

1. Brief for Scrutiny – Flexible Working for Newcastle Borough Council Employees

<p>Topic to be scrutinised</p> <p>Proposals to encourage and enhance flexible working amongst the employees of Newcastle-under-Lyme BC (NBC).</p>
<p>Questions to be Addressed</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) What flexible working arrangements are in place for NBC employees? (2) How have these arrangements developed and what factors have been taken into consideration in this development process? (3) How are these arrangements being implemented and what are the results of this implementation process? (4) What has been the impact on service delivery of the introduction of flexible working? (5) What benefits have resulted from introducing flexible working? (6) What further opportunities are there to introduce flexible working in more areas of the council's business? How have other organisations dealt with these issues? (7) What resource implications are there in terms of flexible working and what barriers are there to it? Can these barriers be overcome?
<p>Outcomes</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) A clear understanding of the nature of 'flexible working' – what is it and what practices and approaches are not covered by it. (2) A further understanding of the background and ongoing issues relating to the introduction and implementation of flexible working at NBC, including any issues faced in terms of developing the approach. (3) How flexible working has been used in other organisations and what opportunities are afforded to NBC through learning from others. (4) An understanding of the potential and actual benefits of flexible working, including what service areas can benefit from these approaches as opposed to the traditional office based approach to working. (5) An understanding and appreciation of the issues relating to flexible working which – when allied to an understanding of the benefits of flexible working – can offer a sound basis for challenge from Members in terms of these approaches. (6) An opportunity to put forward possible suggestions for further areas of flexible working. (7) Focus on the performance management aspects of flexible working, including how such approaches can enhance levels of performance as well as where such approaches can hamper performance. 8) An appreciation of the benefits or otherwise of flexible working on citizens and key stakeholders (including users of services). (9) Ensuring that the right policies and practices are in place to effectively support flexible working in the Council.
<p>Background Materials</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Information from previous Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee reports on

<p>updates to the NBC Transformation Programme and also updates on the The Way We Work (TWWW) Programme</p> <p>(2) Various review documents on use of flexible working in local government as well as the wider public sector (and also the private sector) such as the Department of Transport's report <i>Smarter working and the Public Sector</i> (June 2011)</p> <p>(3) Key examples from other local authorities and public sector organisations, e.g. Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health NHS Trust</p> <p>(4) NBC Homeworking Scheme (August 2011)</p> <p>(5) NBC Flexible Working Hours Policy (October 2009)</p>
<p>Evidence and Witnesses</p> <p>(1) Portfolio Holder for Customer Services and Transformation</p> <p>(2) Portfolio holder for Resources and Efficiency</p> <p>(3) Cabinet Members</p> <p>(4) Heads Of Services & Business Managers</p> <p>(5) EMT</p> <p>(6) Employees Consultative Committee representative</p> <p>(7) TWWW Programme Manager</p>
<p>Method of Scrutiny</p> <p>(1) It is suggested that the role of the Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to continue its existing role in terms of scrutiny, but receive updates on progress of flexible working in its different guises (including home and mobile working).</p> <p>(2) The Scrutiny Committee may wish to examine this Brief and suggest particular areas of focus, which can be progressed through a Task and Finish Group, if the Committee so wishes.</p>
<p>Timetable</p> <p>(1) Start date - Work has already commenced – the TWWW Programme was started in January 2011, and built on previous work done through the Transformation Programme (from February 2010 onwards).</p> <p>(2) Updates on TWWW received by the Transformation and Resources Scrutiny Committee – quarterly.</p> <p>(3) Initial consideration of this Brief and further areas of work identified – 2 November 2011 meeting of the Transformation and Resources Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>(4) Dates of meetings: 18 January and 28 February 2012 progress reports if required.</p>
<p>Constraints</p> <p>Development, consultation, approval and implementation of both the Homeworking Scheme and Flexible Working Policy have already been completed. Work progressing on mobile working.</p>
<p>Members to Undertake the Scrutiny</p> <p>Members of Transformation & Resources Overview & Scrutiny Committee</p>
<p>Support</p>

Chief Executive

EMT

Head of Business Improvement & Partnerships (also TWWW Programme Manager)

Heads of Service and Business Managers, including Heads of Human Resources and Customer Services & ICT

Newcastle Borough Council Corporate Plan Priority Area(s)

- Creating a cleaner, safer and sustainable Borough
- Creating a Borough of opportunity
- Creating a healthy and active community
- Transforming our Council to achieve excellence

CfPS Objectives:

- Provides and critical friend challenge to executive policy makers and decision makers
- Enables the voice and concerns of the public to be heard
- Is carried out by independent governors who lead and own the scrutiny role
- Drives improvement in public services

Brief Approved by Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

Signed:

Date: