

**REPORT TO:** Appointments Committee  
**DATE:** 25<sup>th</sup> October 2005  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director Corporate & Policy  
**SUBJECT:** Homeworking Policy  
**WARDS:** Borough wide

**1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

**1.1** To seek the Committee's approval of the draft Homeworking Policy.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

(1) The Appointment Committee approves the Homeworking Policy.

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1** The Council has already introduced a number of alternative working arrangements, including flexible working hours and various family friendly policies. Homeworking offers appropriate staff the opportunity of improving their work/life balance and thus can benefit staff and potentially deliver savings to the Council in accommodation and energy costs etc.
- 3.2** A homeworking pilot has been running in the Benefits Division for a number of months. Using electronically transferred data, Benefit Officers have been processing benefit claims from home. The pilot has proved extremely successful for both management and the staff involved.
- 3.3** Clearly if the Council is to introduce homeworking as an option, a well defined policy needs to be in place. A working party comprising of representatives from all directorates, including legal services, personnel services and the trade was set up to formulate such a policy.
- 3.4** The draft homeworking policy has recently been presented to the Corporate Services Policy & Performance Board and was approved by the Executive Board on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September (EXB 112 refers).

**4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

**4.1** Homeworking is a valuable addition to the Council's existing flexible working policies.

**4.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

**5.1** None

**5.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

**6.1** Homeworking can have many advantages both employer and employee however it is recognised that as a new way of working it brings with it many considerations. The policy recognises various issues including Health & Safety, Insurance, ICT issues, management control and employee support.

## **6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

**7.1** The Employment Act 2002 provides a statutory right to request flexible working. This policy is intended, in general terms, to allow any application for home working to be considered, thereby enabling all employees to be treated equally.

## **7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

**Document**

**Place of Inspection**

**Contact Officer**

## Appendix

### **HALTON BOROUGH COUNCIL** **HOME WORKING POLICY**

#### **1.0 Scope**

- 1.1 This Policy applies to all Council employees. It shall not apply to school based staff unless adopted by the respective School Governing Body.

#### **2.0 Objective**

- 2.1 The Employment Act 2002 provides a statutory right to request flexible working. Whilst the extent of this legislation applies only to those employees with children under the age of 6, or age 18 if disabled, this policy is intended, in general terms, to allow any application for home working to be considered, thereby enabling all employees to be treated equally. The Policy is designed for homeworking within employee's contractual hours. It is not designed to encourage a culture of excess hours.
- 2.2 This policy also recognises that changes to location of work can, after consultation, be required by the employer in the interests of improved services and working methods.
- 2.3 The home worker shall ensure any necessary caring arrangements are in place so as not to detract from work responsibilities.

#### **3.0 Eligibility**

- 3.1 All Council employees (except for those previously identified) with 26 weeks continuous service are eligible to apply for part or all of their job to be undertaken from home. Consideration would be given to employees not fulfilling these criteria at manager's reasonable discretion.
- 3.2 Each application will be considered individually, or in groups, by the Operational Director. In considering acceding to the request, the Operational Director will take account of the exigencies of the service and whilst every effort will be made to fulfill the objectives of this policy, the overriding need must be managing and delivering the service. The Employment Rights Act 1999 sets out basic principles to assist when considering such applications (see Section 6)
- 3.3 Requests relating to Operational Directors and Executive Directors will be considered by the Chief Officers Management Team.

## 4 Key Benefits of Home Working

4.1 **Modernisation** - The drive towards e-government and the provision of services by technology based means to deliver services in new and innovative ways that achieve business benefit.

**Accommodation** - Provides the opportunity to reduce accommodation needs and make associated savings

**Best Value** - The best value process requires us to look for continuous improvement in the way services are provided

**Progressing the Flexible Working Agenda** - Supports the wider work-life balance enhancing the employee's ability to balance their paid work with the rest of their life and improving the quality and efficiency of Council Services.

**Recruitment and Retention** - Supporting innovative working practices will assist the Council in recruitment and retention.

**Environmental Factors/Agenda 21** - Supports the Local Agenda 21 and benefits the environment e.g. Less travelling = less pollution, less parking/congestion.

Other benefits include reduced travel time and costs, increased motivation and productivity.

## 5 Home Working Arrangements

5.1 For the purpose of clarity, and subject to meeting I.T criteria/requirements, it is considered that there are a number of forms of home working;

5.1.1 **Home Based** - where the employee works almost entirely at home for all of their working hours. Employees normally carry out identical duties as they would in the office. This would include occasionally returning to the office for training, supervision etc. To be considered eligible for this category, the I.T. criteria that must be met are that the employee must live in a broadband area. e.g. Benefits Officers. A risk assessment must be completed and laptops are not suitable for use by this category of home worker

5.1.2 **Location Based Working** - where staff spend a great deal of their time out and about working from different locations. A Home Working arrangement for these employees entails them going to and returning from site visits, without the need to report in and out of the office. This is ideal for staff who spend a substantial part of their working time 'on site' and there may be limited requirements for supervision, admin support and paperwork. To be considered eligible

for this category, the employee must be designated a mobile worker. e.g. Social Workers.

**5.1.3 Ad Hoc Working at Home** - where staff retain a main base but work at home on an ad-hoc basis, usually short-term to complete project or policy work. This does not include employee's who take work home in addition to their contractual hours and/or overtime.

5.2 For the purpose of this policy, the generic term, Home Worker, in this Policy, is used to refer to all of these categories.

5.3 Employees working under the Home Working Policy at 5.1.1 & 5.1.2 will be required to sign a Home Working Agreement. (See Appendix 1)

## **6. Criteria to Assess Suitability of Posts for Home Working**

6.1 In considering which posts or aspects of a post are appropriate for carrying out work at home, Operational Directors will need to consider the effects on the service. In doing so they should apply the principles as set out in the Employment Rights Act 1999 when considering whether to agree or refuse a request. The Act specifies that a valid application for flexible working can only be refused because, in the employer's view, one or more of the following grounds apply: -

1. Burden of additional costs
2. Detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand
3. Inability to reorganise work among existing staff
4. Inability to recruit additional staff
5. Detrimental impact on quality
6. Detrimental impact on performance
7. Insufficiency of work during the periods the employee proposes to work
8. Planned structural changes

Whether the decision is to agree or refuse a request to work from home, reasons as per each of the above categories should be given to the employee, in writing.

6.2 In addition, the Guidelines attached at Appendix 2 should also be considered for such applications:

6.3 The Home Based and Location Based categories are generally not available to managers who have staff to supervise in the work place/office, unless agreed by their Operational Director.

6.4 Where there is a need to re-allocate work as a result of an approved Home Working application, the effects on other staff must be the subject of consultation with those staff potentially affected and also trade union consultation with departmental representatives in all cases.

- 7. The Application Procedure** –for categories specified at 5.1.1 & 5.1.2
- 7.1 Any employee who wishes to vary their working arrangements by working from home should apply in writing and send to their Operational Director who will consider their application. The date of this letter marks entry into the formal procedure. N.B. If any such application also entails reducing the employee's hours, then this should be done through the Part-time Flexible Working Hours policy.
- 7.2 The letter should clearly indicate the following:-
- Details of the post they presently occupy i.e. grade, job title, employee number etc.
  - Details of the home working arrangement they are requesting
  - When they want the arrangement to commence
  - Whether they wish the arrangement to be permanent or temporary
  - If temporary, when they wish the arrangement to cease
- 7.3 A meeting will then be arranged within 10 working days, with the Operational Director, the Employee, their line manager, trade union representative or fellow employee, along with any trade union representative from those unions whose members may be affected by any variation to working arrangements, if required by those members. As with all formal meetings with trade unions or where contractual variations are being discussed, the meeting must also be attended by a Personnel Officer.
- 7.4 In addition to considering the application in accordance with Section 6.1, the Operational Director will consider which aspects of a job are appropriate for carrying out at home, they should take into account the following:
- there should be no adverse effects on the level and quality of service
  - there should be clear objectives and measurable outputs
  - the work must be wholly appropriate to be able to be carried out away from the traditional base
  - there should be no increase in the workload for colleagues as a result of an employee working from home
  - the environment must be safe and conducive for the work to be carried out at home
  - risk assessments must be carried out at all home locations by a suitably qualified manager. This must include a lone working risk assessment and suitable arrangements for regular contact to be maintained.
  - arrangements should be made to protect confidential information

- arrangements should be in place for effective communication with the workplace to be maintained, particularly in terms of supervision and emergencies
  - in the case of Ad Hoc Working from Home, specific arrangements should be in place where the employee has to supervise other employees
  - training should be considered in skills such as time management, which enable the employee to adapt to different methods of working
  - the Council's insurers must be advised of the arrangements
- 7.5 The decision on the application will be the responsibility of the Operational Director, in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Corporate Services and the Operational Director, Human Resources. However, decisions regarding Ad Hoc Working from Home arrangements are the responsibility of the Operational Director.
- 7.6 The employee will receive a letter detailing the new working arrangement and setting out any consequential change to their terms and conditions of service, details of review period etc. This must be sent within 28 days from the date of the letter marking entry into the formal procedure.
- 7.7 If at the conclusion of the trial period (See Section 8) the arrangement is not deemed to be satisfactory on the employee's part, then they must write in setting out their reasons. Accordingly, if the arrangement is not deemed to be suitable on the organisations part, following review and consideration of alternative arrangements, then the employee will be given written reasons why the arrangement cannot be formalised. These should relate to the business grounds as specified in the Employment Rights Act 1999 (see Section 6.1) and contain sufficient explanation as to why those grounds apply in relation to the particular application under consideration. It should also give the employee a right of appeal against the decision.
- 7.8 If no compromise is possible and the decision is to refuse the request, prior to consultation with the Executive Board Member for Corporate Services, the Operational Director will provide the employee with written reasons for the application being refused. This should follow the guidance as set out in section 6.1 and should also give the employee the right of appeal. Similarly, if after consultation with the Executive Board Member for Corporate Services the request is refused, the same process will apply.

## **8. Trial Periods**



- 8.1 As a flexible working practice, Home Working arrangements by their very nature will probably differ between departments and individuals. It is therefore necessary that all arrangements are initially undertaken on at least a three month trial basis. This can be extended by management if necessary, which will give the individual and the line manager the opportunity to monitor, evaluate and review the effectiveness of the arrangement. At the end of the trial period a review meeting will be held to formally assess the outcome of the trial period. If the arrangement does not work out satisfactorily, or an alternative solution cannot be found, the employee will revert to the original contract.
- 8.2 If the trial period is interrupted for any significant period such as sickness absence of 2 weeks or more, then this time will be added to the end of the trial period.

## **9.0 Withdrawal from the Home Working Arrangement**

- 9.1 An individual retains the right to withdraw from the Home Working Arrangement at any time by giving, in writing, the required period of notice as specified in the employee's contract of employment or a lesser period if agreed between the employee and their manager. Likewise, the Council retains the prerogative to amend or withdraw, for whatever reason, from the Home Working Arrangement at any time by giving the required period of notice, as specified in the employee's contract of employment. In such cases, the employee will revert to their original contract/work base. The Operational Director must give reasons in writing to the employee as per section 6.

## **10.0 Promotion/Change of Post**

- 10.1 Managers should consider, when advertising vacant posts, whether the post could be undertaken through a home working arrangement. If that is the case, then this should be indicated on the advertisement.
- 10.2 Any employee with a home working arrangement who wishes to apply for another post within the Council and who wishes to remain working at home should discuss the feasibility of that with the Operational Director of the vacant post, before applying for that post. If the Operational Director decided that the post could be undertaken from the employee's home, but had not indicated that on the advertisement, then the post will be re-advertised to comply with the Council's Equal Opportunity Policy. If the Operational Director decides that the post remains work place based, then the employee can apply for the post on that basis. This will not prevent them from applying for a home working arrangement under this procedure and their request will be considered, subject to them satisfying the eligibility criteria.

## **11.0 Appeals**

- 11.1 Employees have a statutory right to appeal against the employer's decision to refuse a request for a flexible working arrangement. Any such appeal hearing must be arranged within 14 working days of the Appeal letter being received.
- 11.2 If the Operational Director refuses a request for home working, an Executive Director will hear the appeal. If the application is agreed by the Executive Director, then they will need to consult with the Executive Board Member for Corporate Services and the Operational Director, H.R.
- 11.3 If the Operational Director initially indicates their acceptance to the request for home working but after consultation with the Executive Board Member for Corporate Services and the Operational Director H.R. decides to refuse the request, then the appeal will be to a panel of elected members from the Personnel Appeals panel. The Operational Director will attend to present management's case.
- 11.4 The decision will be given personally to the employee at the conclusion of the hearing, unless there is good reason not to do so, and then followed up in writing within 14 days of the appeal hearing. Any such Appeal will be conducted in accordance with the Council's Grievance procedure.

## **12 Discipline**

- 12.1 The Council reserves the right to withdraw the arrangement at any time should it suspect abuse. Abuse of the home working arrangement may be regarded as gross misconduct, which, if proven could result in dismissal.

## **13 Monitoring and Review**

- 13.1 The Policy will be formally reviewed 12 months from its implementation. In addition, any home working arrangement should be continually monitored and reviewed formally on a six month basis.

Appendix 1

## **DRAFT HOME WORKING AGREEMENT**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Directorate \_\_\_\_\_

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### **1. AGREEMENT**

It has been agreed that the above named (the Home Worker) will be allowed to work from home for \_\_\_\_\_ days/hours per week subject to the demands and needs of the service.

Home working days/hours working at home will normally be \_\_\_\_\_ where service needs dictate, for supervision purposes or where meetings have been arranged, managers reserve the right, by prior agreement, to vary home working days or to increase the time a Home Worker spends working at the office. Where there is a need to vary home working days, alternative days will be agreed in advance between a Home Worker and his/her line manager/Operational Director. In the event of the need to increase office based working time, in any one week, additional compensatory home working time may be agreed for some time in the future following discussion with the Home Worker and his/her line manager/Operational Director.

When working from home, a Home Worker will adhere to the attached agreed action plan/task list/output list and his/her progress will be monitored by his/her line manager/Operational Director on a \_\_\_\_\_ basis.

Whilst working at home, a Home Worker is expected to maintain daily contact with his/her Department/Section:

### **2. PAY AND CONDITIONS**

This working arrangement will not affect a Home Workers basic rate of pay, holiday entitlement or overall weekly working hours.

When working in the office, a Home Worker is required to adhere to the normal office hours/contractual hours as agreed with their line manager. On home working days, office hours need not be adhered to although the Department must have telephone access to the Home Worker from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ on these days. Remaining working hours are the subject of negotiation between the manager and the homeworker, taking account of operational requirements.

The cost of telephone calls made from home on behalf of the Department will be re-imbursed to a Home Worker in full, on presentation of an itemized telephone bill on a quarterly basis.

### **3. HEALTH & SAFETY & INSURANCE**

Both the employer and the employee have the same responsibilities whether work is undertaken on the Council's premises or at the Employee's home.

The existence of this agreement confirms that a Risk Assessment has been carried out for the above named Home Worker and that conditions for working at home have been deemed satisfactory.

Providing the Risk Assessment has been carried out, a Home Worker will continue to be covered by the Council's employers liability insurance. To maintain this cover, a further home working Risk Assessment will be carried out every twelve months whilst this agreement is in operation.

### **4. PROVISION, USE OF AND MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT**

Further to discussion between a Home Worker and his/her line manager, the following items of furniture and equipment will be issued to the Home Worker for his/her exclusive use:-

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Faults to general office equipment must be reported immediately by a Home Worker. For maintenance of I.T equipment, please see below. Stationery/materials etc are available from \_\_\_\_\_

### **5. COMPUTER SECURITY, USE OF SOFTWARE AND DATA PROTECTION**

The normal rules around Data Protection, Code of Conduct, Acceptable Use of I.T Policy, freedom of Information and security of information apply to Homeworkers as to all other staff.

### **6. MONITORING OF HOME WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

Prior to commencing the home working arrangement, the manager and the Home Worker shall agree the targets to be met.

Outputs must be monitored and reviewed by the manager on a regular \_\_\_\_\_ basis and the manager shall agree with the Home Worker. A system for monitoring the work they undertake at home and managers shall,

through agreement with the Home Worker, have access to the employee's home for managerial purposes.

The arrangement will include the provision for the employer to be allowed reasonable access to the employee's home to check or remove equipment or other items which are the property of the Council.

## **7. TERMINATION OF AGREEMENT**

Either the Home Worker or his/her Operational Director can terminate this Home Working Agreement as per the Policy at 9.1.

Any difficulties which arise with working from home will be highlighted through monitoring arrangements. However, if a Directorate has evidence of Home Working Agreement being abused the Directorate will investigate this in accordance with the Council's Disciplinary Procedures.

Signed .....  
Date.....  
(Operational Director)

Signed.....  
Date.....  
(Employee)

*These documents will be reviewed in light of Regulations to be made to give effect to the EU Social Partners Framework Agreement on Teleworking (due to be implemented in July 2005.)*

## Appendix 2

# Home Working Policy Guidelines

- 1.0 The Home Working Policy, and these guidelines, have been developed to assist managers in determining whether tasks within their service can be performed by an employee in their own home and if so, what the corresponding issues for consideration may be. Prior to agreement, home working that requires IT systems and telecomms installation are subject to a costed feasibility and an inspection of the proposed working accommodation by a suitably qualified manager.
- 1.1 In considering which posts or aspects of a post are appropriate for carrying out work at home, managers must take into account the following general points:-
- There must be no adverse effects on costs or the level and quality of service
  - There must be clear objectives and measurable outputs
  - There must be no increase in workload of colleagues as a result of an employee home working
  - Arrangements must be in place for effective communication between the home worker and the workplace
- 1.2 Additionally, managers must consider the following for the different categories of homeworkers:-

### Home Based Category:

- Can work be delivered and retrieved electronically?
- Is output measurable?
- Is direct face to face or telephone contact with the customer a requirement of the post?
- Is physical access to shared resources necessary to perform duties?
- Are the required telecomm's links and IT systems available?
- Does the home accommodation comply with Health and Safety regulations?

### Location Based Category

- Can work be delivered and retrieved electronically where appropriate?
- Does the employee need to come to the office to collect work or deliver output?
- Is output measurable?
- Is physical access to shared resources required on a daily basis to perform duties?
- Are the required telecomms links and IT systems available?

- Does the home accommodation comply with Health and Safety regulations?

#### Ad Hoc Working at Home Category

- Appropriate arrangements must be made for the employee to supervise any other staff for which he or she is responsible
- Working at home should be carried out at times when the employee does not need to be accessible in person

## **2.0 Managing Home Working Employees**

### 2.1 Managers who are responsible for managing home workers should:-

- ensure that all the necessary management and supervision arrangements are established, including consideration of recalling home workers to the work base to cover for sickness absence, annual leave and other absences. In addition, thought may need to be given to make arrangements to collect work from home workers if this work is at their home when they are of sick
- assess the work environment, including health and safety and insurance implications
- determine any cost implications
- monitor performance
- set work objectives
- resolve performance/conduct problems
- ensure confidentiality of information
- establish formal/informal communication measures to ensure that the employee is kept informed of organisational issues as are all other work based employees
- establish suitable administrative arrangements

### 3.0 **Contracts/Terms and Conditions**

Working hours should be agreed between the manager and employee so that both parties are clear about when contact can be made and to ensure that the employee fulfills their contractual hours.

- ### 3.2
- Overtime should not be worked without the prior agreement of the Manager. Overtime will only be paid in accordance with current terms and conditions.

- 3.3 Appropriate systems need to be in place to ensure that the working hours, along with the recording of annual leave, sickness or other absences of the employee, are recorded.
- 3.4 Sickness -The procedure for reporting sickness absence will apply in the normal way and any sickness absences will be dealt with in accordance with the -Sickness Absence procedures.
- 3.5 Annual Leave –Employees will book annual leave in the normal way.
- 3.6 It is for managers to decide if home workers are subject to the Flexible Working Hours Scheme. The principles applied therein in respect of non-urgent appointments with dentists and doctors will apply here. That is that they should be made, as far as possible, outside of contractual hours and approval should be obtained in advance from the individuals line manager. Any appointments, which have to be taken during agreed contractual hours, will be recorded as sickness.
- 3.7 Managers may need to give consideration to the recording of hours worked. In addition, it is important to remember that home based workers are still subject to the terms of the Working Time Directive.
- 3.8 It is essential that home workers have a structured and full induction programme. The Council’s Probationary period will also apply to new employees engaged to work immediately from home.
- 3.9 Managers will ensure that home workers will retain access to training opportunities and will retained their entitlement to an Employee Development Review (EDR).

#### 4.0 **Travelling Arrangements**

- 4.1 When an employee is working at or from home, journeys made to the normal working base will not be re-imbursed.
- 4.2 For journeys where the starting and finishing point is the employee’s home, the normal arrangements apply. This means that, in most cases, when an employee travels straight from home to a location that is not his/her normal working base, the Directorate will re-imburse the cost of either:
  - a) The journey from the normal work base to the first visit, or
  - b) The journey from home to the first visit, whichever is the shorter.

The same principle applies when an employee’s last visit is not his/her normal work base.



## **5.0 Change of Circumstance**

- 5.1 If an employee is planning to move house or there are any other changes, which affect the home working arrangement, they have a responsibility to inform their line manager of their change in circumstances at the earliest opportunity. The new property and/or the new working environment need to be re-assessed for the suitability for Home Working purposes for the arrangement to continue. Where a domestic move is undertaken, the cost of any refitting of Council equipment will be the responsibility of the Home Worker. If it is deemed that the new home is not suitable the Home Working Arrangement will be terminated in accordance with Section 9.1

## **6.0 Confidentiality/Data Protection**

- 6.1 Arrangements need to be in place to ensure that the safety, security and confidentiality of Council information whilst working from home is in accordance with the Data Protection Act etc.
- 6.2 Employees have the same responsibilities for security of information and equipment when Home Working. Computers should have passwords and work documentation should be stored in appropriate lockable filing/storage cabinets to ensure insurance cover is maintained.

## **7.0 Insurance and Security of Equipment**

- 7.1 Both the employer and the employee have the same responsibilities whether the work is undertaken at Council premises or at the employee's home.
- 7.2 Managers should seek advice from the Insurance Manager regarding the insurance arrangements for assets in the home environment. Employees should also contact their own household and vehicle insurers to inform them of any changes. Employees who are home-based should also check their house deeds, mortgage conditions or tenancy Arrangements to ensure that they permit for home-based working.
- 7.3 It is the individuals responsibility to ensure that their personal buildings and contents insurance is not invalidated by the use of the home as a place of work or by the storage/use of Council equipment.

## **8.0 Equipment**

- 8.1 The Council will supply or pay an allowance for all necessary equipment needed to enable an employee to work effectively at home or from home. This may include:

- Telecomms lines to allow for connection to relevant networks including e-mail and intranet
  - Relevant IT equipment/Licences if required.
  - Furniture including desk, chair, lockable drawers
  - Mobile phones where appropriate
- 8.2 Home Workers will not necessarily be supplied with permanent telecomms links or other equipment but may be given access to 'dial in' using a laptop if appropriate.
- 8.3 Equipment supplied by the Council is not for personal use, although the Employee may access the computer for personal use in accordance with the Council's Acceptable IT Usage Policy. However, Council equipment must not be used by anyone other than the Employee/homeworker (e.g. members of the family, friends etc).
- 8.4 The Arrangement will include the provision for the employer to be allowed reasonable access to the employee's home to check or remove equipment or other items which are property of the Council.
- 8.5 IT equipment/software needs should be discussed with the Council's IT Section. The type of equipment/software required will depend on the type of Home Working i.e. Home Based, Location Based working or Ad Hoc Working at Home. Faults to any item of IT equipment/software or other Council Property should be reported immediately by the employee to their manager and the Help Desk. Home workers will also have appropriate access to IT technical support.
- 8.6 For homeworkers eligible under sections 5.1.1 & 5.1.2 an appropriate assessment needs to be done of the most cost effective way of providing IT equipment/software. The Council will provide the homeworker with sufficient stationery/consumables in connection with their duties.
- 8.7 The equipment/software provided will at all times remain the property of the Council and will be recovered upon the cessation of the Home Working Arrangement. Individuals have a duty to take reasonable care of the Council's equipment whilst it is in their home and ensure that it is not exposed to any unnecessary risks. Any loss, damage or injury incurred will be covered by the Council's insurance policies except in cases of willful misconduct.
- 8.8 Utilities, electricity, water, gas etc will remain the sole responsibility of the employee. Under current Inland Revenue rules the Council may pay a homeworker up to £2.00 per week as a contribution towards such costs without the need to provide supporting evidence of the actual costs incurred. This payment will only apply to home based employees, for the other categories the payment will be made at the Manager's discretion

8.9 As part of the Home Working Arrangement the employee should not undertake any additional work on behalf of another employer during their contractual hours and under no circumstances should Council equipment be used to undertake additional work. Any secondary employment must be in accordance with the Council's Employee Code of Conduct.

8.10 When Home Working practices cease the individual has a responsibility to co-operate fully in enabling the Council's property to be removed from the premises. If the employee refuses to co-operate with the removal of Council property they shall be invoiced for the full value of the property.

## **9.0 Health and Safety**

9.1 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (HASWA) 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, the Council has a duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of Homeworkers. A "Homeworker" is an employee who works at home for an employer. Also under the Act, the employee has a responsibility to notify their manager if there are any changes to their home working situation, which affects their health and safety.

9.2 Before managers commence with a Homeworkers proposal, a risk assessment shall be undertaken using the Council's standard risk assessment form. The assessment which will normally be completed by the Manager, with support and advice from a member of the Central Safety Team, along with the proposed Homeworker, and shall encompass the following:-

- Plant and Equipment
- Substances
- Tasks/Activities (e.g. manual handling)
- Environmental Factors (workstation)
- Employee Factors (Pregnancy/Gender/Age)

9.3 The purpose of the assessment will be to identify any hazards associated with Home Working, assess the risks and take appropriate action to remove or reduce them as far as possible. The assessment will normally be recorded (except for minor hazards and risks which will not require a formal assessment) and subject to formal review every 12 months, as things change or if there is reason to suspect that it is no longer valid.

9.4 The Council has a responsibility to ensure the safety of any plant; equipment, substances and materials used by the Homeworker and the appropriate control measures should be clearly stated within the risk assessment. For employees' own equipment, which may be used as part of the Home Working proposals, the role of the Council will be to provide advice and guidance, however, if equipment is unsuitable it

may be necessary to review whether the proposals should proceed and/or whether procurement is appropriate.

- 9.5 Homework's working within the terms of this policy and the associated risk assessment will be covered by the Council's Employer's Liability Policy. However, Homeworkers may need to speak to their own insurer to check whether accidental damage to their own property arising from Home Working would be covered.
- 9.6 The Homeworker will still be subject to the same accident reporting system as with other Council employees. All accidents are reportable to the direct Line Manager (Corporate Procedure 002: Accident Reporting).
- 9.7 The Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 requires the Council to supply adequate First Aid provision. It is not practical to train each Homeworker as a First Aider, but the Council has a duty to provide reasonable measures or resources (i.e. First Aid Kit).

**Name of Board:** .....

**Date of Meeting:** .....

**Report Title:** .....

**Author:** .....

**STANDARD SECTIONS – CHECKLIST**

All reports must be submitted together with the following checklist fully completed

|   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|---|------------|-----------|
| <p><b>Resource Implications</b></p> <p>The financial, manpower and land (buying or selling) considerations should be clearly detailed including any corporate implications of following the recommended course of action.</p> |            |           |
| <p><b>Social Inclusion Implications</b></p> <p>Any implications relating to social inclusion/anti poverty should be highlighted</p>   |            |           |
| <p><b>Sustainability Checklist</b></p> <p>Any implications that affect the sustainability themes of economy society and the community and the environment should be included,</p>   |            |           |
| <p><b>Best Value</b></p> <p>Any Best Value implications should be included.</p>   |            |           |
| <p><b>Legal Implications</b></p> <p>Any Legal implications should be included.</p>  |            |           |
| <p><b>Crime and Disorder Issues</b></p> <p>Any crime and disorder implications should be included.</p>  |            |           |

*Please review these potential effects, within the context set out overleaf, to compose your summary assessment*

**Summary assessment of Implications:** *This wording will appear in the Board report.*

