

Plasterdown Grouped Parish Council

HOMEWORKING POLICY

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The Council recognises the advantages of home-based working although it doesn't suit everyone, and some job roles may not be appropriate to undertake at home.

This policy describes the working arrangements and expectations that will apply if you work from home.

Scope of this policy

It applies to all staff who are home-based whether full time, part time or fixed term. It does not apply to office-based staff who work from home on an ad-hoc basis.

Safe working environment

Health and safety for home-based staff applies in the same way as office-based staff, insofar as is reasonably practicable, that you work in a safe manner and that you follow all health and safety instructions issued by us.

You must complete and submit a 'Home Based Workers Risk Assessment'. This is a checklist for you to identify any possible hazards in your home working area. Following completion of the checklist, measures may need to be taken to control any risks identified. This checklist should be completed annually, or more frequently if there are any changes to your arrangements such as new equipment or changes to your home-office space.

You must complete and submit a workstation risk assessment and ensure that this remains up-to-date.

Some of the most important considerations include: -

- If possible, an area should be set aside from the rest of your living space to ensure that you are able to work from home without distractions,
 - Your home office should have adequate space for you to work safely and comfortably,
 - Your desk should be large enough to accommodate your equipment and paperwork,
 - You should have sufficient storage and your workspace should be organised so equipment is close to hand,
 - Your work area should be well lit, with natural lighting if possible,
 - Equipment and sockets should be situated to avoid potential trip hazards, and,
 - You must also ensure that you visually check the cables of any electronic equipment supplied to you regularly (and at least every 6 months) and report any defects.
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- **Facilities and equipment**

The council will provide you with the following equipment for you to work from home and we will maintain and replace these items when necessary.

- Printer/scanner
- Laptop computer

It is your duty to ensure that proper care is taken of the equipment provided to you. Should the risk assessment identify any further equipment that is necessary, please discuss this with the Council.

All equipment provided by the council is for you to work safely and effectively at home and cannot be used for personal use by you or your family.

All equipment will belong to the Council and you will be required to return it to us promptly should you leave our employment. If we are unable to make suitable arrangements, we may collect the equipment and any documents before your last day.

Hours of work

As a home-based worker, your contract of employment will specify the hours when we expect you to be at work and contactable by telephone or email. There may be times during the working day when you are not available in which case these should be flagged to the Clerk (or the Chair of the Council) with prior authorisation.

You must be mindful to take adequate rest breaks which should be, as a minimum:

- A break of at least 20 minutes during each working day over 6 hours,
- A daily rest break of at least 11 continuous hours, i.e. the time between stopping work one day and beginning work the next day, and,
- At least one complete day each week when no work is done.

Potential conflicts of interest

During your hours of work, the council expects that your work environment enables you to work effectively and that you are not distracted by domestic matters. It is not appropriate to combine homeworking with caring for a dependant.

Data protection

As a home-worker you are responsible for keeping all documents and information associated with the council secure at all times. Specifically, homeworkers are under a duty to:

- Set up and use a unique password for the laptop computer

Furthermore, the laptop computer and other equipment provided by us must be used only for work-related purposes and must not be used by any other member of the family at any time or for any purpose.

If you have a telephone conversation where you are discussing confidential work matters, you should ensure that such calls take place in privacy to avoid inadvertent breach of confidentiality.

This is a non-contractual procedure which will be reviewed from time to time.

Date of policy:	November 2024
Approving committee:	HR Committee
Date of committee meeting:	13 th November 2024
Date for next review:	November 2026

Notes

The Good Councillor's guide to being a good employer provides advice and guidance around how to manage a homeworker.

Guidance

Where there is text in [square brackets] this part may be updated or be deleted if not relevant. An alternative option may have been provided.

Important notice

This is an example of an employment policy designed for a small council adhering to statutory minimum requirements and does not constitute legal advice. As with all policies it should be consistent with your terms and conditions of employment.

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This document has been written by Worknest HR – a company that provides HR advice and guidance to town and parish councils. Please contact them on 01403 240 205 for information about their services.