

# Carmarthenshire County Council



## AGILE WORKING POLICY

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# AGILE WORKING POLICY

## POLICY STATEMENT

We (Carmarthenshire County Council) are striving to develop modern working practices that help you (our employee) to deliver your work in the heart of our community, whilst at the same time allowing you to balance work and life demands. We know that work performance is better if you are able to have flexibility in your working arrangements, and we want to support this.

Agile Working isn't about home working it's about being where you need to be to do your job most effectively. It is the term used to describe how you can work from any location, whether it is from a Council building, in the community, from home or any combination of these.

We want to make sure that working in an agile way doesn't mean that service delivery suffers in any way. In fact, we want to deliver a better service. We also want to make sure that you know what is expected of you when working in an agile way, to ensure that there is fairness and equity amongst staff and that working arrangements are safe. This policy addresses these issues.

Agile working is about flexibility and as such it is difficult to apply a rigid set of rules around it. You are expected to enter into the spirit of this policy and to remember that agile working brings a responsibility to co-operate with your colleagues and your manager.

It applies to all office based employees at any level within our organisation. The extent of agile working will vary according to the job role, and the main consideration is the impact on access to services by the public and also your general wellbeing.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this Policy is to maximise agile working opportunities to support our Strategic objectives by:

- **Modernising service delivery:** using new technology to deliver services provides possibilities for streamlining processes and being closer to our customers.
- **Recruitment and Retention:** Different working practices will help us to recruit, and retain valued employees.
- **Accommodation strategy:** agile working will help to reduce accommodation needs and make more effective use of buildings.

- **Flexible working agenda:** agile working will support the wider work-life balance agenda, supporting a more inclusive workforce.
- **Environmental:** agile working can lead to fewer car journeys, reduced congestion at peak times and reduced pollution.

## SCOPE

This Policy applies to all Carmarthenshire County Council employees except for staff on the complement of Locally Managed Schools for which locally agreed arrangements will apply.

It is recognised that within integrated services you may be working alongside staff employed by our partner organisations. The latter will need to refer to their organisational policies or appropriate joint protocols regarding agile working but nevertheless we encourage close working relationships and agile working practices.

## PRINCIPLES OF AGILE WORKING

In order for agile working to become successfully embedded you are encouraged to work together with your team and your manager to explore and agree the agile working principles that are best suited for your service area:

Our approach is that we hold to a set of guiding principles that are applicable to everyone:

- We recognise that the quality of our service delivery will determine whether a particular way of working is successful;
- We recognise that there is no one size fits all solution. Different types of work require different solutions. What can work in one area may not be possible in another;
- We want to encourage innovation but we also don't want a situation "where anything goes". It is also not a free for all where any one individual can decide "what's right for them" and then go off and do it. We provide a framework that allows you, your team and your manager to take responsibility for finding ways of working that is best for our customers, our teams and our organisation;
- We believe your manager and your team having open discussions together can inspire innovation and change how we work and lead to better results;
- We expect you to work with your manager to agree realistic work objectives and for your manager to manage day to day performance wherever you are working.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

We have a responsibility for your health and safety, which includes when you are working in an agile working environment. You can see details of all our health and

safety policies relating to the workplace on the intranet. This will include specific guidance on desk set-up if you're working flexibly in the office or a remote location. If you require any further advice and guidance please contact the Health and Safety Team.

## **KEEPING DATA SAFE**

With more people coming and going into the offices, keeping our data safe is vital. This includes keeping your mobile phones with you, locking files and laptops away at night, having secure remote access to our internal network and password protecting screens and sensitive documents. You can find all of our data security policies on the Information Governance pages of the intranet.

## **AGILE WORK STYLE**

In order to imbed agile working we need to understand the way in which you work. To do this we need to agree your 'work style' and outline the way in which different teams currently work.

The most common work styles are:

1. Fixed Worker
2. Flexible Worker
3. Field Worker

The key consideration for each work style is contained in **Appendix 1**.

The three agile 'work styles' described do not replace our Flexible Working Policy which is still available to you if you wish to make a request to work a particular flexible working pattern.

Your role may not easily fit into one 'work style' so your manager will work with you to determine the closest match.

The most appropriate 'work style' will be recommended to you following a corporate desktop exercise for each post. Your manager will explore the most appropriate work style with you and your team to ensure you understand the concept of our new way of working, how it will benefit you and us but most importantly our customers.

Your 'work style' will be recorded against your post and job profile. Your 'work style' should be reviewed on a regular basis through one to ones/supervision and the Helping People to Perform (HPP) appraisal process where your duties change and these need to be reflected in a revised job profile.

## **AGILE WORKING HOURS**

When agile working, if it fits in with the needs of your customers and your team, there is the possibility of working anytime between 7am and 7pm, in line with our Flexitime Scheme unless you have fixed working hours in your contract. You should ensure that your contractual hours are distributed sensibly across the working week and take into account the team within which you work:

- This is not about squeezing all your hours together to get work over and done with! Your hours need to be worked from Monday to Friday if you are contracted full time or in line with an agreed contractual working pattern or rota;
- It's not about working from home the same day every week, i.e. a Friday or always leaving early on a Monday; we are a team and want to encourage fairness and face to face collaboration across all days of the working week;
- The agreement to work flexible hours is conditional on your manager's approval and where it makes sense for service delivery and the team in which you work.

Work performance often improves with flexible working arrangements, though where there are concerns about your performance as a result of Agile Working your manager is expected to address this with you and adapt your agile working arrangement accordingly.

## **AGILE WORKING SPACE**

Agile working enables you to work from a variety of locations to best serve our customers and improve service delivery. The degree of agile working will depend on the service being delivered and your role.

In most cases your service will have a 'core' location or series of 'core' locations. Your manager is expected to maximise the agility of your team and encourage you to work flexibly and at/from different locations if this improves efficiency and enhances service delivery.

Typical examples include:

- Working from the core location or designated contractual work base
- Working from an office desk anywhere in the county
- Working from customers' premises
- Working from designated partners' premises, eg. Health and Education premises
- Working from other Council establishments, eg. Library, Leisure Centres, Museums
- Working from home (Please refer to section on Homeworking)

To support the three 'workstyles' and new ways of working, we will provide facilities throughout the County for you to make use of.

These are described below:

### **1. Dedicated team desk zones**

Team 'zones' refer to a designated area where you work when at your base. If appropriate to your role you can work from any County location and all managers must ensure that employees are comfortable and welcomed when 'touching down' at temporary team desks and zones.

Desks will be equipped with desktop computers or overtime equipped with a docking station for laptops and located in areas covered by WiFi connectivity with phones and network printing available. These are already located in our libraries but will also be located in all our main buildings and where appropriate, satellite sites such as Resource Centres and other corporate buildings.

### **2. Informal 'hot desk' zones**

A hot desk refers to a designated work space for any employee to use at any time. Where applicable, informal 'hot desks' should be made available for use by any visiting staff, who should approach a team member to ask if they may work from a free desk within that team zone.

Areas will be covered by WiFi connectivity with phones and network connectivity, to enable staff to work effectively. Every employee should welcome a visiting employee into their work space and signpost to the nearest kitchen, rest room and toilets.

### **3. WiFi hotspots**

In addition to providing WiFi in our office accommodation we will continue installing WiFi hotspots in areas where mobile data services are not available, eg. located in our buildings such as libraries and establishments to enable connectivity from outside the premises on an ad hoc basis.

### **4. Quiet working areas**

In all accommodation configured for agile working, it is necessary to provide offices dedicated to quiet working. Typically, these areas will have desktop computing facilities without phones. They are available to you if you need to focus wholly on a particular piece of work and are designed for short term use

rather than long term occupation. These offices need to be managed in accordance with the corporate room booking protocol in order to prevent individual ownership taking place.

## **5. Breakout areas**

Breakout areas should be considered as part of the planning and design of any agile work space. As part of any analysis of the day to day work pattern of each team, it will become evident where areas for specific work tasks should be provided. These may take the form of, eg. a workspace to enable building plans to be viewed and discussed, for collaborative working to take place or informal meetings to be held. These breakout areas reduce the need for larger desks in specific areas, reduce the meeting room requirements and help team members collaborate in an agile working environment.

## **6. Confidential work space**

It is inevitable that there will be occasions when you will need space to discuss and complete confidential pieces of work. Therefore, when planning office layouts thought should be given to providing some space to complete this type of work.

Whilst some of the above areas are currently available across the office portfolio, the provision of further facilities will follow on from detailed reviews of the present arrangements and uses made of our various offices. Consultations will be undertaken with occupiers on the design of office layouts to ensure the provision of the above spaces and facilities enhances service delivery whilst making the best use of our assets. The Head of Property Maintenance and Construction will be responsible for the review of present office layouts and future design in conjunction with the relevant services.

## **Workspace housekeeping**

### **1. Clear desk principles**

As all desks may be used by any employee of the Authority, adopting clear desk principles will assist with the changes in working practice, you will feel more comfortable working from a desk that has not been personalised. There is an expectation therefore, that when you vacate a desk to enable usage by another employee, you will leave it clear, with no materials left other than the standard IT kit provided by us.



## 2. Room booking for meetings space and hot desks

In addition to dedicated team desk zones and informal hot desks a central room booking system will be introduced and implemented across our organisation to book all shared meeting and formal hot desk space.

## 3. Designated Base

You will continue to have a designated base for travel claims purposes, although you may choose to work from an alternative location to allow for improved efficiency, effective service delivery and reduce travel claims, subject to agreement by your manager.

## 4. The agile working desk ratio

We will adopt the principles of an agile working desk ratio to support agile working and our accommodation strategy to enable potential estate rationalisation, going forward:

**Fixed worker** – desk ratio is 1:1 – each fixed worker has his/her own desk although during periods of absence, this desk may be used by other employees and therefore clear desk principles apply.

**Flexible worker** – desk ratio no more than 8:10 – for every 10 members of staff the number of desks will not exceed 8.

**Field worker** – desk ratio no more than 2:10 – for every 10 members of staff the number of desks will not exceed 2.

## AGILE WORK TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

An essential feature of 'agile working' is the use of information and communications technologies to enable new ways of working and moving away from the traditional office environment:

For each of the 'work styles' listed, it will be necessary to provide a range of technology solutions. While it is anticipated that the provision of this technology will enable approximately 80% of staff in each work style to work in an efficient and effective manner, it is inevitable that an element of bespoke configuration or the provision of additional equipment will be required in specific circumstances.

The table below suggests the technology solutions that should be made available to each work style, as determined by the Head of IT & Central Support Services:

Work Style	Role Example	Technology	Optional
Fixed Worker	Receptionist.  Contact point staff	Desktop PC  Fixed Telephone	
Flexible Worker	Office based staff.  Managers.	Laptop or tablet  Agile working desk  Telephone  Access to touch down zones	Mobile phone  Softphone  Smart phone
Field Worker	Social Workers.  Highways Engineers.  Building Inspectors.	Laptop or tablet  Agile working desk  Mobile phone  Access to touch down zones	3G/4G data connection  Smart phone

## **HOMEWORKING**

This section is for anyone who may work from home, whether it is on an occasional ad-hoc basis or as a 'designated home worker' agreed with your manager and a home working agreement in place.

We wouldn't expect you to work on an ad hoc basis more than two days week and not on the same days every week, unless you are a 'designated home worker' and these arrangements are agreed with your manager.

You may want to contact anyone with an interest in your property (e.g. mortgage lenders, landlords, leaseholders, Building and Contents insurer) to make sure there isn't anything they need to consider when home working.

Tax – Dedicated home workers (employees who are permanently home based) will be paid an allowance by the council to cover the costs of working from home. This will be the rate set by HMRC each tax year and so won't be taxed.

## **ENSURING EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY**

In considering agile working managers must adopt a positive, open and fair approach and ensure the Authority's Equality and Diversity Policy is adhered to and

applied consistently to all irrespective of race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origins, language, disability, religion and belief or non-belief, age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, maternity, parental, marital or civil partnership status.

If you have any equality and diversity concerns in relation to the application of this policy and procedure, please contact a member of the HR Team who will, if necessary, ensure the policy/procedure is reviewed accordingly.

If you require this publication in an alternative format please contact People Management on Ext 6184 or email [PMBusinessSupportUnit@carmarthenshire.gov.uk](mailto:PMBusinessSupportUnit@carmarthenshire.gov.uk)

<p><b>Definition</b></p>	<p><b>FIXED DESK WORKER</b>                  This is an employee whose role is required to be in a fixed location for the majority of their time. A desk in a fixed location is usually required, though this desk could be shared with another employee e.g. a Receptionist within a fixed reception area.</p>
<p><b>Equipment</b></p>	<p>The Authority will supply, where relevant, the necessary equipment to enable the employee to perform their role.</p> <p>The ICT Manager will determine the technological requirements.</p>
<p><b>Code of Conduct</b></p>	<p>The content of the Agile Working Policy outlines the parameters in which the employee should work. Specifically for this work style, the following applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 must be complied with in relation to the security of information;</li> <li>• Employees have responsibilities under HASWA 1974 to take reasonable care of their own health &amp; safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work;</li> <li>• To adhere to all Council Policies and Procedures;</li> <li>• Fixed desk employees will adhere to a clear desk policy and keep the desk clean. Any desk may be used by any member of staff, however, special regard will be given to adapted workstations;</li> <li>• Employees should not keep any personal belongings on a fixed desk e.g. photos when they vacate the desk at the end of the day;</li> </ul>

<b>Definition</b>	<p><b>FLEXIBLE WORKER</b></p> <p>This category of worker is primarily required to work from a single building, (in comparison with a field worker who would work across several sites) but is not required to have a fixed desk location. There is an option for teams to have zoned areas where sitting together is an essential element of their role. However, only some of the team is in one place at any one time (facilitated by natural absences, working offsite, attending meetings, working from home etc). This will mean that there will be fewer workstations than there are workers and they will be required to share. Flexible workers may work from home on an occasional basis.</p>
<b>Equipment</b>	<p>Flexible workers will have access to desk space and IT equipment, though the same equipment may be used by other employees. Hot desk workers will not have a workstation which is for their exclusive use only.</p> <p>The ICT Manager will determine the technological requirements.</p>
<b>Code of Conduct</b>	<p>The content of the Agile Working Policy outlines the parameters in which the employee should work. Specifically for this work style, the following applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 must be complied with in relation to the security of information;</li> <li>• Employees have responsibilities under HASWA 1974 to take reasonable care of their own health &amp; safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work;</li> <li>• To adhere to all Council Policies and Procedures;</li> <li>• Flexible workers should be considerate – other people will be using the facility so should replace general stationery items if they become depleted;</li> <li>• Flexible workers will adhere to the clear desk guidance and keep the desk clean as they will be sharing the desk with other employees. Any desk may be used by any member of staff, however, special regard will be given to adapted workstations;</li> <li>• Employees should not keep any personal belongings on a hot desk e.g.photos when they vacate the desk at the end of the day;</li> <li>• Anyone using an adapted workstation as a hot desk must ensure that either the equipment settings are not changed or are returned to their original setting if they are changed.</li> </ul>

<b>Definition</b>	<p><b>FIELD WORKER</b></p> <p>Field workers are employees who spend more than 50% of their time working at a variety of locations and spend some of their time interacting with the core service area. The main aspect of the employee’s job involves visiting other Council locations and/or client sites around the County.</p> <p>Field workers are able to work from a variety of locations, which may include Council and non Council sites or from home.</p> <p>Employees who work in the field will also have access to bookable work spaces (in the same location as their service area) if they require them and/or work at home on an occasional basis.</p>
<b>Equipment</b>	<p>The Council will supply, where relevant, the necessary equipment to enable the employee to perform their role whilst working in the field. It is not expected that home working will be any more than occasional for field workers and so the employee will be responsible for providing their own broadband.</p> <p>The ICT Manager will determine the technological requirements.</p> <p>When working from home, the employee must ensure they have an appropriate workspace with adequate security, storage and screening from activities.</p> <p>The field worker is responsible for providing an appropriate chair and desk for home use (if relevant). The chair should be stable and allow freedom of movement and be adjustable in height with an adjustable back (height and tilt). Appropriate H &amp; S self assessment checks must be undertaken by the employee in line with H &amp; S guidance available on the intranet.</p>
<b>Code of Conduct</b>	<p>The content of the Agile Working Policy outlines the parameters in which the employee should work. Specifically for this Work style, the following applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 must be complied with in relation to the security of information;</li> <li>• Employees have responsibilities under HASWA 1974 to take reasonable care of their own health &amp; safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work;</li> <li>• To adhere to all Council Policies and Procedures;</li> <li>• When Hot Desk Working, the Field Worker should be considerate – other people will be using the facility so should contact the Business Support Unit if general stationery items become depleted;</li> <li>• When Hot Desk Working, the Field Worker will adhere to the clear desk guidance as they will be sharing the desk with other employees. Any desk may be used by any member of staff, however, special regard will be given to adapted workstations;</li> <li>• When Hot Desk Working, the Field Worker should not keep any personal belongings on a hot desk e.g. photos when they vacate the desk at the end of the day;</li> <li>• When Hot Desk Working on an adapted workstation, the Field Worker must ensure that either the equipment settings are not changed or are returned to their original setting if they are changed.</li> </ul>