



# HYBRID WORKING POLICY & GUIDANCE

Rushcliffe Borough Council is committed to ensuring it remains a flexible organisation, recognising that hybrid working can be beneficial to customers, the organisation and to the individual employee.

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### Relevant forms and letters:

- [Links to form](#)

### Related policies/guidance:

- Links to policies

If you have any questions about this policy, or require any further support, please contact the HR Team on 0115 914 8289 or by email to [hr@rushcliffe.gov.uk](mailto:hr@rushcliffe.gov.uk)

Please note:

- This policy applies to all employees within Rushcliffe Borough Council unless stated otherwise within the policy.
- This policy does not form part of contracts of employment.
- Rushcliffe Borough Council reserves the right to amend this policy from time to time.

## 1.0 Policy statement

Rushcliffe Borough Council recognises the need to continue to develop flexible ways of working as this is seen as a benefit to both the employee and the Organisation. Assisting the Council to reduce costs, make better use of office space, enhance service delivery whilst also supporting environmental and transport objectives - reducing carbon emissions and the need to travel whilst making better use of the employee's time.

Hybrid working is designed to meet the needs of the business, and service delivery must be made the priority in all cases. 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 whilst also taking into consideration the needs of the individual.

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for managing hybrid working.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy and guidance applies to RBC employees employed under Rushcliffe Terms and Conditions of Employment but excludes posts where hybrid working has been deemed not to be applicable such as (not an exhaustive list):

- roles within the Manual Workforce
- posts that work on a reception area
- for medical or welfare issues or
- where hybrid working has been withdrawn for conduct or capability issues.

## 3.0 Principles of Hybrid Working

**Definition** - Hybrid Working refers to working from different locations such as home or different Council run sites and locations.

**Business need** – The ability to hybrid work will always be based on business need with residents and internal customers' needs at the forefront. Managers should ensure that service delivery is improved or remains unaffected by hybrid working.

**Not compulsory** - Hybrid Working is not a mandatory requirement and it is recognised that some employees may not wish to work from home due to personal reasons, family/childcare, logistical or practical reasons.

**Locations** - Employees who are able to work flexibly, will be able to work some time from home or in any appropriate RBC location. Some workspaces in service areas may be fixed, in accordance with the duties and requirements of the role and therefore hybrid working may not be possible in these instances.

**Regular attendance in the office** – Employees should generally work a minimum of 2 days at an RBC site and not, in general, be working more than 3 days a week at home. Some jobs require staff to be out and about in the Borough and it is appreciated that this may restrict their ability to come into the office as frequently E.g. Pest Control Officer. If you think this refers to your role, please seek clarity from your Lead Specialist. It is recognised that regular days in the office improves communication and relationships within the team and more widely across the organisation.

**Based on mutual trust** - Any remote working arrangements will be based on mutual trust between line managers and employees. Whilst normal line management and reporting arrangements will continue, there will not be an expectation for employees to be micro-managed as long as performance reaches required levels.

**Supported by technology** - Technology and business tools required to undertake your role will be supplied by ICT Services, including laptops and mobile phones if appropriate. You may be requested to bring the equipment back into the office on occasions for periodic checks. Employees will be required to provide their own appropriate Wi-Fi /Internet access when working from home.

**Council Policies** - Hybrid workers will be subject to all Council policies as normal, including health and safety, HR and ICT policies. All existing reporting arrangements remain the same, such as for example sickness absence, annual leave requests, and accident reporting. Any breaches will be dealt with under the normal arrangements.

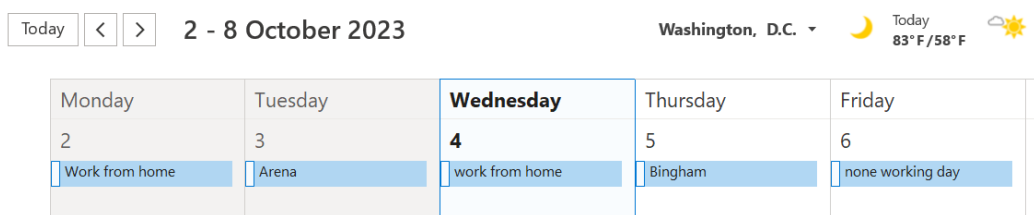
**Eligibility** - Hybrid working is not a right and may not be appropriate for all roles/teams all of the time and may be withdrawn at any time as it does not form part of an employee’s terms and conditions. Hybrid working arrangements will be subject to the discretion of the line manager/Lead Specialist. Reasons why hybrid working may not be appropriate include:

- Attendance at training/team meetings
- To support the training/mentoring of a new employee to the team
- Work on a specific piece of work e.g. requires face to face collaboration
- Performance or conduct issues
- Unsuitable home working arrangements including unreliable Wi-Fi connection

**Caring responsibilities** - Hybrid working should not be utilised for the provision of childcare e.g. babysitting or discharging childcare provision other than on an exceptional basis, with the line manager’s approval where the needs of the service are not adversely affected. Flexible working arrangements can support with school drop-off and pick-up – see EverydayFlex@RBC

**Remaining available** - When not on leave, employees must remain available for meetings, whether in person, via telephone or Microsoft Teams unless pre-agreed with their line manager. Employees are expected to be flexible around which days they work from home or other RBC work sites. It may not be possible to work set days at home each week. Employees may be required to work from an RBC site on a day when they would normally work from home, because the business requires it. Equally employees may be required to work more than 2 days from an RBC site within a week, because the business requires it.

Outlook diaries should be updated on a weekly basis to show working locations (see example below). Diaries should not be blocked out as busy on days where you intend to work from home as you may still be required to attend Teams meetings or be expected to go into the office if business needs arise. If you require more stability with working from home then this should be formally requested through the Flexible Working Policy.



**Working hours** – Hybrid working may give you more flexibility with when you work, however in general, employees are expected to continue to work in-line with standard working hours and in accordance with EverydayFlex@RBC.

#### 4.0 Home environment

Employees should ensure that their work area is suitable, fit for purpose and adheres to health and safety regulations, for example:

- An appropriate, designated workspace/desk area.
- Free from non-work interruptions including background noise levels.
- Secure and maintain confidentiality.

It is the employee's responsibility to risk assess their workspace. If an employee works regularly from home, the online DSE form must be completed. If any employee is in doubt, a photograph can be provided to their line manager and Health and Safety Advisor for further advice.

Whilst employees are working away from the office, lone working policies will be implemented as appropriate. Employees must not, under any circumstance, arrange customer meetings at home and these must be undertaken at a designated council office in line with normal arrangements. It may not be appropriate to work in some public places.

The Council will be liable for insurance of council-owned equipment (providing reasonable care is afforded by the employee). Employees are responsible for ensuring that appropriate home insurance policies cover working from home. Insurance policies and premiums may be affected. Employees should also check mortgage or rental agreements to ensure that working from home is not prohibited or in breach of any pre-existing agreement.

Employees should note that their own health and safety is their primary responsibility including their home working environment.

#### 5.0 Confidentiality and Data security

All employees will be responsible for ensuring confidentiality during the course of their work from home or away from the office. Employees must not share data with those who do not have a right to have access to the data. Disciplinary action may be taken should employees fail to adhere to this.

All Council data held by employees must be kept confidential and secure at all times and appropriate documentation should be destroyed as appropriate in line with ICT policies.

All employees may be required to work from the office in the event of ICT equipment or systems failure.

#### 6.0 Equipment and Payments

**ICT equipment** - will be provided to support the employee in being able to take advantage of hybrid working. The employee however is responsible for ensuring that they have the appropriate space, desk, chair, lighting and heating etc to facilitate working from home. These items are not provided by the Council.

**Additional costs** - The employee will bear the cost of their telephone line rental, broadband, insurance and any increase in utility bills, these will not be refunded by the Council.

**Mileage expenses** – the Council is not responsible for costs incurred travelling to and from home to your work base, this is considered as commuting. When attending a visit from home

to site your normal home to office mileage must be deducted. Most job roles have a specific site location, where this is not clear you will agree your standard office base with your line manager and this should be the location that your expense claims are calculated from, once the home to office mileage has been deducted.

### 7.0 Regular communication and contact

Whilst undertaking hybrid working you must ensure regular contact with your line manager, team members and other colleagues. Some meetings are better in person such as team meetings and your regular 121's. Where meetings take place via Teams you will normally be expected to join with your camera enabled, this does not include general telephone calls on Teams.

### 8.0 Special Circumstances

If the ICT systems are down and you are unable to work remotely your manager may request that you attend the office to fulfil your duties.

If the systems fail in the afternoon and it is too late for you to attend the office and you do not have work that could be done off-line, then you should agree with your manager

- Use of accrued flexitime
- Use of annual leave
- Making the time up

The proximity of your home address will obviously have some bearing on the requirement to attend in the afternoon. If the whole system is down both at the office and remotely, then you should discuss options with your line manager.

If you are required to attend the office on a day that you had intended to work from home then normal home to office mileage applies in these circumstances and you will not be reimbursed for this.

### 9.0 Hybrid Working and Everyday Flex Team Principles

Management will ensure that all reasonable requests are accommodated subject to the business need, and that all employees within the team are treated fairly, equally, transparently and consistently under this policy. All requests by employees will be considered as appropriate by management but not all requests can be accommodated.

To facilitate transparency the Teams Principles document should be completed so that all members of the team are aware of the general requirements around hybrid working and Everyday Flex.

It is recognised that from time to time, in exceptional circumstances, agreements will not be able to be fulfilled, for example, if the minimum office cover is one person and they are called away unexpectedly, the manager must therefore ensure that contingency plans are in place dependent on the nature of the service. Any concerns can be raised with relevant Lead Specialist with support from HR when required.