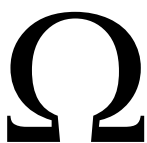


# Ways of Working Procedures



## Version Control

Document title	Ways of Working Procedures		
Owner	Human Resources	Status	Draft
Version	1	Effective from	TBC
Last updated	19/05/2023	Last updated by	HR Strategy and Planning
Purpose	To ensure that managers and employees understand the council's Ways of Working, whilst at the same time, ensuring that they continue to meet legal, operational and individual requirements.		

This policy links to:

- Our Council Plan
- Walsall Proud
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Flexi Time and TOIL Policy
- Home Working Safety Management Standard
- Code of Conduct
- Email and Internet Usage Procedural Guidance
- Information Governance Policy Framework
- Video Conference and Recording Guidance
- Right to Request Flexible Working Policy
- Equality and Diversity Protocol
- Organisational Development Strategy
- Workforce Strategy
- Behaviour & Standards Framework
- Performance Policy
- Probation Policy
- Reimbursement of Personal Expenses Policy
- Mobile Device Acceptable Use Procedure
- Data Breach Handling Procedural Guidance
- Accommodation Policy
- Remote Working Outside of the UK Guidance
- Ways of Working Policy

This list is not exhaustive.

For further advice or guidance on this policy, or if you would like this information in another language or format please contact:

HR Operational Services Team

Telephone: 01922 655671

Text phone: 01922 654000

Email: [hrdoperationalservices@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:hrdoperationalservices@walsall.gov.uk)

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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Ways of Working policy.

## **2.0 Health & Safety**

- 2.1 The council requires managers and employees to assess all health and safety implications associated with remote / home working and to work together to ensure that health and safety is not compromised.
- 2.2 Managers must ensure that health and safety risk assessments cover elements of mobile / remote working if this a requirement of the role. Managers must receive a home suitability and simple risk assessment form from the employee, along with a DSE self-assessment. A separate risk assessment may be required if the ways of working are not considered a low risk office type role. Managers should discuss these assessments with their employees and consider any control measures that might be needed. This should be reviewed when any significant changes are likely to affect the assessment.
- 2.3 The Health and Safety team can provide advice on the council's lone working / home working safety management standard, further information is available on the health and safety intranet pages.
- 2.4 Managers have the same health and safety responsibilities for remote / mobile employees as they do for that of static office employees. Managers should consider:
- How to keep in touch with employees in relation to health, safety and wellbeing.
  - What work activities they will be undertaking and for how long?
  - Can the work be done safely?
  - What control measures need to be put into place to protect remote / mobile workers?
- 2.5 Where employees have a disability or other protected characteristic (e.g., pregnancy) managers should consider what other equipment / reasonable adjustments are required to assist with the ways of working, for example;
- Providing extra equipment to help the employee do their job, such as an employee needing voice activated software on their laptop;
  - Changes to overcome barriers to the physical features of a workplace;

- Changing the way things are done, such as the employee asking their manager to provide more frequent check-ins because they are struggling with their mental health.
- 2.6 If an employee does not have the facilities to work safely and securely from remote / mobile locations they will have to work from an office location.
- 2.7 All employees who work remotely have a duty to ensure, that they look after their own safety and co-operate with the employer which includes following all health and safety procedures and any other instructions issued by the council.
- 2.8 When working remotely employees should consider their own health and safety as they would at work and take steps to prevent accidents to all members of the household, such as trip hazards from loose wires. Equipment should be kept out of direct sunlight and other equipment, paper etc. should not be piled on top of devices to prevent damage or overheating.
- 2.9 Employees should undertake regular visual checks to ensure that all electrical equipment such as transformers, leads for laptops etc. appear to be safe. If equipment looks damaged employees should contact DaTS with the equipment's silver label number. Employees should ensure that electrical equipment is made available for PAT testing if requested.
- 2.10 Accidents and incidents must be reported in the usual manner in accordance with normal procedures.
- 2.11 Managers must ensure employees are aware of lone working practices and emergency contact numbers and are responsible for ensuring employees have copies of or are able to access business continuity plans and disaster recovery procedures.

### **Personal safety**

- 2.12 Employees must not leave equipment used for council business on display through windows or on the seat of a car where it could be seen by passers-by, to reduce the risk to personal safety and / or damage to personal property, as well as the loss of equipment and information. All devices used for council business should be stored in a manner that protects both the devices and any data stored or accessed within or through such devices.
- 2.13 Employees must not have meetings in their home with service users, contractors, or officers from other agencies, or divulge their home address or telephone numbers.

### 3.0 Equipment, furniture and consumables

- 3.1 Managers, employees, DaTS and/or Corporate Landlord will work together to determine what equipment is required in order to perform the job role by the applicable ways of working.
- 3.2 DaTS will provide the technical expertise and advice on what IT equipment should be purchased and supplied (all associated costs will be covered by the requesting service area's budget);
- **For additional / replacement essential IT equipment** (such as tablet, desktop, smart / mobile phone etc.)- Manager's must "Submit a DaTS Request" via DaTS Customer Portal.
  - **For new starters** - Manager's must "Request a New Starter" (for the user account to be created) and "Submit a DaTS Request" to purchase all essential IT equipment.

DaTS Customer Portal can be accessed from Inside Walsall intranet pages via the Contact DaTS button.

- 3.3 Employees are responsible for providing suitable **furniture (desks and chairs)** in their home setting and for ensuring that their home is set up safely for remote working (unless required as a reasonable adjustment, refer to 3.4). The Health and Safety and Corporate Landlord teams can provide advice and recommend specifications for suitable furniture, however employees will have to bear the cost of any additional furniture they wish to purchase that is not already in their homes (including replacement furniture due to faults / wear and tear). Where employees do not have either space or furniture to work safely from home, they may be required to base themselves at an office where appropriate furniture and all health and safety needs can be met. In exceptional circumstances where employees find themselves unable to provide required furniture due to financial hardship, they should raise this matter with their manager, who in turn should take advice from the Corporate Landlord team (office moves) regarding either existing kit (where feasible) or new furniture orders (all associated costs will be covered by the requesting service area's budget).
- **For static employees with existing specialist chairs / equipment who are moving to mobile / remote working (or vice versa)** – Managers should contact [officemoves@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:officemoves@walsall.gov.uk) to arrange collection / delivery of the existing specialist chair / equipment (all associated costs to be covered by the requesting service area's budget).

- 3.4 Where **specialist chairs / desks / other equipment** are required as a reasonable adjustment following OH/DSE and Access to Work assessments, these will be provided at one work location (refer to 3.8 below). Managers should contact [officemoves@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:officemoves@walsall.gov.uk) before ordering any Access to Work recommended or other specified equipment as a reasonable adjustment, as equipment may already be available. In addition, the most appropriate location for the equipment also needs to be identified (office location or home).
- 3.5 Essential **DSE low value (non IT) equipment** (such as footrest, laptop riser, back support, wrist support, etc.) will be provided following a home suitability assessment. Managers should order equipment via Admin and Business Support and have it delivered directly to the employee's work location / home address. All associated costs are to be covered by the requesting service area's budget.
- 3.6 Agency workers who require essential (non IT) equipment following a DSE / Access to Work should contact the council's managed service provider for temporary agency workers in the first instance.
- 3.7 Where an employee is remote or mobile working, they will only be provided with one set of required IT and work station equipment and that should be located where they spend the majority of their time. When a remote / mobile worker attends the office, standard equipment will be available dependent on the workstation / workspace used, however the employee will be required to bring their laptop / headset / mobile phones with them.
- 3.8 Where employees have specialist equipment, only one set of equipment will be provided and should be permanently located where they spend the majority of their time. Specialist furniture and equipment will be provided at the allocated work base where the implementation of reasonable adjustments have been agreed (for employees with disabilities) following a recommendation by an occupational health specialist, Access to Work Adviser etc. where this is practicable.
- 3.9 Some locations have bookable height adjustable desks and chairs with 5 point adjustment for employees coming into the office when home is their primary location. To arrange a workstation with specialist equipment contact [officemoves@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:officemoves@walsall.gov.uk).
- 3.10 Due to Information Security and Data Protection requirements, ICT equipment used must always be supplied and maintained by DaTS for all employees, this includes council approved encrypted electronic storage devices (e.g. laptops, memory sticks).

- 3.11 Employees should not use their own ICT equipment for work purposes (excluding peripherals such as screens, keyboards etc.). However, where technically possible, economically sensible and where appropriate information security is in place under the “Bring Your Own Device” (BYOD) policy employees may use personal devices (e.g. personal tablet or smart phone) to access council data held in a protected area. Further information is available on DaTS intranet pages.
- 3.12 Employees must report any equipment that is lost, stolen or damaged to their manager and DaTS Service Desk immediately. This includes employees who are using a personal device to access council resources as part of ‘BYOD’.
- 3.13 Where equipment is either damaged or not working effectively and requires DaTS intervention, it is the employee’s responsibility to return the equipment to the office base for repair, investigation, maintenance and this should be done without delay. Employees are also responsible for collecting the equipment once repaired. Any delay on the employee’s part on returning / collecting equipment which means they are unable to work will need to be covered by the employee using flexi/annual leave/unpaid leave.
- 3.14 Lockers in council offices will only be allocated to employees who attend the office two or more days a week unless there is a reasonable adjustment in place. Requests for lockers must be made to Administration and Business Support.

### **Printing and consumables**

- 3.15 Printers and consumables (such as stationery, pens, ink cartridges etc.) will generally not be provided by the council, supporting the council’s move to a paperless working environment. Those who have an appropriate business need for a printer to be installed must complete a business case that is approved by their senior manager and authorised through DaTS in accordance with the information governance guidance on printing from home. Managers should ensure appropriate records storage, archiving and destruction capabilities are available. The use of unauthorised technical equipment or software is not permitted in line with the council’s policies as these pose a significant information security risk.
- 3.16 Employees working remotely should operate with electronic only files / records in order to eliminate the risk of data breaches and support the council’s record management processes. The exception to this is those services where paper documentation is required for external proceedings i.e. CPS / Police / Courts etc. To apply for authorisation a ‘printing from home business case’ will be required to support the installation and / or connection



of third party or personal printer to a council approved device, this can be accessed via the DaTS Customer Portal or the Information Governance intranet pages.

- 3.17 Printing at home may also be approved where it is recommended as a reasonable adjustment by an occupational health specialist or Access to Work Adviser etc.

### **Equipment inventory**

- 3.18 All equipment provided will be listed in an inventory and will at all times remain the property of the council and must be returned / will be recovered upon the cessation of the remote / mobile working or end of employment.
- 3.19 Managers should ensure that employees are equipped with core IT equipment, and must ensure that an IT and workstation inventory list is completed and maintained for all items given to their employees for use remotely (including any additional equipment provided as a reasonable adjustment).
- 3.20 Employees should keep a copy of the inventory list of all equipment they have received and are responsible alongside their manager to ensure all required equipment is returned to the council.

### **Returning equipment**

- 3.21 Equipment (and any documents and material, written or otherwise) supplied by the council shall remain the property of the council and must be returned immediately when;
- Employment has ended;
  - Any remote / mobile working arrangement ends;
  - Management request that it be returned.
- 3.22 Employees are responsible for returning IT and workstation equipment. Where the employee is a remote / mobile worker and they do not return equipment they must allow the council access to their home to retrieve such equipment listed on the IT and workstation inventory. All equipment must be returned in working order and in good condition.

## **4.0 Information and data protection**

- 4.1 The increased use of mobile technology potentially increases the vulnerability of the council's network and the data that is held and produced by those

working under the ways of working policy. The council's information governance policy framework and data protection legislation must be complied with in relation to the access, use and security of information.

- 4.2 Managers / Information Asset Owners should assess the risk to information assets dependent on the ways of working being utilised, and review this when any changes are made to the working environment. These risks should be recorded and mitigated where possible.
- 4.3 Managers are responsible for ensuring appropriate records management, data protection compliance and business continuity procedures, guidance or controls are in place concerning;
- The location and use of council equipment, devices and software;
  - Records management procedures including retention, storage and destruction;
  - Procedures or guidance for accessing information on a need to know basis;
  - Appropriate controls, processes or guidance is in place to ensure staff are aware of their duties and obligations relating to the services working practices;
  - Ensuring staff have read and understood the relevant policies, procedures or guidance in place.
- 4.4 All employees are personally responsible for the security of the data they keep in paper and electronic form and should comply with all relevant legislation, policies and procedures regardless of where they work. As a general rule electronic files should be used and only where this is not possible should paper records be maintained, the employee is responsible for ensuring paper records are kept secure in a lockable storage unit, retaining notes where these form business records and confidentially shredding other paper waste.
- 4.5 Employees must report any suspected or actual information security incident / data breaches to their manager, Information Asset Owner and the Information Governance team (please refer to the information governance intranet pages). Any data breaches may lead to formal action taken under the disciplinary policy, which may ultimately lead to a sanction up to and including dismissal.

#### **Clear workstation and screen**

- 4.6 All employees / workers must take responsibility for the management of information within their working environment. Information is a valuable asset

of the council and it is the responsibility of all employees to ensure its confidentiality and that data protection principles are maintained.

- 4.7 At the end of the working day or workstation booking, employees / workers should store away all work-related files and paperwork, and any removable storage devices to leave their workstations clear of all items.
- 4.8 All paperwork and equipment (including laptops / tablets) left in the office overnight should be securely stored away in lockable cupboards / drawers, or disposed of securely.
- 4.9 During the working day employees / workers should also be mindful of their surroundings and take appropriate steps to protect confidential information that maybe on their workstation, e.g. turning over confidential papers that are not actively being worked on, and taking appropriate steps to protect confidentiality of information shown on their screens.
- 4.10 Whenever employees / workers are leaving their workstations, even for brief breaks e.g. toilet visit or to collect printing, they should ensure their computer / laptop screen is locked (Ctrl+Alt+Delete, or Ctrl+Alt+End or Windows key+L) and no confidential information is left visible.
- 4.11 A clear workstation and screen policy also applies to mobile and remote employees. All employees should be mindful of the environment that they are working in that all council information in any form should remain confidential. Employees must not allow family members or third parties to access personal data or use council owned / provided equipment. Employees must ensure that any paper notebooks that contain personal, sensitive or business data are kept in a safe place (locked drawer or secure a laptop bag with a padlock) or confidentially shredded when no longer required.

## **5.0 Risk and insurance**

- 5.1 The council's insurers will cover third party and employer liability risks and cover some council owned equipment in the home provided that the council's insurance officer is provided with the details. The council's insurance will not cover the home or any equipment provided by the employee / their personal property.
- 5.2 Remote / mobile workers must inform their own domestic insurers (where applicable) that they are home based working if it is not already a standard term in the cover. The employee will be liable for any additional cost to their home insurance due to additional premiums related to home working.

- 5.3 Any loss, damage or injury incurred may be covered by the council's insurance policies except in cases of willful misconduct or where reasonable precautions have not been undertaken in which case liability may rest with the employee.
- 5.4 Employees are responsible for checking applicable mortgage or rental agreements to ensure they are permitted to work from home, and for obtaining any permissions necessary to work from home.

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