

COLWICH PARISH COUNCIL



PD118 FLEXIBLE WORKING

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FLEXIBLE WORKING

Flexible Working – PD118

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This document was originally written by:

Name	Position	Date
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Employment Committee

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1 POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1** Colwich Parish Council (the Council) takes the right afforded to qualifying officials to request flexible working seriously. It is not a right to work flexibly or part-time and the Council is only under a duty (a) to consider any request in a reasonable manner and (b) only to refuse the request on the specific grounds set out in the legislation [Children and Families Act 2014 and the the Employment Relations (Flexible Working) Act 2023].

2 QUALIFICATION FOR MAKING A STATUTORY REQUEST

- 2.1** Flexible working may be requested from day one of employment.
- 2.2** Qualifying officials can request a change to their terms and conditions of employment and be protected by law from detrimental treatment or unfair dismissal as a result.
- 2.2.1** Be an official.
- 2.2.2** Not be an agency worker.
- 2.2.3** Are employed by the Council.
- 2.2.4** Not have made more than one other application to work flexibly under the right to make such applications during the past 12 months.

3 SCOPE OF A REQUEST

- 3.1** The request can include any or all of the following:
- 3.1.1** A change to hours worked.
- 3.1.2** A change to the times the official is required to work.
- 3.1.3** A request to work from home.
- 3.2** Examples include requests for compressed hours, flexitime, staggered start and finish times and so on. Any agreed change to the official's terms and conditions shall be permanent unless the Council and official agree otherwise.

4 THE OFFICIAL'S APPLICATION

- 4.1** The official shall make a considered application in writing to the Chief Officer, or to the Chairman in the case of the Chief Officer. The official shall consider:
- 4.1.1** What working pattern they want and what impact (if any) it shall have on their pay.
- 4.2** As a matter of law, the application must be in writing and:
- 4.2.1** State that it is a statutory request.
- 4.2.2** Specify the change applied for.
- 4.2.3** Specify the date on which the official proposes the change shall become effective.
- 4.3** The ACAS Code (www.acas.org.uk), which tribunals are required to take into account if they have to decide whether the Council handled the request in a reasonable manner, says that Councils should make clear to their officials what information they need to include in a written request.

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- 4.4** Only two applications per 12-month period may be made under the right to apply. If the official has made a previous application to the Council for flexible working arrangements, then the application shall state this and give the date(s) on which the previous application(s) were made.

5 THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE

- 5.1** The Council may agree to the request without meeting with the official.
- 5.2** Otherwise, the ACAS Code says that the Council should arrange to talk to the official as soon as possible. The law does not require it but the Code says that, to act reasonably, the Council should allow the official to be accompanied by a work colleague and tell them so in the invitation to the meeting. The meeting should be held in private, and the Council and the official should discuss the work pattern in depth and how best it might be accommodated.
- 5.3** The Council shall consider the request and consider various options and alternatives. The Chief Officer, or the Chairman as appropriate, shall inform the official of the outcome of the request in writing, within 14 days of the meeting.
- 5.4** The possible outcomes are:
- 5.4.1** Accept the official's flexible working request in full.
 - 5.4.2** Offer an alternative working pattern.
 - 5.4.3** Reject the official's request.
- 5.5** If the Council agrees to the official's flexible working request, or the official accepts an alternative working pattern, they shall be informed of the date on which the change shall become effective and if there shall be any trial period. The official has no right to return to their previous working pattern without submitting a new flexible working request to the Council, subject to 2.2.4 above. If the official wishes to request a review of their arrangement at any time, they must discuss it with their Line Manager or the Chief Officer as appropriate.
- 5.6** The Council shall respond in writing, within 14 days of the application, either accepting the proposal and detailing arrangements OR declining the request for one of the business reasons specified below.
- 5.6.1** Burden of additional cost.
 - 5.6.2** Inability to re-organise the work among existing officials.
 - 5.6.3** Inability to recruit additional officials.
 - 5.6.4** Detrimental impact on quality.
 - 5.6.5** Detrimental impact on performance.
 - 5.6.6** Detrimental effect on the Council's ability to meet customer demands.
 - 5.6.7** Insufficient work for the periods the official is prepared to be available.
 - 5.6.8** Planned structural changes to the Council.

6 TIMESCALE

- 6.1** The Council shall deal with any flexible working request in a timely and reasonable manner. The request, including any appeal shall be dealt with within 2 months from the date of receiving it. If it is not possible to complete the consideration of the request within the 2-month time limit, the delay shall be notified and an extension of time agreed.

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7 APPEAL PROCESS

- 7.1 If the application is refused an appeal can be submitted in writing within 14 days of receiving the decision, clearly stating the grounds for appeal.
- 7.2 A meeting shall be arranged with the Employment Committee within 14 days of the appeal being received. The official may be accompanied at this meeting. After the meeting the official shall be sent a letter telling them either that the appeal has been successful or the reasons why it has been rejected. If it is rejected the business reasons shall be laid out. The decision is final.

SIGNED	<i>Wendy Plant</i>
COUNCILLOR WENDY PLANT, PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN	