

## APPENDIX 4

### Working at Home – Law and Democratic Services Practical bullet points

#### MANAGERS

- We are all supportive of home working. Make sure that you are fully aware of “The working at home Guidance document” both as a manager and as an employee who may work from home. (i.e. lead by example).
- Working at home is still fairly new for all, but there seems to be a few issues that regularly come up, so it may be worth refreshing yourself as a manager on these:
  - Remember the place of work is Swindon Borough Council not the home, therefore if this isn't working for either the employee or manager both has the right to remove working from home.
  - If you feel that the trust and confidence you had in the employee is breaking down because the employee is working from home and you are not comfortable with how it is operating, you need to identify why this is and try and resolve it before it becomes a major performance issue.
  - Agree with the employee what hours the employee is working when working from home and communicate this to team members and others who need to know.
  - When an employee is working at home, this should be as if working in the office. Accordingly, the office telephone must be put through to the home location (either to a mobile or landline) by the employee the day before the home working is operating.
  - No additional payments would be made to employees using their own home telephones or personal mobiles.
  - If the technology is not available to allow the employee to work from home then it is their responsibility to come into the office to work, remember the place of work is the Council.
  - If an employee does not have a work laptop, then check how emails are being dealt with and ensure that matters are dealt with in a DP compliant way. If the employee does not have a work laptop then check if one is needed to enable home working.
  - Remember that due to confidentiality issues, some work cannot be done at home because certain information cannot leave the Council premises therefore it must be made clear that this work has to be completed in the office.
  - Ensure output is at least as productive as in the office and demonstrably so. Review what the objectives are, put a system in place that allows you to measure output, make sure the employee communicates what work is being done at home. Remember home working needs to be output led.

- Accordingly, for 'one off' instances, agree the work that is to be done at home and monitor that this has been done. For regular working at home (eg 1 or 2 days a week), specifically agree with the employee how this should be monitored so that everyone is clear how this is operating so as to counter any perception that 'working at home' is a euphemism for a 'day off' and leaving colleagues to deal with the work needing to be done.
  - All employees (except for Legal staff – see bullet point below) who work from home, whether on a regular or ad-hoc basis, will be required to complete a monitoring form for each day that they work from home (see attached) and they should submit this to their manager. Information on times available/not available when working from home should also be logged on the form and the office notified (either by email or telephone).
  - Legal staff currently undertake monitoring via a time recording system and will therefore not be required to complete an additional form.
  - Employees who do work from home should ensure that they cover their own work and meetings and should attend section/departamental meetings on a regular basis.
  - Is the home working employee still visible to you and the team, and available to respond to general everyday issues? If not, check that other members of the team in the office are not picking up work that should be completed by the employee who is working from home.
  - Make sure the calendar is up to date.
  - Be consistent. You can't have one rule for one and another for the others
- As a manager you must lead by example and ensure you follow the same guidance. Make clear who is managing your staff if you are not available in the office. Obviously, it may be that your teams self manage but they need to know who they can go to if they are not able to contact you and again you must communicate with your staff on contactable hours etc.
  - Finally, have regular meetings with home workers. Trust plays a big part in home working and as a manager if you believe that this is being tested you must be honest with the employee and let them know that you are concerned that the service may be suffering as a result of home working. If necessary you may need to ask the employee to work in the office more to establish if this is the case. But first ask yourself if this is just because they are not visible.

## EMPLOYEES

- Remember that your place of work is Swindon Borough Council not the home, therefore if this isn't working for either the employee or manager each has the right to remove working from home.

- Agree with your manager what hours you are working when working from home so that this can be communicated to team members and others who need to know.
- Put your telephone through to your home the day before you are working at home unless otherwise agreed with your manager.
- Notify your manager (or designated person) when you “log-on” / commence work and when you finish work / “log-off” at the end of the day. Also ensure that you advise your manager (or designated person) if you are to be absent / “logged-off” for any period during the working day /office hours – for example an absence to attend a Dentist’s appointment or similar. Follow the notification and recording procedure when you return to working at home. The procedure can also be followed if you intend to “move your working day”. Always advise your manger and other team members if this is your intention.
- Ensure you have the necessary equipment to effectively work at home and that matters are dealt with in a DP compliant way, and confidentiality maintained where necessary.
- Output should be at least as productive as in the office and demonstrably so. Accordingly, for ‘one off’ instances, agree the work that is to be done at home and monitor that this has been done. For regular working at home (eg 1 or 2 days a week), specifically agree with your manager how this should be monitored.
- Monitoring forms to be completed and submitted to your line manager for every day that you work from home ( Legal staff currently undertake monitoring via a time recording system and will therefore not be require d to complete an additional form).

1<sup>st</sup> September 2012