

Version	EN3
Last Revision Date	June 2020

Y Berthynas Waith  
Cyngor Rhondda Cynon Taf, gweithio gyda chi, gweithio gyda'n gilydd

**gweithio'nwell**  
**workwell**

Employee Relations  
Rhondda Cynon Taf Council, working with you, working together

## Agile Working Policy

This document is available in Welsh please see Polisi Gweithio Hyblyg



<b>DOCUMENT CONTROL</b>	
<b>POLICY NAME</b>	<b>Agile Working Policy</b>
Department	Human Resources
Telephone Number	01443 444501 01443 444502 01443 444503
Initial Policy Launch Date	January 2016
Reviewing Officer	Richard Evans
Review Date	April 2017
Date of Equality Impact Assessment	January 2016
<b>REVISION HISTORY</b>	
Date	Revised By
July 2018	Policy Review Group
June 2020	HR Welsh Language Standards Group
<b>DOCUMENT APPROVAL</b>	
This document has received approval from:	Date of Approval
HR Senior Management Team	January 2016
Senior Leadership Team	January 2016
Cabinet	N/A

**This document is available in Welsh or English and other formats are available when requested.**

## CONTENTS

1. Policy Statement.....	1
2. General Operating Principles.....	2
3. Agile Working.....	3
4. Eligibility for Agile Working .....	3
5. Agile Working Principles .....	3
6. Equipment .....	4
7. Shared Office Facilities.....	5
Shared Office Facilities Principles .....	6
8. Review, Revision or Termination of Arrangements.....	6
9. Communication and Safety.....	7
10. Information Security.....	8
11. Allowances .....	9
12. Insurances.....	9
13. Responsibilities.....	10
14. Policy Compliance & Review .....	11

## 1. **POLICY STATEMENT**

- i) The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for managing Agile Working and to reduce the level of risk posed to the lowest possible level. It sets out the requirements for legal compliance and the Council's duty of care.
- ii) The Council recognises the need to develop modern working practices to enable its employees to maximise their performance and productivity whilst maintaining a good work-life balance. New technologies make it easier to access information remotely and work from a variety of locations whilst promoting a more joined up service.
- iii) Agile working provides staff with more options where and when they undertake their roles by introducing an element of choice to ensure the needs of the customer are best met. Agile working allows the workforce to influence how they carry out their role and promotes varying levels of flexibility within the workplace
- iv) Agile Working is a term used for employees who work away from their main fixed centre (the fixed centre is detailed within an employee's contract of employment). For the purposes of this document, employees where appropriate, will be referred to as 'Agile Workers'.
- v) The Council is committed to developing a more agile organisation and recognises that Agile Working can be beneficial to customers, the organisation and to the individual employee. To work effectively any such arrangement has to meet the operational requirements of the service, ensuring that the needs of both internal and external customers will be met as well as those of the individual.
- vi) The Agile Working Policy aims to supplement and enhance flexible working arrangements currently available to staff whilst maintaining the Council's focus on delivering a quality service to the public it serves.
- vii) The Policy will also support the Council's service delivery, financial and accommodation strategy objectives by streamlining and improving processes and modernising services by using new technology to help deliver improved services. The Policy will also help the Council make more effective use of its buildings, reduce pollution and congestion on our roads, help with work life balance thus supporting a more inclusive workforce and help recruit and retain employees.
- viii) The Policy applies to any employee whose Chief Officer has identified that both the employee and the post that they occupy are suitable for 'Agile Working'. This Policy does not include school based employees for whom the Governing Body determines the operating hours.

## 2. **GENERAL OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

- i) The Council will encourage and support Agile Working so long as it benefits the Council and does provides enhancement to service delivery. Agile Workers will be provided with the appropriate equipment, connections and technical back up required for them to work efficiently and effectively.
- ii) All employees will be treated equally, whether they are office based or working remotely, whilst there will be due regard to staff with individual needs and requirements.
- iii) All Agile Workers will be expected to comply with their service area's existing working Protocols and Procedures.
- iv) In addition to the existing Protocol's and Procedures, Agile Workers will also be expected to comply with Council's Policies and Procedures in particular with regard to:
  - Flexi-Time Working Policy
  - ICT Policies:
    - Information Security Policy
    - Information Security – Incident Management Policy
    - Internet & Email Acceptable Use Policy
    - Information Physical Security Policy
    - Portable & Remote Computing Policy
  - Information Governance Policies:
    - Information Sharing, Confidentiality and Data Protection
  - Health and Safety Policy
  - Risk Assessment Policy
  - Display Screen Equipment Policy
  - Lone Working Policy
- v) The policy provides a fair, consistent, objective and transparent approach to Agile Working across the Council.

### 3. **AGILE WORKING**

Agile Working is about the HOW (optimum work method enabled by technology), the WHERE (different buildings, in the field, varying degrees from home or any combination of these) and the WHEN (appropriate working time arrangements) that are designed to deliver greater focus on our customers and outcomes.

There are different ways in which agile working can be undertaken and are dependent on the demands and needs of the Council. The following categories of workstyles are defined to support Agile Working:-

- **Mobile or Field Worker** – an employee that generally works out in the community and is essentially nomadic. There are fewer requirements to be at base and may undertake office duties from an alternative building which maybe closer to their community location or from home. The main fixed centre being a base for liaison with managers. Mobile/field workers will also occasionally work from home.
- **Flexible Office Worker** – an employee that spends most of their time working in an office environment although maybe frequently away at meetings, working from other Council sites or occasionally working from home.
- **Fixed Office Worker** – an employee that is generally at a fixed desk location for the majority of their time and rarely required to undertake their duties outside of that location. This workstyle would be considered out of scope for Agile Working.

### 4. **ELIGIBILITY FOR AGILE WORKING**

- i) Whilst a large number of roles within the Council will be suitable for Agile Working, there is still a requirement for the line manager to assess the suitability of the role and the individual for Agile Working.
- ii) Where Agile Working is agreed, the principles for the work to be undertaken will be based on business needs.
- iii) As part of any agreed Agile Working arrangement, a risk assessment will be jointly completed by the employee and their manager

### 5. **AGILE WORKING PRINCIPLES**

- i) Effective Agile Working arrangements must be a balance between service delivery and the individual's needs.

- ii) Employees working in a mobile capacity are still subject to the same terms and conditions as those working in a fixed centre e.g. flexi-time working hours, training and development requirements.
- iii) Critical hours of work must be agreed between the mobile worker and their line manager.
- iv) If any situation arises where hours worked are to fall 'regularly' outside the stated normal operational business hours of the service, this must first be agreed with line managers in discussion with human resources.
- v) The agreed hours may be worked to suit the mobile worker on the strict condition that it meets the service needs and there is support available.
- vi) All contracted hours, irrespective of the time worked, will be paid at plain time rates. Any additional hours worked which are more than the normal contracted hours should first be agreed with the line manager.
- vii) Electronic diaries must be kept up to date and open access granted to line managers and team members.
- viii) The usual reporting procedures in the event of sickness absence, medical appointments and annual leave/time off requests remain in place for Agile Workers.

Agile Workers will be expected to attend designated meetings, development sessions and appointments at their fixed centre, as necessary to meet the needs of the service.

- ix) Agile Workers must understand and accept their obligations to protect Council information and equipment in line with the Information Security Policy and will periodically bring devices back into the main office for repairs, clean up, tests and upgrades. Agile Workers must report losses or compromises of information, equipment, tokens and/or hard copy documents immediately.
- x) Agile working must not affect the provision of services and therefore managers must ensure they have systems in place to maintain suitable office presence, as required and to monitor the level of available front line staff on duty at any one time.

## **6. EQUIPMENT**

- i) The Council will provide equipment to enable staff to access the Council systems in line with the agreed work-style. This equipment must only be used for purposes in line with the Council acceptable use policies
- ii) The Council will provide access to an appropriate device and these must be used in line with the Council's ICT and Information Security Policies.

- iii) An appropriate device maybe a desktop PC or virtual desktop at a Hot Desk or Shared Working location or a mobile devices such as a laptop or tablet that maybe easily connected for access to systems.
- iv) An inventory of items supplied should be maintained by the line manager and signed off by the employee and their manager.
- v) Electrical sockets and other parts of the domestic electrical system at an employee's home are the employee's responsibility.
- vi) Where access to the internet is required as part of your role you access will be made available at all Council main/satellite offices should you not have access at home.
- vii) The cost of renting a personal land line and internet access for any home-working element of the Agile Working arrangement will not be refunded by the Council.
- viii) All equipment, materials or stationery supplied by the Council will remain the property of Rhondda Cynon Taf, used for work purposes only and returned to the Council at the end of the Agile Working arrangement.
- ix) Failure to take due care to ensure the safety of the equipment may result in disciplinary action.

## **7. SHARED OFFICE FACILITIES**

- i) The Council workspace and desks are a corporate resource (rather than individually owned) and should therefore be used and allocated on the basis of need to ensure their most cost effective use. The deployment of shared work spaces or "hot desks" will form part of the Council's Building Asset Management Strategy
- ii) In respect of agile working, the term "hot desks" refers to a designated shared work space for any employee to use at any time. Normally these shared desks approach is designed to meet demand from "non-based" visitors and transient agile workers.
- iii) In addition they may form part of a specific Team Zone - a designated area where staff will work as part of a team when at their base. The Team Zone may incorporate allocated desks for fixed workstyles as well as "hot desks" to support flexible and mobile work styles in the team.
- iv) Agile working means staff can work from any Council location. Therefore managers (and other staff) must ensure visiting staff feel comfortable and welcome when using "hot desks".

## **Shared Office Facilities Principles**

### **i) Clear desk principles**

A clear desk will create the environment for shared use. It will ensure confidentiality standards are maintained and security of information, minimise health and safety risks but it will also mean that staff will feel more comfortable working from a desk that has not been personalised by another member of staff. There is an expectation therefore, that when an individual vacates a desk to enable it to be used by another member of staff, it will be left clear, with no materials left other than the standard IT kit provided by the Council.

### **ii) Storage Principles**

In a “hot desk” sharing environment, there should be no personal shelves or storage allocated to individual desks, nor can there be permanent desk pedestals. Files and resources used for professional work will be kept appropriately secure in team storage areas. A key constraint on the introduction of agile working is a dependency on paper documents and other physical resources. However, the ongoing implementation of the Council's Digital Plan and increase of electronic document storage will increasingly enable more Agile working.

### **iii) Meeting rooms**

All meeting rooms should be regarded as a corporate resource and wherever operationally possible be made available to meet Council-wide needs and not solely limited to individual teams.

## **8. REVIEW, REVISION OR TERMINATION OF ARRANGEMENTS**

- i) At the instigation of the manager or employee, any agile working arrangements will be open to review or revision at any point and the review date will be as agreed by the manager and employee.
- ii) The Council reserves the right to terminate the Agile Working arrangements where there is clear evidence of a change of operational requirements, personal capability issues or failure to comply with agreed policies.
- iii) Reasonable notice of the termination will be provided in writing to the employee.

## 9. COMMUNICATION AND SAFETY

- i) In order that the Agile Working arrangement works successfully it is important that there is a commitment between the mobile worker and their Line Manager/colleagues to maintain regular contact. Clear communication systems with Agile Workers are just as important as for the primarily office based worker.
- ii) Staff working remotely could easily be cut off from the usual communication channels – formal and informal and therefore it is important to extend these or refine them to include the mobile worker. Team meetings should be arranged with reasonable notice wherever possible for the mobile worker to attend. Services such as video conferencing e.g. Skype should be introduced where practicable.
- iii) **Under no circumstances** are arrangements to be made for clients or representatives to meet with the mobile worker at their home. All such meetings should be carried out at the Council's main/satellite offices in order to maintain the necessary level of professionalism. Employees are advised that they should not give their personal phone numbers, addresses etc. to clients/customers.
- iv) Arrangements should be put in place so that routine work related communications are only received or dealt with during the employee's agreed working hours.
- v) To assist with recharging models, some Agile Workers may be asked to record the duties undertaken and the times associated with those duties at the end of each week.
- vi) Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Council has a responsibility to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of staff, wherever they work. Employees working in an agile capacity have the same duties under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 as all other employees. They must take care of their own health and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by their actions and co-operate with the Council on all health and safety matters.
- vii) The following documents outline the relevant policy and guidelines:
  - General Health and Safety Policy
  - Display Screen Equipment Policy
  - Workplace Stress Policy
  - Lone Working Policy
  - Violence at Work Policy
  - Risk Assessment – A Guide for Managers
  - Existing service area protocols and procedures

## 10. INFORMATION SECURITY

Agile Working presents additional risks to the Council due to the value of working equipment to thieves, the ease of which the devices and information can be lost/stolen and the reduced level of physical protection inherent in Agile Working. If it is necessary to transport any equipment or documentation, it should be securely stored out of sight at all times and stored securely overnight.

- i) The security classification of the information usually handled by the mobile worker must also be taken into consideration when considering suitability for Agile Working.
- ii) Individuals are responsible for taking adequate steps to ensure the security of Council equipment and information in their possession. Agile Workers are responsible for the confidentiality and security of equipment and information handled by them and should not willingly allow anyone who is not authorised by the Council to use or have access to the equipment, information or documentation.
- iii) Agile Workers must ensure that they comply with all relevant legislation, in particular the Data Protection Act 1998, as well as all Council policies and procedures.
- iv) Documents should be returned to appropriate Council premises as soon they are no longer required so that they can be stored or disposed of in accordance with corporate policy and procedures.
- v) Information that is 'not protectively marked', i.e. there would be no business impact to the Council if the information were released into the public domain, is permitted to be processed on non-Council equipment and if required printed off on personal printers. As the information is being provided electronically, the Council will not be in any way liable for the cost or maintenance of the equipment or any ancillary stationery.
- vi) Information that has a protective marking of 'PROTECT' or higher, i.e. personal and/or sensitive information which could have a negative effect on the Council if it were compromised must not be printed onto hard copy on any printer when away from Council premises.
- vii) Remote access equipment, tokens and/or protectively marked material must not be taken out of the United Kingdom without explicit consent from their line manager. Advice may be sought from the Local Information Compliance Officer.
- viii) Remote workers must ensure that access tokens are stored separately to the computer and that no passwords are written down.

## 11. ALLOWANCES

- i) Where possible meetings and visits will be co-ordinated to ensure effective use of travel times and costs. Travel expenses should be claimed in accordance with the current Council policy.
- ii) An employee's designated office base will be set and agreed with their manager and Human Resources. The office base is an important distinction for travel expense purposes. The following will apply:
  - If an employee's work style is classed as a flexible office worker, the office base will be where the core service area is located.
  - If an employee's work style is classed as a mobile/field worker, the base will be where the core service area is located.

It is important that all employees manage their travel and limit it in order to achieve the environmental benefits of agile working. Where possible, ICT should be used to reduce the need to travel. This can include conference calling, video conferencing and web conferencing.

- iii) If no Council mobile facility is available, telephone calls made on private mobiles/lines may be reimbursed.

## 12. INSURANCES

- The Council will be responsible for any necessary insurance of equipment supplied and employee liability insurance.
- The Council's Employer's Liability insurance will indemnify the Council if it is held to be legally liable in respect of injury to an employee arising out of and in the course of employment at home, provided the work has been authorised by the employee's line manager. However an employee's working at home would be primarily responsible for his/her own working environment.
- Any Agile Working at or from home may affect the home and insurance policies of the householder. Employees are advised to check with their insurers if changes need to be made to their policies and make any necessary adjustments before undertaking any working from home, including payment of any additional premiums where applicable. The Council will not accept liability for damage caused to the home or its contents, or any personal items.

### 13. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- i) The final agreement to support Agile Working will rest with the relevant chief officer who is responsible for ensuring that the policy is applied fairly and consistently and all relevant issues are properly addressed, in consultation with human resources, to ensure consistency of approach across the Council.
- ii) Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

Agile Workers understand and comply with this policy and all supporting policy and guidelines;

- The individual is fully trained on the required equipment and technology;
- Work with the employee to complete a joint Health & Safety assessment.
- The individual does not become isolated and that they attend team meetings if appropriate; receive communications and attend appropriate training and development activities;
- They review the arrangement with the individual in the event that the status of the Agile Working arrangement alters in any way, including moving house or a change to the individual's domestic circumstances.
- There must be clear objectives and measurable outcomes, which are set, monitored and regularly reviewed. These should constitute effectiveness for the service area and cover points such as productivity, quality of work, service standards and timeliness.

- iii) Employees will ensure that they:

- Understand and comply with this policy and all supporting policy and guidelines;
- Work together with their Line Manager to complete the risk assessment;
- Maintain appropriate communication with their Line Manager and colleagues;
- Attend meetings and training as and when required to do so;
- Consider their own Health and Safety and that of others who may be considered to be at risk due to the remote working arrangement;
- Liaise with their insurance company and mortgage lender to ensure compliance;
- Advise their Line Manager if their domestic arrangements alter or if the Agile Working is adversely affecting their role or health;
- Report any loss or theft of equipment or documents (including access tokens);

- Report system malfunction or any other security breach or incident;
  - Grant access to their home as appropriate to allow safety/security checks to be carried out and for furniture and equipment to be delivered at a time and date suitable to both parties.
  - Ensure diaries / email calendars are maintained and kept up to date
  - Ensure that where shared or Hot Desk workstyles is adopted that Clear desks are maintained at the end of a working period and are left clean and tidy for other people to use
  - Ensure that council information/data is kept secure and confidential
- iv) **Health and Safety Officers** will provide advice and guidance assessments and the application of Health and Safety legislation applicable to Agile Working.
- v) **Information Compliance Officers** will provide advice on the security of the Agile Working environment and the secure handling, storage, transportation and disposal of any information/documentation.
- vi) **ICT Staff** will provide advice and assistance regarding the IT systems and technical requirements for Agile Working including providing a Service Desk function during agreed business hours.
- vii) **HR Officers** are responsible for providing advice and guidance on HR related matters and policy interpretation.

#### **14. POLICY COMPLIANCE & REVIEW**

- i) Failure to observe the standards set out in this policy may be regarded as serious and any breach may render the employee liable to disciplinary action which may include dismissal.
- ii) This policy will be reviewed every 12 months, or as appropriate in accordance with changes in technology, Council policies, increased risks posed by Agile Working or in response to security incidents.