis. Broadband allowances will be based on the specific cost of broadband shown on the bill and capped at a maximum of £17.99 per month. Where the bill does not itemise the broadband element, employees can claim a broadband allowance of a flat rate of £5.00 per month at the discretion of their Manager or Head of Service.

Broadband allowances can only be claimed where a specific broadband bill (or bill with specific broadband costs) can be produced. A broadband connection which comes as part of a package can only be claimed where the element is detailed separately on the bill.

Please note that a reapplication for home working is required on an annual basis or sooner if your job changes or if the cost of your broadband changes.

Name:

Job Title:

Directorate:

Service Area:

1) Please state the pattern of work you are requesting to work from home, including the times

2) What type of work do you undertake?

3) Is your work performed on an individual basis or with clearly defined areas of individual work?

Yes No

4) Can it be carried out without continuous face to face contact with other people?

Yes No

5) Can essential face to face contact be organised into a specific time slot e.g. one day per week?

Yes No

6) Can the work be managed by results to meet targets agreed with your line manager?

Yes No

7) Can information necessary on a daily basis be accessed by telephone or electronically?

Yes No

8) If your work is highly time sensitive, can it be delivered electronically or is it within hand delivery distance of the end user?

Yes No Not Applicable

9) What percentage of your time do you spend on the following tasks? (Please place a tick in the nearest appropriate box)

Using a Computer

Less than 15% 15% 30% 45% 60% 75% 90% 100%

Meeting with the Public at your workplace

Less than 15% 15% 30% 45% 60% 75% 90% 100%

Meeting the Public outside the office or carrying out work away from your office.

Less than 15% 15% 30% 45% 60% 75% 90% 100%

Meetings internally with colleagues at your workplace

Less than 15% 15% 30% 45% 60% 75% 90% 100%

Other (Please specify)

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10) Do you have a space which could be dedicated to home working and which addresses the criteria set out in the guidance?

Yes No

11) What distance do you commute each day to and from your office or normal place of work?

0-5 miles 6-10miles 11-20 miles 21-30 miles More

12) What is the total time you spend commuting to and from your normal place of work?

0-30 mins 31-60 mins 61-90 mins More

13) Is this request being made under the right to request flexible working regulations? (Please see Policy on Requesting Flexible Working)

Yes No

14) Do you wish to claim for a broadband allowance?

Yes No

Please give any further information you consider important to the consideration of your application to home work.

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I the undersigned have read and will abide by the Home worker Policy and procedure contained in the Employee Handbook. I agree:

- To make myself available to cover in the office for period of staff absence such as holidays or sickness and will ensure that all necessary information is available to other members of staff during their periods of absence.
- To attend regular meetings with my line manager and others as and when required.
- Complete the home working health and safety questionnaire and agree to a home assessment being carried out should a need be identified.
- Report any work related accidents that occur whilst working in accordance with the usual procedures
- This agreement may be terminated by either the home worker or the manager by giving one months notice.
- That any equipment issued to me will be returned to the Council on termination of this agreement.

Signed:

Member of staff:

Date:

To be completed by the Manager/Head of Service:

I **authorise /do not authorise*** the above named to work from home. Suitable arrangements, where appropriate, have been made to ensure reporting lines remain effective throughout any periods of home working.

I **authorise / do not authorise*** the above named to claim an allowance for their broadband connection.

The home worker is to be provided with the necessary equipment to facilitate homeworking.
 (* delete as applicable)

If the request is declined please state the reasons here:

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Signed:

Date:

Appendices to main report

None