

23 October 2025

Dear Applicant

Our Ref: FOI 969

Your request for information received on 21 October 2025 has been handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA).

Request

receive a copy of your Flexible Working Policy

Our response

Please find attached a copy of our Flexible Working Arrangements Policy and Flexitime Working Policy.

This concludes our response.



**Housing
Executive**

Flexible Working Arrangements Policy

September 23

Flexible Working Arrangements (Interim Policy)

Human Resources Department

Issue Details

	 Housing Executive
Title	Flexible Working Arrangements Policy
Aim	To set out how we will consider new ways of working which meet the needs of both our customers and our people
Last reviewed	September 2023
Last updated	September 2023
Staff affected	All
Author(s)	Assistant Director, HR
Approved by	Executive Team
Equality screened	
Data Protection screened	
Date of next review	September 2026
Policy Owner	HR Advisory

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this interim policy on **Flexible Working Arrangements** is to set out how we will consider new ways of working which meet the needs of both our customers and our people. Significant flexibility was enabled across the Housing Executive during the pandemic, and we want to ensure that the learning and the benefits from this are maintained into the future.
- 1.2 We believe we have a unique opportunity to consider how we can improve working lives for our people while ensuring customer service is maintained. We want this to be about more than just **where** people work but also consider **when** people work and **how** we work and deliver our services. We recognise that roles across the Housing Executive are different, and every individual is different, therefore a 'one size fits all' approach is not appropriate. This policy will therefore provide our managers and our people with key principles and guidance so that we can optimise flexibility while also continuing to deliver a high standard of customer service.
- 1.3 It is widely recognised that flexible working practices can bring a wide range of benefits for people and the organisation including:
 - Assisting in attracting and retaining people
 - Improved motivation and engagement and reduced absence
 - Improved performance and quality of service
 - Improved health and wellbeing and work life balance
 - More flexible utilisation of office accommodation
 - Improved use of technology
 - Reduced printing and travel

We believe that this policy will help enable us to deliver key objectives within our [People Strategy](#) and our [Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#), and will also impact the achievement of other strategies such as sustainability and accommodation.

- 1.4 **This policy will be implemented in the first instance for a period of not less than one year. It will then be subject to review and consultation and agreed thereafter.**

2.0 Legislation

It is important for managers and employees to be aware that there a number of pieces of legislation which are relevant to this policy and how it is implemented. Some examples are listed below but this is not an exhaustive list and therefore managers must liaise with Human Resources and, where appropriate Health & Safety Services, when applying this policy.

- 2.1 **Employment Rights Order (ERO)** – this provides the right for employees to request flexible working arrangements. It also clarifies that in order to reasonably reject an application the employer must ensure that the decision is on the basis of the specific grounds set out in the legislation. See section 7 for further details.
- 2.2 **Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)** – employers have a duty to consider reasonable adjustments for disabled employees who request flexible working arrangements. The Housing Executive has a Reasonable Adjustment Policy which sets out how we will consider reasonable adjustments. Further information and guidance about the Disability Discrimination Act and the reasonable adjustment duty can be found in The Equality Commission NI [Disability Code of Practice for Employers](#)
- 2.3 **Work and Families (NI) Act** – this provides the right for all employees (not just those with caring responsibilities) who hold 26 weeks' continuous service to make one statutory request in a 12 month period to work flexibly. Please note that this Flexible Working Arrangements policy goes beyond the legal requirements as it is open to all employees with no minimum service requirement (see section 3.1 below).
- 2.4 **Sex Discrimination (NI) Order** – this provides protection from indirect Sex Discrimination. Employers have a duty to ensure that decisions around flexibility do not place women at a disadvantage compared to men. Any restrictions put in place must be objectively justified.
- 2.5 **Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI)** – this makes it unlawful for employers to discriminate against employees on the grounds of age. Employers need to ensure that decisions relating to flexible working requests do not place anyone at a disadvantage due to their age.
- 2.6 **Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order** – this law prohibits religious discrimination in employment and is relevant to the provision of flexible working arrangements in certain circumstances for reasons connected to the religious observances of some employees. For example, employees holding certain religious beliefs, particularly where these are strictly observed, may be more likely to request not to work on certain days (e.g. religious feast days), or may require time-off during normal working hours for prayer breaks.
- 2.7 **Race Relations (NI) Order** – this prohibits racial discrimination in employment. Employees could suffer direct or indirect discrimination if employers fail, without objective justification, to permit them to have flexible working arrangements to provide time off work due to their religious beliefs.
- 2.8 **Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act** – this places a statutory obligation on Public Authorities to carry out their functions with due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and good relations in respect of religious belief, political opinion, gender, race, disability, age, marital status, dependants and sexual orientation.

2.9 A range of Health & Safety Legislation is also relevant and should be considered in conjunction with this policy. Please refer to [Pages - Health and Safety Policies](#), in particular note the General Health & Safety Policy, Display Screen Equipment Policy and the Health & Wellbeing Policy.

3.0 Interaction with other policies

3.1 'Flexible Working Procedure/ Part-Time Working Policy'

The Employment Act 2003 introduced the right for qualifying employees to apply for flexible working. The Housing Executive has therefore had a policy in place for many years to facilitate applications for flexible working. This new Flexible Working Arrangements Policy has a much wider scope than the original policy and goes beyond the requirements of the legislation. The Flexible Working Procedure, Job Share Policy and Part Time Working Policy have been rescinded and all applications for flexible working arrangements, including applications to work on a part-time or job share basis, will be considered under this new policy.

3.2 In certain circumstances our Reasonable Adjustment Policy may need to be considered when assessing individual circumstances. Whilst a role may not normally be deemed suitable for more flexible arrangements, adjustments may need to be considered for individuals with a disability.

3.3 There are separate policies in place for specific types of leave as there are other contractual implications associated with that leave e.g. Career Breaks, Term-Term Working, Special Leave, Annual Leave etc. In such circumstances employees should use the appropriate policy to have their requests considered.

3.4 When implementing this policy, managers and employees must continue to comply with all other relevant policies and procedures regardless of when, where and how they are working. Examples of relevant policies data protection, dignity at work and health and safety related policies e.g. liaising with Premises Officers regarding requirements set in the First-Aid Policy and the Fire Safety Management Policy.

4.0 Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this policy Flexible Working Arrangements are broadly defined under three main headings:

When you work:	Your working patterns including the days of the week you work, the number of hours and the time of day you work. In line with legislation and associated guidance, no roles will be automatically excluded from consideration. For example while it may be necessary to have some roles performed on a full time basis, consideration may need to be given to filling the role with part time workers and there may also be a requirement to consider reasonable adjustments to working hours / patterns.
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Where you work:	The physical location/environment in which you fulfil the duties of your role e.g. office based, site based or remote.
How you work:	The nature of your role e.g. frontline/customer facing, how you engage with the customer, the systems to enable different ways of work, your workstation, resources or equipment to fulfil the role e.g. hot-desking, systems, equipment, the need for digital/hard copy files etc.

5.0 Scope

- 5.1** This Policy applies to Housing Executive employees. The scope for enhanced flexibility in working arrangements will depend on the nature of the job role as set out later in this policy.
- 5.2** With respect to agency workers, there may be circumstances in which managers wish to consider flexibility in line with the principles of this policy. HR advice should be sought, and we will engage with the recruitment agency accordingly.

6.0 Principles

The core principles of this policy are as follows:

- 6.1** Customer service/meeting business needs must be at the heart of all decisions.
- 6.2** The requirements of individual job roles will determine what can be agreed in terms of flexibility.
- 6.3** Looking after health & wellbeing is essential, including considering individual personal circumstances – which may change throughout the different stages of people's careers.
- 6.4** We will seek to maximise the benefits of working together and working flexibly.
- 6.5** No one will be designated to work at home 100% of their time - everyone will have a designated NIHE base location.*
- 6.6** Flexibility needs to be 'two way', and agreements will be kept under review and are subject to change, only some will result in contractual changes.
- 6.7** Flexible Working Practices should support and enable a more flexible approach to service delivery and new ways of working.
- 6.8** Alignment with our employer brand is key. The Housing Executive aims to be a genuinely flexible employer that continues to attract and retain a highly engaged workforce.
- 6.9** The Flexible Working Practices policy will become the main vehicle for flexibility, replacing other policies where appropriate to enable consistency of approach (consistent is not sameness).
- 6.10** The Flexible Working Practices policy should help support and enable our sustainability strategy. Other issues such as public sector policy on working in cities and towns will be kept under review.

*The designated base location is determined by role and not the individuals preferred working location. In line with this policy, individuals may of course request approval to work at different locations, but their base location remains unchanged.

7.0 Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 Executive Team

The Executive Team will:

- Review and monitor working patterns and practices across the Housing Executive to ensure services are being delivered to a high standard whilst also facilitating flexibility for our people.
- Ensure this policy and associated procedures are implemented and applied in a fair and consistent manner in line with the principles of the policy.
- Provide visible support for this policy and lead behaviours which will enable the Housing Executive to become a more flexible employer.

7.2 Director of Corporate Services (DoCS)

The Director of Corporate Services will ensure the effective operation of this policy and procedure.

7.3 Assistant Director Human Resources - HR Advisory

The Assistant Director of Human Resources will ensure the day-to-day implementation of this policy and procedure.

7.4 Line Managers

Line Managers are responsible for:

- Contributing to Stage 1 reviews as required by the management team
- Consistently applying the outcome of Stage 1 service and management team reviews within their areas of responsibility
- Ensuring the potential for enhanced flexibility in working arrangements is communicated to the team
- Ensuring individuals circumstances are considered when making decisions, with factors such as wellbeing, reasonable adjustments (as appropriate), development and engagement taken into account
- Fully considering an individual's proposed working arrangements in line with the core principles, policy guidance and in light of the role to reach a decision
- Completing the appropriate section of the Flexible Working Arrangements form in order to reach an agreed way forward with individuals within their team

- Ensuring that any decisions reached will positively impact performance and Housing Executive customers
- Seeking advice from the Human Resources Department on matters related to the Flexible Working Arrangements Policy where required
- Applying the Flexible Working Arrangements Policy in a fair and consistent manner
- Completing the NIHE incident report form (IR1) and individual stress risk assessments, when required
- Ensuring individuals comply with the requirements of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations (see section **10.4** below for further information)
- Ensuring individuals comply with policies and procedures regarding equipment including reporting and taking action regarding any faults and defects with electrical equipment
- Liaising with the building Premises Officer to assist with undertaking First Aid Needs Assessments.
- Liaise with the building Premises Officer to nominate staff to undertake training to perform the role of Fire wardens and Fire Marshals.
- Managing the implementation of the agreed interim working arrangements
- Actively supporting employees throughout the implementation process of the agreed interim working arrangements
- Regular monitoring and review of the impact of the arrangements in place to ensure working arrangements have a positive impact upon the business on an ongoing basis
- Ensuring the success of arrangements in place is appropriately measured in line with the core policy principles

7.5 Employees

Employees are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with this Flexible Working Arrangements Policy and associated guidance
- Actively considering preferred working arrangements and the impact this would have on the team, business, wellbeing and performance
- Proactively looking at actions that will have a positive impact on the team
- Proactively considering any actions that will help accommodate preferred working arrangement request and performance within role
- Ensuring meetings are held with their Line Manager to discuss preferred working arrangements and reach a satisfactory agreement
- Adhering to all relevant policies and procedures such as data protection, dignity at work and health and safety related policies e.g. First-Aid and the Fire Safety Management Policy at all times, regardless of the agreed working arrangements concerning where and when they work.
- Complying with the dignity and work policy and being mindful of the visual displays of posters, computer screen savers, downloaded images, graffiti, obscene gestures, flags, bunting or emblems, or any other offensive materials or behaviour.

- Taking responsibility for their own health, safety and wellbeing e.g. availing of health & wellbeing support recommended by medical professionals
- Reporting any faults and defects with IT/electrical equipment, provided by NIHE, to IT Assist/ their line manager and refrain from continued use.
- Participate in the completion of an individual stress risk assessments, where it is deemed necessary
- Comply with the requirements of the Display Screen Equipment Regulations (see section **10.4** below for further information)
- Completing Flexible Working Arrangements Application Forms as required
- Fully participating in meetings with their Line Manager to review success of working arrangements in place.
- Understanding that as part of the flexible working arrangement agreement, if remote working is deemed appropriate, days spent working remotely may alternate in accordance with business need and Line Manager Agreement.
- Recognising that flexibility is a two way agreement - as circumstances in business change so too may the required working arrangements.
- Understanding that where there are attendance, disciplinary or performance related issues, line managers may review and potentially withdraw the previously agreed working arrangements where these are relevant to the concerns.
- Ensuring that if working remotely, Housing Executive equipment and confidential information must be stored securely to ensure compliance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018)’
- Ensuring they are contactable within working hours via Microsoft Teams and phone.
- Ensuring that if working remotely, the professional approach that is expected within the workplace is maintained at all times. This includes an expectation that your camera is switched on during virtual meetings.
- Following guidance and requirements relating to ‘hot desking’ as appropriate including cleaning between uses.

7.6 Human Resources

While the primary responsibility for agreeing flexible working arrangements lies with Line Managers, Human Resources provide an important source of advice and have a central role to play in facilitating and supporting line managers in their efforts to manage increased flexibility in working arrangements.

Human Resources will:

- Communicate this Policy and Procedure to employees to raise awareness of the Housing Executive’s Flexible Working Practices Policy and associated guidance

- Ensure the effective implementation of the Housing Executive's Flexible Working Practices Policy and associated guidance
- Provide advice and guidance to line managers and employees regarding the operation and application of this policy and procedure to ensure fairness and consistency
- Provide advice and guidance to managers in the operation and application of this policy and procedure and ensure appropriate training is provided.
- Help monitor the effectiveness of increased flexibility in working arrangements and seeking feedback e.g. through surveys and focus groups.
- Liaise with Trade Union Colleagues to reach satisfactory agreements and review working practices in line with best practice.

7.7 Trade Unions

Trade Unions will:

- Work constructively with the Housing Executive to facilitate an agreement in terms of flexible working arrangements and the nature of when, where and how work is conducted.
- Provide support to members to develop a culture where flexibility in terms of working arrangements is provided.
- Work with management to ensure any concerns raised in relation to application of the policy are addressed within a timely basis.

8.0 Procedure

The 5 key stages within the procedure are as follows:

- Stage 1 – Management Team Consideration of Service Delivery and Roles*
- Stage 2 – Team Communication regarding Roles*
- Stage 3 – Individual Considerations regarding Working Arrangements*
- Stage 4 – Management Consideration of Working Arrangements*
- Stage 5 – Agreed Way Forward*

A description of each stage is set out below and an overview is included as Appendix A.

Appendix B provides guidance for managers along with tables for completion which may be helpful to aid completion of the Part 1 High Level Service Review and Part 2 Role Analysis.

Stage 1 – Management Team Consideration of Service Delivery and Roles (See Appendix B)

This is a key stage in the procedure and starts with the members of each management team working together to consider:

- (i) How best to deliver their service – this is about considering if the current model is as effective and efficient as possible. This may include reviewing customer and employee indicators of performance such as satisfaction data, achievement of KPI's, overtime levels, absence rates, employee relations culture etc.
- (ii) Whether a more flexible approach will or could help the business and the individuals.

Each of the various roles/groups of roles in the function will need to be considered as part of this. This will include assessing how suited the roles are to more flexible arrangements in line with the core principles.

Working as a management team at this early stage will ensure a consistent approach across the Housing Executive as far as reasonably possible.

This review should not be a 'one off' exercise at a point in time. Business needs change and as such management teams should continue to keep consideration of service delivery and the roles in their functions under review, preferably annually or if a change arises in the business which would impact the assessment of the roles. The outcome of such reviews may impact the consideration of individual requests.

To ensure regular reviews are in place with a link to performance it is recommended that managers:

- (i) review their assessment of roles as part of the annual review of business performance (achievement of KPIs/business plans) and
- (ii) review individual flexibility arrangements as part of annual review of individual performance.

Appendix B provides guidance for managers along with tables for completion which may be helpful to aid completion of this stage.

Stage 2 – Team Communication regarding Roles (See Appendix B)

Once the management team has completed Stage 1 considerations, individual managers then need to apply this at a team / individual level. This will include communicating the outcome of stage 1 to the team and consulting with employees and their representatives as appropriate regarding roles.

Communication and consultation are key to the success of this policy, and both will need to be revisited if changes arise following Stage 1 reviews. For example, if managers require more frequent attendance in the office over busy periods, which differs from arrangements which are normally in place, this should be discussed with the team and trade union representatives as far in advance as possible in order to maximise the success of working arrangements.

Stage 3 – Individual Considerations regarding Working Arrangements (See Appendix C)

Applications for flexibility can only be considered for roles that managers have identified as having scope for flexibility at Stages 1 and 2 (see Appendix C for a copy of the form).

We recognise that many managers and individuals already have agreed arrangements in place which have been working well. For example, some roles are already being performed 2-3 days per week in the office environment and the rest of the time remotely, and individuals are content to work on that basis.

If there is alignment between the individual's needs and flexibility arrangements which are already in place and working well there is no requirement for individuals to complete 'Flexible Working Arrangements Application Form'.

This may apply to the majority of people and roles and is such case Managers and employees may in such case wish to hold a file note to confirm the agreed arrangements.

However, if an individual wishes to request something which is different to current mutually agreed working arrangements, they can complete a form where the manager has confirmed that their role has scope to be considered for flexibility.

When completing an application employees must refer to the core principles listed at the beginning of the form. Careful consideration should be given to how working arrangements would impact the customer, the business and the team and any reasonable steps which might prevent any negative impact should be proposed.

Completed Flexible Working Practices Application Forms are then submitted to the relevant manager.

Stage 4 – Management Consideration of Working Arrangements (See Appendix C)

Managers will review Flexible Working Arrangements Application Forms in line with the core principles, policy guidance and in light of the role. The Line Manager will arrange to meet the employee to discuss the request within 28 days. The employee has the right to be accompanied by a work colleague or Trade Union representative. Decisions must be based on the core principles and HR advice should be sought to ensure consistency of approach.

In addition to the core principles set out in this policy, it is important to be aware that there are a wide range of legal obligations with respect to considering and determining the outcome of flexible working applications (see policy section 2 above). In particular the **Employment Rights Order (ERO)** which provides employees with the right to request flexible working arrangements stipulates that in order to reject an application the decision must be on the basis of the grounds/legal reasons set out below;

- burden of additional costs
- detrimental effects on ability to meet customer demands
- inability to reorganise work among existing staff
- inability to recruit additional staff
- detrimental impact on quality
- detrimental impact on performance
- insufficiency of work when employee proposes to work
- planned structural changes.

Stage 5 – Agreed Way Forward (See Appendix C)

Having considered the application, managers will meet with individuals to discuss and seek to reach an agreed way forward.

All agreements will be monitored and kept under review to ensure success in line with the core principles and are therefore potentially subject to change.

We want to support and facilitate ongoing two way flexibility and adaptability across the organisation through this policy. It is anticipated that only some changes will require a permanent contractual amendment.

Business needs and individual needs change and as such managers should continue to keep flexible arrangements under review. It is recommended that reviews of individual arrangements are carried out as part of the ongoing performance management review discussions.

9.0 Appeals

The Housing Executive recognises that from time to time an individual may not be satisfied with the decision reached by their manager.

Individuals should initially raise their concerns informally with the manager's own line manager who will attempt to resolve the matter at the earliest opportunity.

If the matter cannot be resolved informally, the individual should appeal the decision to the appropriate Assistant Director (or above depending on the level of the original line manager) within 14 working days of being notified of the decision.

An appeal will not normally be held if the reasons for appeal are not clearly stated. Where reasons for appeal are not clearly stated, individuals may be asked to provide further information. Depending on the nature of the concerns, there may be occasions when it is necessary to invite the individual to a meeting prior to reaching a decision during which they may be accompanied by a work colleague or trade union representative.

The Assistant Director will provide a written response confirming whether the complaint is being upheld or rejected, normally within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal. This decision is final.

10.0 Health, Safety and Wellbeing

10.1 Health, safety and wellbeing considerations form a key part of the decision making with respect to Flexible Working Arrangements. Managers should ensure they:

- Maintain regular contact with employees
- Communicate with employees to ensure that if working remotely, the remote working environment is suitable and meets the needs of the post
- Clearly communicate with employees regarding workload expectations and timeframes
- Attend the 1 day **Stress Management Training** facilitated by Health & Safety Services and Human Resources
- Recognise signs of stress in employees, and determine if such stress is work related and take appropriate action, using the Individual Stress Risk Assessment Form [Individual Stress Risk Assessment Form](#)
- Play a reactive role in helping to support an employee following absence as a result of work related stress.
- Adopt a proactive approach in managing and supporting employees prior to any sickness absence related to stress and in so doing to decrease the chances of long term sickness absence and increase the chances of positive long term recovery.
- Liaise with the building Premises Officer to assist with undertaking First Aid Needs Assessments.
- Liaise with the building Premises Officer to nominate staff to undertake training to perform the role of Fire Wardens and Fire Marshals.

10.2 Employees also have a personal responsibility to take steps to look after their own health and wellbeing whilst working remotely. This includes:

- Keeping regular contact with colleagues and their Line Manager
- Taking regular breaks
- Familiarising themselves with the Housing Executives [Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) and [Health & Wellbeing Policy](#)
- Recognising personal and workplace stressors and the resources that can help to address this
- Availing of appropriate sources of support where required, such as Inspire Wellbeing.

10.3 Equipment

Employees who work remotely should be provided with suitable equipment, in accordance with the requirements for a DSE Workstation (refer to the DSE Policy, for further information), to enable them to safely fulfil the duties of their role.

This equipment remains the property of the Housing Executive and employees must ensure it is only used by them and only for the purposes required to fulfil the duties of the role. Reasonable care must be taken of the equipment.

Any faults or defects should be reported to the line manager who will advise on the necessary course of action. Do not continue to use faulty/defective electrical equipment. This checklist provides useful advice and guidance [Checklist for staff using DSE Home Workstations](#)

10.4 Display Screen Equipment

The Health & Safety Services Department developed a [DSE Policy](#) and [DSE Checklist](#) to ensure employees have all the necessary information and support for their continued safe use of DSE at home. Employees should ensure they take time to familiarise themselves with the contents of these documents and ensure completion of the action list within the checklist document, in addition to the mandatory [DSE E-Learning Course](#).

- Line managers should ensure that employees, including those employees who “hot-desk” or undertake DSE work activities remotely, complete a **DSE Self-Assessment** for their office and home based workstations [DSE Self-Assessment Checklist](#) on an annual basis or following the introduction of new work equipment or changes to their work location.
- Employees must inform their manager of any issues encountered between assessments such as diagnosis of a medical condition or any injuries or occurrences of undiagnosed pain whilst undertaking their DSE tasks (refer to the DSE Policy for further information).
- Employees using a “hot desk” at their designated base, should have access to any additional/specialist DSE equipment that they have been assessed as requiring. This may include a standing desk, document holder, specialist keyboard, mouse or seating.

Further advice or assistance can be obtained through your Local DSE Assessor or Corporate Health and Safety Advisors.

10.5 Reporting of Incidents

Any incidents that occur whilst working remotely or in the course of your work activity must be immediately reported to their Line Manager. All line managers are required to complete the [IR1 Incident Report Form](#), follow the organisational Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy and forward the IR1 form to the Corporate Health & Safety Team at IncidentReporting@nihe.gov.uk

11.0 Other Matters

11.1 Absence Reporting

The normal procedures as stated in the Attendance Management Policy apply to employees working remotely or working under flexible working arrangements in terms of working patterns etc.

It is the responsibility of employees to familiarise themselves with the reporting procedures and to ensure compliance with the necessary procedures. It is particularly important that employees who become ill whilst working remotely notify their line manager as soon as possible.

11.2 Insurance

- The Housing Executive is responsible for ensuring any necessary insurance of equipment supplied by the Housing Executive is in place.
- It is the responsibility of the employee to ensure they have appropriate home buildings and contents insurance in place. The Housing Executive will not accept responsibility for damage caused to the home or its contents.
- Employees should ensure that they liaise with their insurers, mortgage lender etc. to check if they require notification of any working at home.

11.3 Travel Expenses

Employees should refer to the [Travel and Subsistence Policy](#) and follow the normal procedure for claiming mileage where additional expenditure is incurred in order to carry out the needs of the business. All employees will have a Housing Executive base location and mileage cannot be claimed for commuting to and from this base location.

11.4 Other Expenses

Entitlements relating to pay and other allowances are based on the pattern of hours and location of work determined by the Housing Executive as opposed to arrangements which have been requested by an individual to accommodate their preferred flexible working arrangements.

11.5 Use of IT

The Acceptable Use of IT Policy applies equally to employees working remotely or working under flexible working arrangements. It is the responsibility of employees to familiarise themselves with the policy and to ensure compliance.

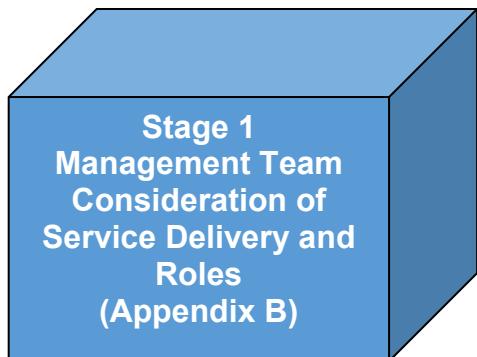
12.0 Data Protection

All information recorded for the purposes of flexible working practices under this policy is held, processed and managed in accordance with Data Protection legislation (UK GDPR and DPA 2018) and the Information Commissioner's Code of Practice on Employment Records.

13.0 Review and Revision

Human Resources will monitor and review this policy and the success of the working arrangements in line with the 10 core principles in section 4 above and feedback from our people and trade union colleagues. This is an opportunity for us to implement a range of more flexible interim arrangements and we will continue to listen to colleagues throughout. The information gathered will be used to inform revisions to the policy and associated guidance.

Appendix A: Overview of Procedural Stages



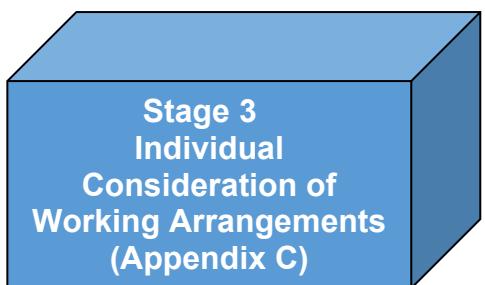
This is a key stage in the procedure and starts with the members of each management team working together to consider:

- (i) How best to deliver their service – this may include considering if the current model is as effective and efficient as possible (this may include reviewing customer and employee indicators of performance such as satisfaction data, achievement of KPI's, overtime levels, absence rates, employee relations culture etc).
- (ii) Whether a more flexible approach help the business and the individuals.
- (iii) Each of the various roles/groups of roles in the function will need to be considered as part of this. This will include assessing how suited the roles are to more flexible arrangements in line with the core principles.

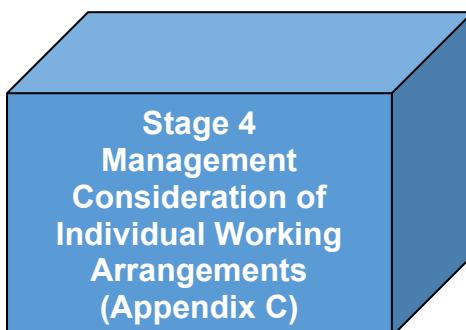
Working as a management team at this early stage will ensure a consistent approach across the Housing Executive as far as reasonably possible. This review should not be a 'one off' exercise at a point in time. Business needs change and as such management teams should continue to keep consideration of service delivery and the roles in their functions under review, preferably annually or if a change arises in the business which would impact the assessment of the roles.



Once the management team has completed Stage 1 considerations, managers then need to apply this at a team / individual level. This will include communicating the outcome of stage 1 to the team and consulting with employees and their representatives as appropriate regarding roles.



If an individual wishes to request something which is different to current mutually agreed working arrangements, they can complete a form where the manager has confirmed that their role has scope to be considered for flexibility. When completing the Flexible Working Arrangements Application employees must refer to the core principles listed at the beginning of the form. Careful consideration should be given to how working arrangements would impact the customer, the business and the team and any reasonable steps which might prevent any negative impact should be proposed. Completed Flexible Working Practices Application Forms are then submitted to the relevant manager.



Managers must now review employees Flexible Working Arrangements Application Form and consider the individual's proposed working arrangements in line with the core principles, policy guidance and in light of the role.



Managers and individuals are required to meet, discuss and seek to reach an agreed way forward, with personal circumstances having been taken into account. Managers will make decisions based on the core principles – seeking HR advice if required to ensure consistency of approach. Flexibility and adaptability are key and only some changes will result in contractual changes. All agreements will be monitored and kept under review to ensure success in line with the core principles and are therefore potentially subject to change.

Appendix B: Stage 1 Guidance for Managers

Part 1: Service Review

One of the aims of this policy is to ensure that we actively consider new ways of working which meet the needs of both our customers and our people.

This starts with management teams considering how their service is being delivered and whether a more flexible approach could help.

Managers may wish to use Table A below to enable consideration of the service for onward sharing with the team. In most cases this is likely to be a high level review which will underpin decisions which will follow around scope for flexibility.

TABLE A: High Level Service Review

Consideration	Comment
How well are we meeting customer expectations? What is customer satisfaction like (may be internal/external)?	
How well are we meeting our KPIs?	
Have you identified any areas of the service you would like to review/change?	
Are we maximising the use of technology and digital solutions?	
Are there any service areas that could be delivered in a different way? Could we enhance our systems/processes?	
Does the working week fit with service customer expectations? Is there a reliance on overtime/long working hours which requires a review?	
How would you describe the employee relations culture? Are there any indicators that might suggest performance could be impacted negatively due to employee relations concern? E.g. high absence, formal complaints etc.	
Any other areas not covered by above?	

Part 2: Role Analysis

Having considered the service review, the aim of this stage is to ensure that management teams work together to consistently consider the roles/groups of roles in their function in terms of their scope for flexibility.

This exercise is completed at a point in time, and it will need to be kept under review annually or as business needs change.

Managers may wish to use Table B below to enable consideration of roles for sharing with the team. Roles need to be considered using the policy definitions of when, where and how people work. The definitions are as follows:

When you work:	Your working patterns including the days of the week you work, the number of hours and the time of day you work. In line with legislation and guidance, no roles will be automatically excluded from consideration. For example while it may be necessary to have some roles performed on a full time basis, consideration may need to be given to filling the role with part time workers and there may also be a requirement to consider reasonable adjustments to working hours / patterns.
Where you work:	The physical location/environment in which you fulfil the duties of your role e.g. office based, site based or remote.
How you work:	The nature of your role e.g. frontline/customer facing, how you engage with the customer, the systems to enable different ways of work, your workstation, resources or equipment to fulfil the role e.g. hot-desking, systems, equipment, the need for digital/hard copy files etc.

Each role/group of roles should then be rated according to whether there is significant, moderate, minimal or no scope for flexibility. Some guidance is provided in the table below and additional questions to prompt further analysis are provided below:

Rating Roles for Flexibility

	Significant	Moderate	Minimal	None
When	Majority of the role could be performed effectively under a variety of working patterns	Some of the role could be performed effectively using different working patterns	Majority of the role must be performed at a set times as determined by NIHE	Role must be performed within a working pattern determined by NIHE
Where	Majority of the role could be performed effectively from different locations	Some of the role could be performed effectively at different locations	Majority of the role must be performed at a set location determined by NIHE	Role must be performed at a set location determined by NIHE
How	Majority of the role has scope for	Some of the role has scope for	Majority of the role must be	Role must be performed in a

	change, there are opportunities to review systems, processes and the method of engaging with customers	change with some opportunities to review systems, processes and the method of engaging with customers	performed in a specific way, with minimal opportunity to review systems, processes or the method of engaging with customers	specific way, there are no opportunities to review systems, processes or the method of engaging with customers
--	--	---	---	--

The following additional questions may be helpful for managers to consider when analysing roles under the headings of when, where and how.

When: The working patterns including the days of the week worked, the number of hours and the time of day employee's work.

Criteria	Comment
Does the role require working specific hours?	
Are there any elements of the role that could be conducted outside of traditional core hours?	
Would the working patterns of the individual impact upon the performance of the team?	
Would the working patterns of the individual impact communication with the team/customers?	
How do you plan to review the arrangements to ensure they are appropriate?	
Is there a regular requirement for face to face engagement?	

Where: The physical location/environment in which you fulfil the duties of their role e.g. office based, site based or remote.

Criteria	Comment
Does the role require working at a particular location?	
Does the location impact on performance (e.g. team or individual)?	
Does the location impact communication and engagement?	
Would customer engagement (internal/external) be impacted by the work location of the individual?	
Are there any systems that impact potential for flexibility e.g. systems that are an enabler for flexible working arrangements?	

How: The nature of employees role e.g. frontline/customer facing, how the employee engages with the customer, the systems to enable different ways of work, workstation, resources or equipment to fulfil the role e.g. hot-desking, systems, equipment, the need for digital/hard copy files etc.

Criteria	Comment
Does this role require face to face external customer engagement?	
Does this role require face to face internal customer engagement?	
Does this role require access to certain office based resources that cannot be accessed elsewhere?	
Is the role suited to hot-desking	
Would the individual require additional equipment in order to effectively perform their role from various locations?	
Are there any systems that would restrict the scope for flexibility?	
How would you ensure the employee has the appropriate training to contribute to effective knowledge transfer?	
How will you ensure effective interaction with team members & managers is appropriately upheld?	

Table B: Consideration of Roles – Scope for Flexibility

Please complete the below table by considering posts/groups of posts within your team and assessing their suitability for flexibility in terms of when, where and how. These should be rated according to whether there is significant, moderate, minimal or no flexibility.

This exercise is completed at a point in time and should be kept under review at least annually or when business needs change.

Posts	When	Where	How

Conclusion:

Please provide any overarching comments regarding the flexibility in your service area.

Signature:

Date

Appendix C:

Flexible Working Arrangements Application Form



Guidance Notes:

- (i) The purpose of this form is to facilitate managers and their employees to discuss and keep a record of agreed flexible working arrangements for employees,
- (ii) Applications can only be submitted where managers have identified that the employee's role has scope for flexibility. Applications are not required if an individual's needs match current mutually agreed flexibility arrangements for the role.
- (iii) As you work through this form, please remember that all decisions must be based on the following 10 guiding principles:

Flexible Working Arrangements Principles

• Customer service/meeting business needs must be at the heart of our decisions.
• The requirements of individual job roles will determine what can be agreed in terms of flexibility.
• Looking after health & wellbeing is essential, including considering individual personal circumstances – which may change throughout the different stages of people's careers.
• We will seek to maximise the benefits of working together and working flexibly.
• No one will be designated to work at home 100% of their time - everyone will have a designated NIHE base location.
• Flexibility needs to be 'two way', and agreements will be kept under review and are subject to change, only some will result in contractual changes.
• Flexible Working Practices should support and enable a more flexible approach to service delivery and new ways of working.
• Alignment with our employer brand is key. The Housing Executive wants to be a genuinely flexible employer that continues to attract and retain a highly engaged workforce.
• The Flexible Working Practices Policy will become the main vehicle for flexibility, replacing other policies where appropriate to enable consistency of approach (consistent is not sameness).
• Our policy should help support and enable our sustainability strategy. Other issues such as public sector policy on working in cities and towns will be kept under review.

Part 1: To be completed by the employee

Employee Information (to be completed by employees)

Name:	
Employee Number:	
Dept:	
Grade:	
Contact Telephone No or E-mail:	

Individual Considerations

Reminder: please be aware of the requirements as set out in the UK GDPR and the DPA 2018 and only provide what is necessary to aid your discussion with your manager regarding working arrangements. Do not include sensitive or personal medical information unless you consider this is necessary.

Considerations	Yes/No or N/A	Detail (only provide what is necessary to aid discussion with your Manager)
<p>Does my role require me to work at a particular location/work specific hours etc.?</p> <p>What are the benefits from working together with others – my own team, other teams?</p>		
<p>What are my own personal circumstances at this stage in my career – and what flexibility might enable me to perform most effectively? E.g. different working hours/location?</p>		
<p>How does my preferred working arrangement enable me to meet the needs of my customers (think both internal and external) and the business?</p>		
<p>How does my preferred working arrangement impact my team – any actions to ensure positive impact/address any gaps?</p>		
<p>What working arrangement would enable me to perform best?</p>		
<p>What actions can I take to ensure my preferred working arrangement can be accommodated and will help me to perform well in my role?</p>		
<p>What actions do I need to take to ensure I look after my health, safety and wellbeing (consider need for interaction, relationship building, and getting support)?</p>		

Part 2: To be completed by the employee and Line Manager during 1:1 meeting

Management Considerations

Reminder: please be aware of the requirements as set out in the UK GDPR and the DPA 2018 and only provide what is necessary to aid your discussion with the employee regarding working arrangements. Do not include sensitive or personal medical information unless you consider this is necessary.

Considerations	Yes/No or N/A	Detail (only provide what is necessary to aid discussion with your Staff)
How suited is the individual's role for flexibility (refer to the role analysis ratings in the policy)		
What impact would the request have on the customer? (think both internal and external).		
What impact would approving the request have on the business/ performance?		
What impact would approving the request have on the team – could any actions be taken to ensure positive impact/address any gaps?		
What impact would approving the request have on the individual? (consider wellbeing, development, engagement etc.).		
Could any actions be taken to address any concerns arising re the individual's wellbeing, belonging and contribution in team; and customer, business, team objectives?		
Has the individual taken responsibility to consider the impact of their request and how it might be accommodated?		
How will success be measured?		

Agreed Working Arrangements:

The following agreement has been reached regarding flexible working arrangements going forward:

Declarations

Employee:

I confirm that I have discussed and agreed the contents of this form with my line manager. I confirm that the information documented on this form is correct to the best of my knowledge.

I have read and understood the '**Flexible Working Arrangements Policy**'. I understand that any changes agreed above are subject to ongoing review and do not constitute any change to my contractual terms and conditions.

Name	Signature	Date

Manager:

I confirm that I have discussed and agreed the above working arrangements and will review this on a regular basis with my team member.

Name	Signature	Date

**COMPLETED FORMS SHOULD BE RETAINED BY THE LINE MANAGER
(COPIED TO THE EMPLOYEE)**

NOTE: This agreement should be kept under review through the Performance Management Process and more often if required.

Your Information

What we do with your information

The Housing Executive is processing your application for flexible working arrangements. Processing your information is necessary for agreeing working arrangements and in doing so, the Housing Executive is using the lawful basis of legal obligation to consider requests for flexible working.

The information you have provided is required for the following specified purposes:

- Facilitating and possessing a record of agreed flexible working arrangements for employees

Sharing your information with others

Your information will only be shared with the manager who is undertaking your 1:1 meeting and the HRBP, this will not be shared with anyone else.

How long we hold your information for

The Housing Executive will hold the information you have provided until you are Age 100 YEARS in line with the [Disposal of Records Schedule](#) for Personal files.

Privacy Notice

The Housing Executive is committed to protecting your privacy and maintaining your trust and confidence in how we handle your personal information. You can view the Housing Executive's [HR Privacy Notice](#) on the Data Protection Huddle page or you can ask Human Resources to post or email a copy to you.

Appendix D: Role Analysis Example – Resourcing

(1)When: The working patterns including the days of the week worked, the number of hours and the time of day employees work.

Criteria	Comment
Does the individual's role require working specific hours?	<p>On some occasions working specific hours may be required e.g. when assessment/ interviews are being conducted it would be a requirement of the role to conduct these during certain hours to facilitate the panel and candidates.</p> <p>Outside of facilitating certain elements of process the hours of work can be flexible as contact with candidates etc is via email and there is scope for this to be monitored at any time and contact times from candidates can be varied.</p>
Are there any elements of the individual's role that could be conducted outside of traditional core hours?	<p>As stated previously, assessments/ interviews would normally be conducted within the traditional core hours, however other elements of the role can be conducted outside of core hours as required.</p>
Would the working patterns of the individual impact upon the performance of the team?	<p>No – as long as there is flexibility from the employee that when there is a business requirement this will be facilitated to ensure high level of customer service to both internal customers and candidates.</p>
Would the working patterns of the individual impact communication?	<p>No – the majority of contact with candidates is conducted via email and telephone which on some occasions can be easier as candidates may not be available during the working day to discuss processes due to their current work commitments.</p> <p>Regarding communication with internal candidates and within the team there may be a minimal impact due to the varying communications in place e.g. telephone, virtual meetings and email.</p>
How do you plan to review the arrangements to ensure they are appropriate?	<p>Arrangements would be reviewed during weekly 1:1 meetings to ensure the arrangements are still appropriate and to allow discussion for upcoming work to allow planning to take place and any adjustments to be made as required.</p> <p>Monthly team meetings will also allow for discussion with the wider team to ensure that there are no wider issues being created and to ensure the level of service is not being impacted by any arrangements.</p> <p>If a particular issue needs to be addressed this can be done on an ad hoc basis.</p>

(2)Where: The physical location/environment in which you fulfil the duties of their role e.g. office based, site based or remote.

Criteria	Comment
Does the individual's role require working at a particular location?	<p>Due to the nature of the role the individual is required to work at a variety of locations to facilitate assessments/interviews as required. There are elements of the role due to process administration including printing of interview notes, scanning and appropriate storage of</p>

	<p>hard copy files that some work will always remain office based.</p> <p>There may also be occasions for team training and development that individuals are required to attend the office to assist other new members of the team and undertake workshops to ensure consistency of approach e.g. policy development/implementation.</p> <p>Other than assessment/interviews elements of the role can be facilitated virtually from other locations or WFH.</p>
Does the location of the individual's role impact performance (e.g., team or individual)?	No - although on occasions individuals will be required to be present in the office to ensure paperwork is prepared and stored appropriately and to facilitate workshops, policy updates and training.
Does the location of the individual's role impact communication/engagement?	<p>The individual has access to appropriate equipment such as laptop and mobile to facilitate communications between internal and external customers along with their team/colleagues.</p> <p>However, there may be instances whereby employees are required to attend their base location for the purposes of training, team meetings or workshops.</p>
Would customer engagement (internal/external) be impacted by the work location of the individual?	<p>Assessments/Interviews will continue to be facilitated face to face and panel meetings as required.</p> <p>As the majority of both internal/external customer contact is via email the location would not impact the role and calls received to the office can be re-directed to employees work mobile phones if required.</p>

(3) How: The nature of employees role e.g. frontline/customer facing, how the employee engages with the customer, the systems to enable different ways of work, workstation, resources or equipment to fulfil the role e.g. hot-desking, systems, equipment, the need for digital/hard copy files etc.

Criteria	Comment
Does this role require face to face external customer engagement?	Yes - face to face external customer engagement is required for candidate interviews and assessments and pre-employment checks as required.
Does this role require face to face internal customer engagement?	Yes, interactions between interview panels to facilitate assessment/interviews. Other work prior to processes can be conducted virtually including shortlisting, agreeing interview questions if required.
Does this role require access to certain office based resources that cannot be accessed elsewhere?	The storage of recruitment files appropriately will need to be office based in a secure location. IT equipment and systems are accessible from any location.
Would the individual require additional equipment in order to effectively perform their role from various locations?	No - employees have been provided with the necessary IT/mobile phone equipment to fulfil the duties of their role effectively.
How would you ensure the employee has the appropriate level of training in order to contribute to effective knowledge transfer?	<p>There would need to be a combination of face to face and virtual training.</p> <p>Some training and knowledge transfer can be conducted virtually however, some training e.g. for new team members would be required to attend the office to observe interviews etc due to the nature of the role.</p>

How will you ensure interaction with both Team members & Managers is appropriately upheld? Please specify the plan.	1:1 weekly meetings Monthly team meetings and workshops Facilitation of face to face interaction as and when required which assists to ensure that the health and wellbeing of the team is being maintained and also identifying any potential issues or training needs.
Would the employee's role be suited to hot-desking?	On a broad principle - no. Due to the nature of the role and confidentiality of processes it would not be appropriate to hot desk. While the individual can work from other locations, they would need to ensure they are working from a place within the location that means their work remains confidential. They would also require a base location to allow for the appropriate storage of files to ensure effective information governance in line with GDPR.

Table B: Consideration of Roles – Scope for Flexibility

Please complete the below table by considering posts/groups of posts within your team and assessing their suitability for flexibility in terms of when, where and how. These should be rated according to whether there is significant, moderate, minimal or no flexibility.

This exercise is completed at a point in time and should be kept under review at least annually or when business needs change.

Posts	When	Where	How
HR Manager, Resourcing	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Senior HR Advisor	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
HR Advisor	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate

Conclusion:

All members of the resourcing team can have an element of flexibility however, due to the nature of the role and delivering business need regarding recruitment and selection processes there remains a need to attend the office. There can be some flexibility in some elements of the role in regards to working from home/other locations but not all of the role can be facilitated due to training, delivery of the service and ensuring the appropriate storage of files and information.

Appendix E: Guidance on Hot Desking



1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide guidance in regards to the Housing Executive's hot desking arrangements. In line with the Flexible Working Arrangements policy, the Housing Executive has the opportunity to consider working practices and new ways of working. We recognise that roles across the Housing Executive are different, and every individual is different, therefore a 'one size fits all' approach is not appropriate. The guidance should therefore be followed by all managers and employees who have flexible working arrangements in place that include the provision for hot desking.
- 1.2 Hot desking enables office accommodation to be utilised to its full potential. Although hot desking means that the traditional allocation of fixed desks within the office no longer exists, it is not anticipated that there should be any significant impact on an individual's ability to fulfil the duties of their role, with suitable workspaces available to all individuals via a booking system.
- 1.3 In order for hot desking processes to be effective, it is important to assess the impact of shared workspaces. Therefore, the Housing Executive adopted an innovative approach to the planning process and conducted hot desking pilots across various areas to trial such practices. Any matters raised throughout such pilots at the early initiation stage were discussed and addressed at the Accommodation Strategy Work Stream groups in order to ensure the effective implementation of hot desking practices across the organisation.

2.0 Availability of Hot Desks

In order to ensure the availability of hot desks when required, managers are encouraged to put measures in place for the booking of hot desks within their team/department if they feel necessary e.g. agreed zoned area.

3.0 Booking system

A booking system is in operation for the booking of hot desks. Please refer to the following link to the NI Direct Website for available guidance including user guides and an introductory video on features/functions
<https://dttdocumentation-uiadmin.nidirect.gov.uk/DeskBooking/>.

- 3.1** Whilst it is not mandatory to use the system, it is a helpful tool particularly for larger teams. The system is user friendly and enables employees to book a desk by following a number of straightforward steps, which includes inserting personal information e.g. telephone number and selecting the relevant building e.g. Adelaide Street. Users can then select the particular zone/department in which they wish to book a desk. Upon booking, users will receive a booking confirmation email containing a unique booking reference number. Users should make a note of the reference number stated within the initial booking confirmation, as this may be needed at a later stage if making a cancellation
- 3.2** Desks are available to book on a half day, full day or multi day basis through selecting the relevant time slot. Desks can be booked on behalf of other users or for a group. Employees are encouraged to be courteous to others and only book desks for the duration required, e.g. if an employee is going to be out on site, at a meeting elsewhere or in training for several hours a desk should not be booked for the full day, as this impacts the availability of desks for colleagues during busy periods.
- 3.3** Whilst desk bookings can be made in advance, users are discouraged from making block bookings.
- 3.4** If a booking has been made and you no longer require this desk, please cancel the booking using the booking platform. Users should make a note of the reference number stated within the initial booking confirmation, as this may be required when making a cancellation.

4.0 Confidentiality

- 4.1** When operating in a hot desking capacity, it is expected that employees should adhere to the normal good practice organisational GDPR and confidentiality procedures e.g. confidential information should not be left unattended and confidential waste should be disposed of using the confidential waste bins within the hot desking area.
- 4.2** The Housing Executive adopts a paperless approach. In instances where paper based files are required, files should be stored securely in an agreed designated team location e.g. two door wooden cabinets etc.
- 4.3** Employees are encouraged to exercise caution when dealing with sensitive matters and should therefore ensure they go to a private space to discuss anything of a confidential nature.

5.0 Personal belongings

- 5.0** Employees are reminded that a hot desk should be suitable for use for any employee and therefore should not be populated with personalised items.

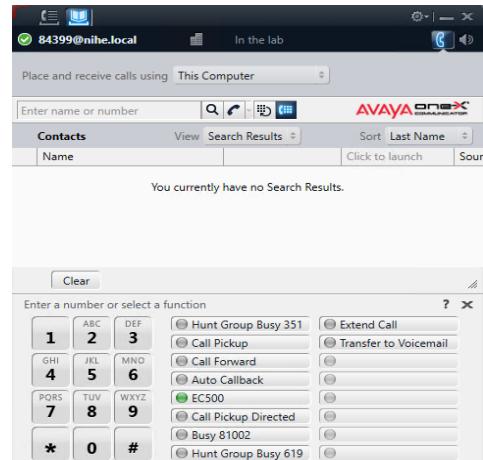
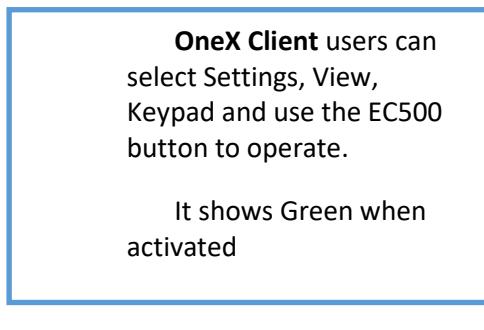
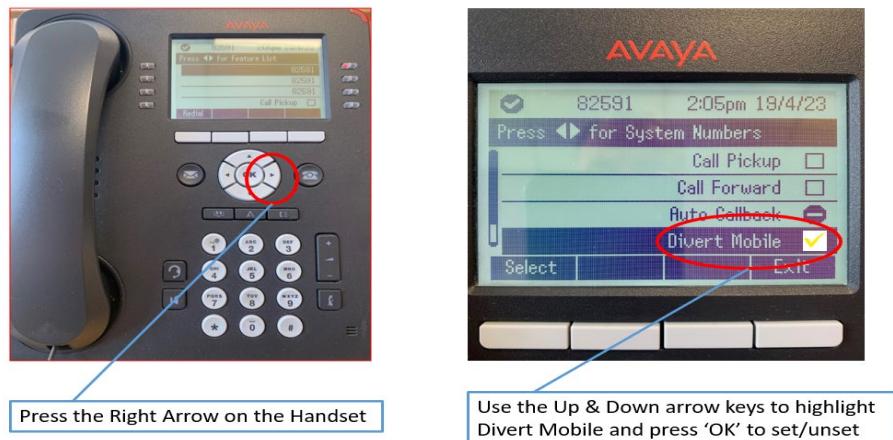
- 5.1** The pedestals in Adelaide Street should be used to store personal items for the days in which people are using the desk only. It is therefore important that at the end of each day, personal belongings are removed from the desk/pedestal. Keys should be left in the pedestals at the end of each day.
- 5.2** The two door wooden cabinets should be used for more permanent storage – in most cases these cabinets can be shared between two people.

6.0 Equipment

- 6.1** In order to ensure employees are adequately equipped to conduct work within a hot desking capacity, all hot desks will include at minimum the following items:
 - Monitor
 - Keyboard/Mouse
 - A suitable office chair that takes account of the varying requirements of multiple users.
- 6.2** Please note the equipment listed above is not exhaustive and other equipment such as docking station and universal charging cables may be available at various hot desks.
- 6.3** Within all hot desk areas, employees should have access to:
 - Stationery stock (e.g. pens, paper and stapler etc)
 - A printing/scanning device
- 6.4** Employees are responsible for reporting missing or damaged equipment at the earliest convenience to their line manager.
- 6.5** All employees can now install and configure the Avaya One-X Communicator softphone onto their device. This will allow calls to be received to your extension number on your PC/Laptop/Tablet.
 - If the software hasn't already been installed, you can download it from the IT Assist Store.
 - Guidance on softphone configuration can be found at the following link: [Avaya Softphone Setup](#)
- 6.6** Desk phones may also be available to staff. If there is a specific need to retain a desk phone this can be accommodated by the IT department, as appropriate.
- 6.7** In instances where a desk phone is available at the hot desk, employees are encouraged to refer to the below guidance.

6.8 Desk Phone Guidance:

- There is a call divert to NIHE mobile function on the Avaya telephone system, it is also known as EC500. It is associated with the extension number and not the physical phone on any particular desk.
- When the Divert Mobile or EC500 is activated it will automatically route incoming calls to ring both the station number and the associated NIHE Mobile phone number.
- Staff can log onto any desk phone in the Organisation using their 5 digit extension number as the username and their station password.
- Once logged on staff can set/unset the call divert function for their extension number.



- If staff unset the call divert function when logged onto a desk phone, they must remember to set it again before they log off if they want calls to divert to their NIHE mobile phone when they leave the desk.
- There is a separate 'Call Forward' option available on some desk phone menus. IT recommend this is used only to forward calls to an internal NIHE extension and not a mobile phone number. Divert Mobile or EC500 should be used when forwarding calls to an external number.

7.0 Health, Safety and Wellbeing

It is important that hot desking workspaces are set-up correctly in line with the normal DSE procedures and suited to differing individual needs. We recognise that hot desking may not be suitable to the needs of everyone, and we ask staff with concerns to speak to their managers so we can consider their arrangements. For example, some staff with a disability or medical condition may require their own designated desk to accommodate specialist IT or office equipment or may need to be located in a particular area to ensure they can work safely and effectively. In line with our Reasonable Adjustments Policy we will consider all requests for reasonable adjustments and exceptions to hot desking arrangements on an individual basis. Therefore, at the start of each hot desking session, employees are encouraged to check that the workstation is set-up correctly.

8.0 Workspace Cleaning

- 8.0** Cleaning materials such as sanitiser and wipes should be readily available to employees within all hot desking areas.
- 8.1** As good practice etiquette, employees should ensure that they make use of the available cleaning materials and leave the workspace in a hygienic state as they would wish to find it e.g. all surfaces/equipment should be wiped down and cleared of any tissues and dirty cups etc.

Flexitime Working

Human Resources Department

	 Housing Executive
Title	Flexitime Working
Aim	
Version	
Last reviewed	
Last updated	
Staff affected	
Author(s)	Human Resources Policy Unit
Approved by	Housing Executive Board
Screened for equality impact	
Date of next review	

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1.0 Scope of the Policy

- 1.1 The Policy may apply to all staff, including permanent and temporary employees and will apply to those working under part time working or job sharing arrangements on a pro rata basis.
- 1.2 The application of the scheme is subject to the demands and requirements of the service and is at the discretion of the Line Manager.
- 1.3 The Policy will be applied in conjunction with the rules set in the [Time Management System](#).

2.0 Aims of the Scheme

- 2.1 The main aim of the Flexible Working Hours scheme is to provide a more flexible system of attendance for staff. Employees have considerable scope to vary their times of arrival and departure from work, to vary the length and timing of their lunch break and to take time off if they work extra hours.

3.0 Key Definitions/Principles

3.1 Coretime

- (i) In order to ensure that there are periods during the day during which staff are available to communicate with the public and each other, several hours are designated as Coretime. Coretime is the essential part of the day during which all staff have to be present, unless they have permission to be away. In the majority of circumstances, the core periods are 10 am – 12 pm and 2 pm – 4 pm.
- (ii) While it is intended to maintain the current core periods as far as possible, staff may adjust core periods, depending on the demands of the sections service, and with prior agreement of their Line Manager, and may opt to work a core period time during any two hour period between 8 am – 12 pm and another core period between 12.30 pm – 6 pm.

3.2 Flexible bands

- (i) The periods before and after coretime during which staff are free to arrive for work in the morning and leave for home in the afternoon,

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subject only to the need to maintain adequate staffing during normal office hours.

- (ii) Staff can work flexi between the hours of 7 am and 9 pm, subject to the Line Manager's approval, and the building being open, and subject to the core periods outlined above.

3.3 Flexible lunch break

- (i) All staff are required to take a lunch break of at least 20 minutes during the flexible band between 12 noon and 2 pm, the length and timing of the lunch break may vary, subject only to operational requirements.

3.4 Reconciliation

- (i) Flexi hours should be reconciled on a monthly basis using the [Time Management system](#). Credits/debits will be automatically carried forward by the system and will be checked by the Line Manager who will take action where necessary
- (ii) For authorised absences, time will be credited to an officer's record of hours attended. In normal circumstances, credits should reflect the time which the officer would have recorded if the absence had not been necessary.
 - (a) The credit for a whole day's approved absence should be the standard day and the credit for a complete morning's or afternoon's absence should be half the standard day.
 - (b) Credits for less than a day should be agreed between the officer and the Line Manager.
 - (c) Staff attending an all day meeting or training course where the actual time is less than the standard day should receive the full credit if attendance at the office is not practical. Credits should be agreed with the Line Manager, and in normal circumstances a maximum of 9 hours and 40 minutes will be applied.
- (iii) Each employee is responsible for ensuring that his/her clock card is accurate and up to date. The Line Manager through the office administrator must ensure that the flexi card is appropriately reconciled.

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4.0 Carry Over

- 4.1 Carry over is the arrangement to take forward excess or deficit hours from one accounting period to the next.
- 4.2 Staff will be able to accumulate the appropriate hours to take 36 flexi leave days per financial year (i.e. 3 days per calendar month)
- 4.3 The maximum carry over of deficit hours is 18 ½ hours per month, whereas the maximum carry over of credit hours is 22 hours 12 minutes
- 4.4 Staff are discouraged from remaining in continuous substantial deficit for a prolonged period.
- 4.5 Staff may not normally carry forward more than the maximum deficit. Any deficit in excess of the permitted maximum is in breach of the scheme and this can lead to disciplinary action (which may include stopping pay for the excess deficit). Where staff are prevented from reducing a deficit balance to the maximum allowed because of circumstances, for example if they are absent due to ill health, which they could not anticipate or avoid they should be allowed to carry the deficit forward.
- 4.6 Any excess credit above the maximum is normally lost. However, in circumstances where staff are prevented by the needs of the office or because of sick leave from reducing their credit balance to the maximum they may be permitted to carry the excess into the next accounting period.
- 4.7 When the carry over of greater deficit or excess than the maximum is authorised, there should be a clear understanding that the deficit or excess should be brought within normal limits as soon as reasonably possible. Unless there are exceptional circumstances the normal limits should apply again at the end of the next accounting period.

5.0 Recording of Attendance

- 5.1 Staff are required to record their attendances and absences accurately and promptly, in accordance with the agreed procedures. Persistent failure to do so will be treated as abuse of the scheme and may result in removal from the scheme and/or disciplinary action.
- 5.2 Staff are individually responsible for the accurate recording of their working hours and under no circumstances will someone record hours worked on behalf of someone else.
- 5.3 All entries must be certified by the Line Manager who will be satisfied that the reasons and times are valid.

Flexitime Working

6.0 Flexi Leave

6.1 Flexi leave may be time taken off:

- (i) in lieu of excess hours attended (in the previous or current accounting period); or
- (ii) in anticipation of hours to be made up later

6.2 Flexi leave may be allowed up to a limit of 22 hours 12 minutes in any one accounting period, and may be taken as full or half days, or in blocks of hours (minimum of 2 hours). Flexi leave may only be recorded after it has been agreed with the Line Manager.

7.0 Medical Appointments

7.1 Before arranging a doctor/dentist's appointment or a similar type of appointment, the officer must inform his/her Line Manager of his intention. Where possible appointments should be made outside core periods. Reasonable flexi credits will be allowed for the length of the appointment and will normally be subject to a maximum of 2 hours. However, in exceptional circumstances additional time may be approved at the Line Manager's discretion.

8.0 Abuse of the Scheme

8.1 The operation and control of the Flexible Working Hours policy rests with local management, who will monitor the scheme to ensure its effectiveness. An officer's participation in the scheme may be suspended temporarily or indefinitely for persistent or serious abuse.

9.0 Overtime

9.1 There is a clear distinction between extra hours worked by individuals as part of the flexible working hours arrangements, and additional attendance outside core time which may attract [overtime payments](#) or time off in lieu if appropriate.

9.2 Hours worked after 5 pm on Mondays – Thursdays and 4.30 pm on Fridays may be treated as overtime at the specific request of management. Staff will be required to record their finishing time, prior to commencing overtime. For more information on overtime see the [Overtime Policy](#).

Flexitime Working

10.0 Flexible Working Hours Credit/Debit on Leaving NIHE

- 10.1 On receipt of notification from an Officer that he/she is leaving the Housing Executive, the Line Manager must inform the member of staff that a balance of hours situations should be achieved by the last working day.
- 10.2 Where this balance has not been achieved, any debit balance should firstly be off set against any outstanding annual leave, and if this is not possible, final pay must be adjusted accordingly, i.e. by a deduction or addition made for debit/credit balance of hours.

11.0 Working Time Regulations

- 11.1 The Flexible Working Hours Policy has been developed in accordance with the requirements of the [Working Time Regulations](#), full details of which are contained within [Section 4.4](#) of the Staff Handbook.