

**FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:**           **CABINET**

**DATE:**               **TUESDAY, 13 MAY 2014**

**REPORT BY:**       **HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**SUBJECT:**           **AGILE WORKING POLICY / FLEXIBLE WORKING HOURS SCHEME**

**1.00**   **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01    To seek approval to proposed changes to the Flexible Working Hours scheme and to implement an Agile Working Policy.

**2.00**   **BACKGROUND**

2.01    There is an increasing demand for the Council to deliver services at times when they are most needed by the Flintshire residents and customers. This requires a change to the flexible working arrangements currently in operation. The priority for the organisation is to ensure that service delivery is protected and greater flexibility is developed to better meet the changing needs of our customers.

2.02    There is also recognition that developing flexible and modern working practices, which enable employees to maximise their performance whilst maintaining a work life balance, is key to improve service delivery.

2.03    In support of these two aims, it is proposed to amend the Flexible Working Hours scheme to remove core hours to enable employees to have greater flexibility on how and when they undertake their duties. Equally, the scheme provides more flexibility in service delivery for the benefit of our customers.

2.04    In addition, the introduction of agile working practices aims to improve service delivery, increase employee engagement and optimise the use of workspace whilst improving the work life balance of employees. Agile working practices are also a key enabler for achieving the objectives of the Council's Asset Management Strategy.

2.05    Agile working replaces the traditional working practices of employees at a fixed desk in one location with a more flexible, responsive and customer focused approach. Employees will share work space and desks, work from various locations enabled by appropriate technology and have more flexible working time arrangements.

- 2.06 The Council has already operated a number of pilot agile working projects in front line services such as Housing, Public Protection and Revenues and Benefits. Employees have adopted agile working styles of operation and the core hours under the Flexible Working Hours Scheme have been temporarily relaxed. Without exception, the managers and the teams have identified significantly improved levels of performance and productivity, re-energised and engaged employees, better accessibility of services for customers and improved worklife balance for employees.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 The Agile Working Policy in Appendix 1 provides a detailed summary of the proposals to formalise the introduction of agile working arrangements within the Council.
- 3.02 The Flexible Working Hours Policy in Appendix 2 supports the need to amend the current flexible hours working patterns. The two policies support each other, in order for employees to work in a more agile, flexible way to meet the demands of our customers there is a requirement to fundamentally change the reliance upon fixed location and core hour working practices.
- 3.03 The organisation has had the opportunity to pilot agile working practices, has achieved successful outcomes and has generated some valuable learning from which other services can benefit. There is now the need to underpin these new working practices with formal policies and procedures to enable the consistent implementation of agile and more flexible working across all service areas.

### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.01 That Members approve the two policies, Agile Working and Flexible Hours Scheme, as success of each is dependent on both being implemented in tandem
- 4.02 That Members fully support and endorse the ethos of agile and flexible working styles to modernise working practices, to improve the accessibility of services to customers and to act as a key enabler for the Council's Asset Management Strategy.

### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.01 The implementation of agile working is partly dependent on the availability of appropriate IT kit and on the reconfiguration of office accommodation and equipment. Some financial provision has been made in the 2014/15 budget to meet additional costs.

**6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None identified

**7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None identified

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 Equality Impact assessments will be undertaken for individual service areas to assess the impact of agile and flexible working

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 There will be implications for each employee in moving from core hours to flexible working across a longer working day. Any actions arising during implementation will be documented and consideration jointly between line managers and employees in agreeing flexible and agile working arrangements will be made. There will be a period of transition and a phased implementation approach to the introduction of agile working which will be service demand led.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 On-going involvement will be required with Trade Union colleagues as the agile working arrangements are implemented across the Council.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Consultation with trade unions has taken place in the drafting of the agile working and flexible working hours policies and the attached documents have full Trade Union support

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Flexible Hours Scheme  
Agile Working Policy

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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