



## HOUGHTON REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

### Flexible Working Policy & Flexi Time System

Date of approval:	12 <sup>th</sup> March 2012
Dates of review:	27 <sup>th</sup> February 2013: 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2017
Dates of re-approval :	18 <sup>th</sup> July 2017

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## **1. Qualification**

1.1 In order to make a request for flexible working you must:

- (a) Be an employee
- (b) Not an agency worker:
- (c) Have a child under 17 ; or a disabled child under 18.
- (d) Have been continuously employed by the Council for a period of not less than 26 weeks at the date of the application is made.
- (e) Make the application no later than 2 weeks before the child's 17<sup>th</sup> birthday or 18<sup>th</sup> birthday in the case of a disabled child.
- (f) Have or expect to have responsibility for child's upbringing
- (g) Be responsible for the care of a person aged 18 or over.
- (h) Not have made another application to work flexibly under this right to make such applications during the past 12 months.
- (i) The right to apply for flexible working arrangements applies to the mother, father, adopter, guardian or foster parent of the child or the partner or spouse of such a person, living with the child.

## **2. Scope of a Request**

2.1 If you qualify, you have a legal right to request:

- (a) A change to working hours worked ( change to start & finish times)
- (b) A change to hours worked (i.e. reduction in hours worked)
- (c) A change to the times you are required to work (core times)
- (d) A change in duties
- (e) A change to any other terms of your employment
- (f) Any agreed change to your terms and conditions will be permanent, unless agree otherwise.

## **3. Your Application**

3.1 If you decide to make a flexible working request you must follow this procedure. However, before making an application you should think about:

- (a) What working pattern will help you best care for your other responsibilities.
- (b) The financial implications a change might have on you.
- (c) What effects, if any, the change will have on the Council's Business and how these might be accommodated.

The application must be in writing, signed and dated.

3.2 State that it is an application under the right to apply for flexible working arrangements, specify the change applied for and date on which you would like the change to be effective. Explain what effect, if any, you think making the change applied for would have on the Council; and how you meet the eligibility requirements.

3.3 You can only make one application per year. If you have made a previous application to the Council for flexible working arrangements then the application must state this and give the date on which the previous application(s) are or were made.

#### **4. The Council's Response**

- 4.1 The Council may agree to the request without discussing it with you provided we notify you within 28 days of receipt of the application that the request is granted. Otherwise, the Council will arrange to meet with you within 28 days of receiving the application (or longer if mutually agreed). If the individual who would normally consider your application is on holiday or sick leave this time limit will be automatically extended.

#### **5. The Meeting**

- 5.1 You are entitled to bring a companion to the meeting. The companion can address the meeting but not answer questions on your behalf. The companion should be a trade union representative or work colleague of your choosing. At the meeting, we will discuss the work pattern suggested in depth and how best it might be accommodated. If there are problems in accommodating the request, we will consider alternative working patterns.

#### **6. After the Meeting**

- 6.1 Within 14 days of the meeting we will write to you to either agree a new working pattern and a start date or, where the decision is to refuse the variation, to set out the grounds for the refusal: The grounds on which the Council can reject your request include:

- (a) Burden of additional costs
- (b) Detrimental effect on the ability to meet customer demand
- (c) Inability to re-organise work amongst existing staff
- (d) Inability to recruit additional staff
- (e) Detrimental effect on quality
- (f) Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work
- (g) Planned structural changes
- (h) Any other ground allowed by regulation.

#### **7. The Appeal Procedure**

- 7.1 You may appeal the Council's decision provided you do so within 14 days of receiving the Council's appeal. Within 14 days of receipt of the notice of appeal. The Grievance Committee will either hold a meeting with you to hear the appeal or allow the appeal and notify accordingly.

- 7.2 Within 14 days of holding the meeting to hear the appeal, the Grievance Committee will give you notice of our decision on the appeal. If we allow the appeal the notice will specify the variation in terms and conditions agreed and the date from which it is to take effect. Where the Grievance Committee dismisses the appeal, the notice will set out the grounds on which the dismissal is based.

#### **8. Flexi – Time System – Houghton Regis Town Council**

- 8.1 Public Office Hours (the hours when the office must be covered)

Public Opening  
9 am - 5 pm      Monday - Friday

8.2 The office must be covered by at least two members of staff during these times, with one member of staff being in the front office. The office will be open outside of these if 2 members of staff are in the office.

8.3 Telephone Answering  
9 am - 5 pm Monday - Friday

In addition the telephone will be answered outside of these times if a member of staff is available.

## **9. Details of the Scheme**

Starting Times:	8.00 am - 10.00 am
Core Time:	10.00 am - 12.00 noon
Flexible Time:	12.00 noon - 2.00 pm
Core Time:	2.00 pm - 4.00 pm
Finishing Times:	4.00 pm - 6.30 pm

9.1 The 'core time' is the time when the employee must be at work.

9.2 For a part time employee, the flexible time will be one hour prior to and after their normal working times providing that this does not extend to working before 8 am or after 6.30 pm.

9.3 Lunch Break

A lunch break of a minimum of 30 minutes and a maximum of 90 minutes must be taken between the hours of 12.00 noon and 2.00 pm, where employees are working more than 5 hours per day.

9.4 Standard Day – Full Time Employee

For the purpose of recording annual leave, sickness or other authorized absences 7 hours 24 minutes is regarded as a standard working day and 3 hours 42 minutes as a standard half day.

9.5 Recording of Hours

Hours worked must be recorded daily on a 'Flexitime – Week by Week Recording Sheet', which should be submitted to the Town Clerk for confirmation of hours worked at the beginning of each new month. At the end of each month a maximum credit or debit of 4 hours can be carried forward at the end of each accounting period.

9.6 Part-Time Employees

The accounting period is 4 weeks at the end of which the employees contracted hours must be 4 times their normal weekly hours.

## **10. Flexible Leave**

10.1 In each monthly accounting period credit hours may be used to have a maximum of 1 day or 2 half days flexible leave.

## **11. Leaving the Council's Employment**

- 11.1 An employee leaving the authority should ensure that they are neither in credit or debit with the Flexible Working Hours Scheme. No payment will be made for hours in credit but if an employee in debit these hours will be deducted from the final salary payment.

## **12. Overtime**

- 12.1 Overtime will normally only be possible outside flexible time hours. In these instances paid overtime and time off in lieu arrangements will apply as existing.

## **13. Misuse of the Scheme**

- 13.1 Misuse of which will be subject to action under the Council's Disciplinary Procedure. This could include the right not to participate in the scheme, in which case they would revert to public office hours of 9 am to 5 pm with an hour for lunch. Misuse of the Scheme could ultimately lead to dismissal subject to an employee's right under the Disciplinary Procedure.

## **14. Review of Policy**

- 14.1 This policy will be reviewed every 4 years or as required by the Corporate Services Committee.