

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM FOR STAFFING COMMITTEE

15 August 2016

1. GUIDE TO AGILE WORKING

Submitted by: Executive Management Team

Portfolio: Policy, People and Partnerships

Purpose of the Report

To obtain the Committee's approval to adopt the Guide to Agile Working.

Recommendation

That the guide detailed at Appendix A be approved.

1. Background

- 1.1 More extensive use of Agile Working is required when the Council offices moves to the new Civic Hub in 2017.
- 1.2 The Council recognises the need to develop modern working practices to enable employees to maximise their performance and productivity and deliver the greatest value to the business, whilst maintaining a good work life balance and reduced travel.
- 1.3 New technology is making it easier to access information remotely, work from a variety of locations, whilst promoting a more joined up service.
- 1.4 Agile working is a term used to describe how employees can work flexibly from any location, whether it is from a Council building, within the Community and client sites or by varying degrees of home working and regular hot-desking. It is based on the concept that work is an activity we do, rather than a place we go.
- 1.5 How and where we work is the key to ensuring we have the right people, in the right place, at the right time. We therefore need to promote and support agile working and enable employees and managers to consider how the ways in which we work can become more diverse and how the time we spend at a particular workstation might reduce. Employees may wish to consider how they might achieve a better work life balance while maintaining or improving service provision, and managers should consider potential benefits of agile working to their service such as improved efficiency, reduced property and travel costs, reduced absence and environmental impact.
- 1.6 The guide includes the criteria for four different work styles; Home, Fixed, Mobile or Flexible for the manager to discuss with the employee and assign a work style to the post with a technological solution. For example a Flexible worker will be someone who spends most of their time working in an office environment, may be frequently away from a desk attending meetings, working from other Council sites or working occasionally from home.

- 1.7 There is no expectation for employees to work at home and Managers cannot force an employee to do so.
- 1.8 The joint trade unions have been consulted on the proposed new guidance and their comments have been incorporated into the guide. They have asked to attend any training events and for the guide to be placed on the intranet to obtain staff feedback.

2. Aims of the Policy

- 2.1 The overall aim is to use this Guide is to enable both managers and staff to gain a better understanding of Agile Working and understand the basic principles, which can then be considered and applied to specific roles. It provides staff with more options with regards to where, when and how they undertake their roles by introducing an element of choice where the needs for the service user are best met.

3. Issues

- 3.1 At its meeting on 11 July 2016, the Employees Consultative Committee recommended that the Policy be adopted and endorsed as a working document, with a six month review following the relocation to the Hub.

4. Legal and Statutory Requirements

- 4.1 It is important that the council's guide on Agile Working reflects current best practice.

5. Equality Impact Assessment

- 5.1 Implementation of the policy will help to ensure the Borough Council fulfil its responsibilities as an equal opportunities employer.

6. Financial and Resource Implications

- 6.1 None

7. Major Risks

- 7.1 None identified.

8. List of Appendices

Appendix A – Guide to Agile Working

9. Earlier Committee Resolutions

Employees Consultative Committee – 11 July 2016