

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

Human Resources Committee

For Resolution

17th December 2009

Report of: Director of Strategic HR and Workforce Strategy

Title: Revisions to the Existing Corporate Flexi-Time Scheme

Ward: City Wide

Officer Presenting Report: Rachel Falla, Employee Relations Manager

Contact Telephone Number: 0117 92 22215

RECOMMENDATION

(i) To note the results of the recent SNAP survey undertaken council-wide to ascertain current arrangements within the Council to accrue flexi-leave and take flexi-leave in a four week period.

(ii) To approve the amendments to the flexi-time scheme (attached as Appendix C), when the new scheme is implemented with effect from 1st April 2010, (including an amendment to the scheme regarding flexi-leave: paragraph 4.2 below refers).

Summary

This issue was first brought to the attention of HR Committee in July 2009 to consider proposals to harmonise the two different flexi-time schemes which had reflected differences between those departments which had previously been part of Avon County Council, and those which were part of Bristol City Council. This review was recommended by the Council's Strategic HR Group, which had become aware of inconsistencies in the Flexi-Scheme following the restructuring of Council Directorates, and the realignment of divisions/workgroups.

The Committee reached a decision on all revisions, with the exception of the amount of flexi-leave which could be accrued and taken in a four week period which was deferred, pending a further review.

A Working Party was formed consisting of Management, HR and Trade Union Representatives and it was decided that the best way of determining practice across the City Council and the potential impact upon service delivery was by undertaking a SNAP survey.

The significant issues in the report are:

1. Decide whether the Flexi-Time Scheme should operate with;

- one day
- two days or
- up to two days flexi

being accrued and taken in a four week period.

2. That the Welfare Rights team are currently able to accrue and take up to 3 days flexi in a flexi-period, as a consequence of a local agreement. This practice needs to be reviewed and brought into line with the decision reached by this Committee, at today's meeting.

1. Policy

1.1 The Flexi-Time Scheme is an integral part of the Council's declared intention of having a flexible approach to working hours. The Scheme aims to enhance service delivery by varying the attendance hours of employees to meet the needs of the section/department within the standard day and assist employees, where practicable, with personal responsibilities or appointments.

Flexi-time is a staff benefit subject to management approval. There are some sections where flexi cannot apply for service delivery reasons. Where the Flexi Scheme does apply, managers should monitor accrual of both flexi credit and debit. Managers must also approve the taking of flexi leave before it is taken.

The accrual and taking of flexi-leave cannot be taken for granted as service needs are paramount and will vary.

2. Consultation

2.1 Internal

Consultation was undertaken Council wide with those members of staff who completed the SNAP survey.

Consultation on the findings of the SNAP Survey and this Report was undertaken with members of the Flexi Working Party (Management, TU and HR Representatives). The outcome of this consultation is to be clarified after meeting next Wednesday.

2.2 External

Not applicable.

3. Context: Survey Overview

- 3.1 The estimated response rate to the SNAP Survey was reasonable. There was a 22.1% response (1881 employees overall). There was a high proportion of management responses 26% in total (496 managers).
- 3.2 Responses have been broken down by Department (Table 1) and show a varied and wide ranging response rate from both Strategic and Service Directorates. Whilst the majority were above the average response rate (22.1%) two areas were noticeably low e.g Health and Social Care (8.6%) and CYPS (8.8%).
- 3.3 Please note that whilst the response rate was low in these Departments, there are many staff within Health and Social Care who are not entitled to flexi time as they are covered by the provisions of Working Arrangements Policy (shift).
- 3.4 We also became aware of a number of staff in H&SC and CYPS with no access to the intranet or groupwise and paper copies were distributed. A notice had already been put into all payslips two weeks before the survey was distributed and the Senior Leadership Team had also been asked to identify these staff so that paper copies could be distributed.
- 3.5 In order to obtain the opinion and facts from both managers and employees, the survey was split into two sections. In the first managers gave information as to how much time was accrued, the second part collated the same information from all staff. This was important

because we needed to ascertain management views regarding a possible change in the maximum number of lieu days an employee can take and how any change in the flexi-scheme would impact upon service delivery.

- 3.6 Please note that the Working Party also included a question about lieu time to see how much lieu time was utilised.
- 3.7 The Council's Corporate Communications Team, who supported the working party in designing the SNAP survey have provided some narrative in relation to the statistical findings.

Key Summary of Findings

- 3.8 The key findings are as follows;

14% are allowed to accrue 1 day
77.2% are allowed to accrue 2 days
8.8% are allowed to accrue more than 2 days

22.1% are permitted to take 1 day
73.2% are permitted to take 2 days
4.8% are permitted to take more than 2 days

Please note: These figures vary because some Departments allow employees to accrue 2 days but only allow one day to be taken in a flexi period e.g. ICT.

Of those staff who are allowed to accrue and take up to 2 days, the frequency of taking flexi-leave was as follows;

9% never take flexi leave
50.3% sometimes take 2 days
22.3% often take 2 days
18.3% always or almost always take 2 days

- 3.9 Unsurprisingly, those employees already able to accrue and take up to 2 days are resistant to a reduction to one day for reasons which include, increased childcare costs (16%), additional travel (45%), less flexibility around school run (25%).
- 3.10 Significantly, if we were to reduce to one day, 42% said that they would ask for a more formal and less informal Work Life Balance arrangement.

- 3.11 It should be noted that of 14% of managers completing the survey operating with one day flexi leave, 64.1% believe it would be difficult (Agree and Strongly agree) to maintain cover for service delivery.
- 3.12 With regards to lieu time, the survey identified that 83% of staff do not accrue lieu time. Of those that do accrue, it did not appear that any staff accrued more than 15 hours. This area is not therefore considered to be of concern.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 At this committee's meeting in July 2009, the various differences in the application of flexitime, were overcome by harmonising "bandwidths" and core hours etc. It is evident from some Service Managers that harmonising the number of days to one or two will impact upon service delivery.
- 4.2 In recognising the diversity of our services and the way in which they are provided it is proposed that 'up to 2 days' flexi should be allowed within the policy. This allocation is to be agreed by the relevant Service Manager in conjunction with the HR Business Partner.
- 4.3 To ensure that the Flexi-Time Scheme is applied efficiently and transparently within each Section, we propose that each Service Directors should re-examine the way in which the Flexi Scheme is currently applied within each Department, ensuring that appropriate consideration is given to Service needs. The outcome of this review should be reported through the Departmental Joint Consultative Committees by 1 April 2010.
- 4.4 Managers will also have the responsibility of deciding whether the Flexi-Scheme does apply at all, as they currently do, or whether one day or two days should be applied to individual workgroups. The discretion to award 3 or 4 lieu days per month, is to be deleted from the scheme.
- 4.5 Service Directors should also ensure that all working arrangements, including Work Life Balance, are applied fairly and equitably, always ensuring that services are delivered efficiently and avoid any manipulation of the scheme, if this exists.
- 4.6 It should also be noted that there were some concerns were expressed by part-time staff that if the allowance was reduced to one day (on a pro-rata basis for part-time workers), they would not benefit from the scheme. This needs to be considered on a case by case basis, however, part-time workers should not significantly benefit more than full-

time workers.

- 4.7 The above amendments, including the decisions reached by HR Committee in July this year are incorporated into the revised flexi-time scheme and into the policy itself (see Appendix C).

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1 The Scheme could be harmonised down to one day but the feedback from the survey is that managers rely heavily on the good will of staff to ensure service delivery and a reduction would impact on their ability to provide services. There was also evidence that this would impact on employees with child care responsibilities. Whilst there is some managerial support for reducing the number of lieu days which can be taken, it is not considered necessary to adopt a rigid approach (council wide); hence managers have discretion to agree two or three lieu days per month, on the basis of the revised scheme, as set out in paragraph 4.7 above.
- 5.2 If the entitlement to flexi-leave is decreased to one day, there is evidence that there would be a large number of formal work life balance requests and potentially a number of appeals should formal requests be turned down.
- 5.3 The Council could harmonise up to two days but again there is evidence from some managers that they believe this would impact adversely on their ability to provide services.

6. Risk Assessment

- 6.1 Harmonisation down to one day or up to two days is likely to impact upon (either or both of) the Council's ability to provide services and also likely to impact upon employee morale. It is therefore proposed that proper consideration is given to the needs of each work section and that staff are consulted properly through the DJCC regarding the agreed flexi-leave to be applied in the future.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken with the report submitted to HR Committee in July and has been updated in accordance with the SNAP Survey data.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

This report details the proposed change of allowing up to 2 days flexi-leave to all Council employees to whom the Flexi Time Scheme applies. Managers should ensure consistency of treatment in terms of applying the Policy to staff and taking into account service delivery needs. Any proposed changes to an employee's entitlement under the Flexi-Time Scheme should involve consultation with the employee affected.

Legal advice from Husinara Jones for Head of Legal Services

Financial

(a) Revenue:

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

(b) Capital:

Not applicable.

Advice from Stephen Skinner, Head of Finance - Resources, Transformation and Deputy Chief Executive

Land

Not Applicable.

Personnel

As set out in paragraphs 4.1 to 4.7 above.

Appendices

- Appendix A - Summary Report following SNAP Survey including Statistics
- Appendix B - Amended Equalities Impact Assessment
- Appendix C - Revised Flexi Scheme

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 Background Papers:

None.

**Flexi Survey
Report on Main Findings**

This interim report tabulates the main findings from the survey. These are followed by a short discussion section which highlights the main observations drawn from the tables.

Note: All figures are shown as percentages and 'missing data' are excluded.

- Table 1. Response Rate by Strategic and Service Directorate
- Table 2. Accrual and Taking of Flexi Leave by Strategic and Service Directorate
- Table 2a. Accrual and Taking of Flexi Leave by Who Services Predominantly Provided To Show as Percentages
- Table 3. Responses to One Day Proposal from Managers
- Table 4. Responses to One Day Proposal from all staff as employees
- Table 5. Responses to Two Day Proposal from Managers
- Table 6. Responses to Two Day Proposal from all staff as employees
- Table 7. Managers Responses on Lieu Time by Service Directorate
- Table 8. Employees Responses on Lieu Time by Service Directorate
- Table 9. Managers Responses on Work Life Balance
- Table 10. Employees Responses on Work Life Balance by Service Directorate

Note: This report should be used in conjunction with findings previously circulated to the working group.

Table 1. Response Rate by Strategic and Service Directorate

Strategic Directorate	Service Directorate	Headcount	Response (n)	Response (%)
Deputy Chief Executive	One Council Communication	20	10	50.0
	Strategy and Performance	30	28	93.3
	Missing	-	3	-
	Overall Strategic Directorate	50	41	82.0
Health and Social Care	Older People services	309	72	23.3
	Mental Health, Learning Difficulties & Disabled People	87	46	52.9
	Care Services	1519	18	1.2
	Putting People First	95	28	29.5
	Missing	-	9	-
	Overall Strategic Directorate	2010	173	8.6
Children and Young People's Services	Inclusive and Learning Communities	18	15	83.3
	Performance, Policy and Partnerships	47	8	17.0
	Safeguarding and Specialist Services	772	68	8.8
	Learning, Achievement and Schools	476	23	4.8
	Missing	-	1	-
	Overall Strategic Directorate	1313	115	8.8
City Development	Transport	520	108	20.8
	Economic and Cultural Development	583	72	12.3
	Planning and Sustainable Development	135	123	91.1
	Major Projects	101	49	48.5
	Missing	-	3	-
	Overall Strategic Directorate	1339	355	26.5
Neighbourhoods	Safer Bristol	223	69	30.9
	Environmental and Leisure Services	437	115	26.3
	Strategic Housing	398	185	46.5
	Landlord Services	787	182	23.1
	Neighbourhoods Development Unit	85	37	43.5
	Missing	-	8	-
	Overall Strategic Directorate	1930	596	30.8
Transformation, Resources	Integrated Customer Services	288	122	42.4
	Information, Communication and Technology	177	99	55.9
	Shared Transactional Services	705	119	16.9
	Transforming Bristol Portfolio	11	12	109.1 (?)
	Finance	254	144	56.7
	Workforce Strategy	219	24	11.0
	Legal Services	205	72	35.1
	Missing	-	9	-
	Overall Strategic Directorate	1859	601	32.3
	OVERALL Total	8501	1881	22.1

Nb: 4 respondents did not specify Strategic Directorate. 4 respondents were from Public Health

**Table 2. Accrual and Taking of Flexi Leave by Strategic and Service Directorate
Shown as percentages**

Strategic Directorate	Service Directorate	Allowed to Accrue			Permitted to Take			Frequency of taking 1 day (if accrue 2 or more days)			
		1 day	2 days	>2 days	1 day	2 days	>2 days	Never	Sometimes	Often	Always or almost always
Deputy Chief Executive n = 41	One Council Communication	50.0	50.0	0	60.0	40.0	0	25.0	50.0	25.0	0
	Strategy and Performance	7.1	82.1	10.7	17.9	75.0	7.1	8.7	78.3	8.7	4.3
	Overall Strategic Directorate	19.5	73.2	7.3	27.5	67.5	5.0	10.3	75.9	10.3	3.4
Health and Social Care n = 173	Older People services	39.4	36.6	23.9	43.3	31.3	25.4	10.0	45.0	22.5	22.5
	Mental Health, Learning Difficulties & Disabled People	32.6	55.8	11.6	39.5	53.5	7.0	15.4	42.3	26.9	15.4
	Care Services	44.4	38.9	16.7	66.7	22.2	11.1	0	40.0	20.0	40.0
	Putting People First	26.9	69.2	3.8	53.8	46.2	0	25.0	41.7	16.7	16.7
	Overall Strategic Directorate	36.1	47.6	16.3	47.1	38.7	14.1	12.6	46.0	21.8	19.5
Children and Young People's Services n =115	Inclusive and Learning Communities	26.7	53.3	20.0	73.3	20.0	6.7	25.0	75.0	0	0
	Performance, Policy and Partnerships	25.0	75.0	0	50.0	50.0	0	0	50.0	25.0	25.0
	Safeguarding and Specialist Services	53.0	39.4	7.6	65.6	23.4	10.9	4.5	63.6	22.7	9.1
	Learning, Achievement and Schools	31.6	57.9	10.5	47.6	42.9	9.5	20.0	30.0	40.0	1.0
	Overall Strategic Directorate	43.1	47.7	9.2	61.5	29.4	9.2	9.8	56.1	24.4	9.8
City Development n = 355	Transport	3.7	88.0	8.3	3.8	96.2	0	8.7	55.3	26.2	9.7
	Economic and Cultural Development	10.1	76.8	13.0	24.6	62.3	13.0	1.9	80.8	13.5	3.8
	Planning and Sustainable Development	0.8	94.2	5.0	2.5	95.0	2.5	12.1	46.6	22.4	19.0
	Major Projects	6.1	83.7	10.2	19.6	76.1	4.3	20.0	47.5	12.5	20.0
	Overall Strategic Directorate	4.3	87.4	8.3	9.9	86.0	4.1	10.3	55.4	20.8	13.5
Neighbourhoods n = 596	Safer Bristol	23.2	71.0	5.8	34.8	60.6	4.5	0	50.0	27.3	22.7
	Environmental and Leisure Services	10.5	81.6	7.9	13.5	84.7	1.8	10.4	43.8	26.0	19.8
	Strategic Housing	7.0	83.2	9.7	5.5	85.1	9.4	7.0	42.1	24.6	26.3
	Landlord Services	15.6	81.6	2.8	21.5	77.9	0.6	7.4	49.3	22.1	21.3
	Neighbourhoods Development Unit	8.3	88.9	2.8	22.2	77.8	0	6.9	44.8	31.0	17.2
	Overall Strategic Directorate	12.2	81.6	6.3	16.3	79.7	4.0	7.0	45.9	24.6	22.5
Transformation, Resources n = 601	Integrated Customer Services	7.4	86.1	6.6	8.3	90.9	0.8	5.5	31.2	22.9	40.4
	Information, Communication and Technology	25.8	63.9	10.3	74.2	23.7	2.1	12.5	66.7	12.5	8.3
	Shared Transactional Services	6.7	84.9	8.4	9.5	88.8	1.7	11.1	57.4	15.7	15.7
	Transforming Bristol Portfolio	.0	100	0	8.3	91.7	0	18.2	63.6	9.1	9.1
	Finance	5.6	77.1	17.4	9.2	83.7	7.1	7.6	53.4	22.9	16.0
	Workforce Strategy	8.3	87.5	4.2	25.0	75.0	0	22.2	61.1	5.6	11.1
	Legal Services	4.2	90.1	5.6	7.0	91.5	1.4	10.6	50.0	33.3	6.1
	Overall Strategic Directorate	9.5	80.8	9.7	20.3	77.0	2.7	9.3	50.4	21.1	19.2
Public Health n = 3		33.3	66.7	0	33.3	66.7	0	50.0	50.0	0	0
	OVERALL	14.0	77.2	8.8	22.1	73.1	4.8	9.0	50.3	22.3	18.3

Table2a. Accrual and Taking of Flexi Leave by Who Services Predominantly Provided To show as percentages

Strategic Directorate	Respondents who Predominantly Provide Services To	Allowed to Accrue			Permitted to Take			Frequency of taking 1 day (if accrue 2 or more days)			
		1 day	2 days	>2 days	1 day	2 days	>2 days	Never	Someti mes	Often	Always or almost always
ALL	Public (n = 648)	14.8	75.9	9.3	20.0	73.8	6.2	6.8	47.6	23.9	21.7
	Other council employees (n= 575)	14.9	76.7	8.4	27.1	70.1	2.8	12.8	55.9	18.3	13.0
	Both (n = 660)	12.3	78.9	8.8	19.7	75.1	5.2	8.1	48.4	23.6	19.8
	OVERALL	14.0	77.2	8.8	22.1	73.1	4.8	9.0	50.3	22.3	18.3

Table 3. Responses to One Day Proposal from Managers

Impact	Response	Managers who allow to accrue 1 day (n = 63)	Managers who allow to accrue 2 days (n = 423)
It would be easier to ensure adequate staffing cover to maintain service delivery	Strongly agree	12.9	7.4
	agree	41.9	16.1
	Not sure	22.6	12.5
	disagree	19.4	38.4
	Strongly disagree	3.2	25.7
Staff would be less happy and less motivated	Strongly agree	16.1	51.4
	agree	30.6	27.1
	Not sure	16.1	10.2
	disagree	33.9	8.6
	Strongly disagree	3.2	2.6
Sickness absence levels would increase	Strongly agree	6.5	12.0
	agree	16.1	25.7
	Not sure	29.0	35.0
	disagree	40.3	21.6
	Strongly disagree	8.1	5.8
Staff retention levels would decrease	Strongly agree	1.6	11.2
	agree	13.1	27.8
	Not sure	31.1	33.5
	disagree	42.6	23.4
	Strongly disagree	11.5	4.1
It would be more difficult to attract staff	Strongly agree	1.6	15.3
	agree	32.3	32.5
	Not sure	21.0	25.4
	disagree	35.5	22.2
	Strongly disagree	9.7	4.5

Table 4. Responses to One Day Proposal from all staff as employees

Impact		Staff allowed to accrue 1 day (n = 261)	Staff allowed to accrue 2 days or more (n = 1599)
Increased costs for child minding/nursery	Strongly agree	5.9	11.3
	agree	5.0	6.8
	Not sure	15.5	10.1
	disagree	5.4	4.4
	Strongly disagree	2.9	1.4
	n/a	65.3	65.9
More time spent commuting/travelling time	Strongly agree	12.0	28.0
	agree	15.7	20.6
	Not sure	21.5	18.0
	disagree	9.9	6.9
	Strongly disagree	5.4	2.9
	n/a	35.5	23.6
Less flexibility within the working day around the school run	Strongly agree	10.8	16.8
	agree	7.9	10.1
	Not sure	14.6	9.0
	disagree	6.7	4.0
	Strongly disagree	3.3	1.4
	n/a	56.7	58.7
Less time for myself/my own interests	Strongly agree	19.3	45.5
	agree	27.3	26.8
	Not sure	20.2	14.3
	disagree	10.9	3.9
	Strongly disagree	4.6	2.6
	n/a	17.6	6.9
I don't believe there would be an impact	Strongly agree	11.7	5.9
	agree	20.1	8.1
	Not sure	20.1	11.2
	disagree	17.2	21.6
	Strongly disagree	15.9	47.8
	n/a	15.1	5.4
I would consider making a request for a formal work-life balance arrangement	Strongly agree	15.1	23.4
	agree	16.8	19.7
	Not sure	24.4	23.6
	disagree	10.1	10.1
	Strongly disagree	5.0	6.0
	n/a	28.6	17.3

Table 5. Responses to Two Day Proposal from Managers

Impact	Response	Managers who allow to accrue 1 day (n=63)	Managers who allow to accrue 2 days or more (n=423)
It would be difficult to ensure adequate staffing cover to maintain service delivery	Strongly agree	17.7	5.1
	agree	19.4	12.1
	Not sure	24.2	11.1
	disagree	29.0	47.7
	Strongly disagree	9.7	24.0
Staff would be happier and more motivated	Strongly agree	21.0	36.5
	agree	45.2	43.5
	Not sure	24.2	12.0
	disagree	9.7	6.3
	Strongly disagree	-	1.7
Sickness absence levels would decrease	Strongly agree	11.3	9.9
	agree	16.1	24.2
	Not sure	40.3	40.7
	disagree	30.6	22.3
	Strongly disagree	1.6	2.9
Staff retention levels would improve	Strongly agree	11.3	12.8
	agree	33.9	35.1
	Not sure	24.2	32.0
	disagree	25.8	18.2
	Strongly disagree	4.8	1.9
It would be an incentive to attract staff	Strongly agree	19.7	27.4
	agree	50.8	48.1
	Not sure	18.0	14.7
	disagree	9.8	8.4
	Strongly disagree	1.6	1.4
It would be more difficult for me to manage and monitor accrual arrangements	Strongly agree	6.5	3.9
	agree	22.6	8.9
	Not sure	21.0	10.9
	disagree	43.5	54.6
	Strongly disagree	6.5	21.7

Table 6. Responses to Two Day Proposal from all staff as employees

Impact		Staff allowed to accrue 1 day (n = 261)	Staff allowed to accrue 2 days or more (n = 1559)
Fewer costs for child minding/nursery	Strongly agree	8.1	11.2
	agree	7.2	8.2
	Not sure	16.6	11.1
	disagree	3.1	2.6
	Strongly disagree	1.8	1.1
	n/a	63.2	65.9
Less commuting/travelling time	Strongly agree	19.9	28.9
	agree	24.7	22.6
	Not sure	20.3	18.0
	disagree	4.8	5.6
	Strongly disagree	2.6	2.4
	n/a	27.7	22.5
Flexibility within the working day around the school run	Strongly agree	12.6	15.6
	agree	13.0	11.4
	Not sure	14.8	10.4
	disagree	3.1	2.0
	Strongly disagree	2.2	1.2
	n/a	54.3	59.4
More time for myself/my own interests	Strongly agree	29.7	45.1
	agree	40.3	29.6
	Not sure	15.7	13.1
	disagree	3.8	3.2
	Strongly disagree	2.5	1.8
	n/a	8.1	7.1
It would be difficult for me to manage my workload	Strongly agree	1.3	5.3
	agree	5.7	4.7
	Not sure	21.1	16.6
	disagree	34.2	25.9
	Strongly disagree	26.3	40.2
	n/a	11.4	7.3
I don't believe there would be an impact	Strongly agree	10.6	16.8
	agree	25.8	19.5
	Not sure	29.7	21.0
	disagree	16.9	14.1
	Strongly disagree	8.1	19.9
	n/a	8.9	8.7

Table 7. Managers Responses on Lieu Time by Service Directorate

Strategic Directorate	Service Directorate	Frequency Lieu Time used to Deliver Services				If Use then >15 hours use		Possible to Pay Overtime within existing budget	
		Never	Sometimes	Often	always/almost always	Yes	No	Yes	No
Deputy Chief Executive n = 8									
	One Council Communication	0	50.0	50.0	0	50.0	50.0	0	100.0
	Strategy and Performance	20.0	40.0	40.0	0	25.0	75.0	0	100.0
	Overall Strategic Directorate	12.5	37.5	50.0	0	42.9	57.1	0	100
Health and Social Care n = 47	Older People services	36.8	42.1	15.8	5.3	5.3	94.7	33.3	66.7
	Mental Health, Learning Difficulties & Disabled People	30.0	20.0	50.0	0	20.0	80.0	14.3	85.7
	Care Services	50.0	50.0	0	0	50.0	50.0	0	100
	Putting People First	33.3	58.3	8.3	0	8.3	91.7	0	100
	Overall Strategic Directorate	34.8	41.3	19.6	4.3	20.0	80.0	10.9	89.1
Children and Young People's Services n = 30	Inclusive and Learning Communities	50.0	.0	25.0	25.0	.0	100	.0	100.0
	Performance, Policy and Partnerships	50.0	50.0	0	0	0	0	50.0	50.0
	Safeguarding and Specialist Services	40.0	40.0	6.7	13.3	22.2	77.8	13.3	86.7
	Learning, Achievement and Schools	11.1	55.6	33.3	0	12.5	87.5	0	100
	Overall Strategic Directorate	33.3	40.0	16.7	10.0	15.0	85.0	10.0	90.0
City Development n = 103	Transport	10.0	66.7	23.3	.0	11.1	88.9	59.3	40.7
	Economic and Cultural Development	12.5	43.8	34.4	9.4	17.9	82.1	15.6	84.4
	Planning and Sustainable Development	48.1	40.7	11.1	0	14.3	85.7	3.8	96.2
	Major Projects	50.0	33.3	16.7	0	0	100	33.3	66.7
	Overall Strategic Directorate	26.2	48.5	22.3	2.9	13.2	86.8	26.3	73.7
Neighbourhoods n = 149	Safer Bristol	30.0	50.0	15.0	5.0	14.3	85.7	10.0	90.0
	Environmental and Leisure Services	21.7	47.8	30.4	.0	5.6	94.4	18.2	81.8
	Strategic Housing	44.4	51.1	.0	4.4	.0	100.	29.5	70.5
	Landlord Services	39.6	47.2	13.2	.0	12.5	87.5	28.0	72.0
	Neighbourhoods Development Unit	28.6	57.1	0	14.3	20.0	80.0	14.3	85.7
	Overall Strategic Directorate	36.5	49.3	11.5	2.7	8.5	91.5	23.8	76.2
Transformation , Resources n = 159	Integrated Customer Services	57.1	31.4	5.7	5.7	6.7	93.3	18.2	81.8
	Information, Communication and Technology	26.1	69.6	4.3	.0	5.9	94.1	47.8	52.2
	Shared Transactional Services	56.3	31.3	9.4	3.1	7.1	92.9	29.0	71.0
	Transforming Bristol Portfolio	66.7	33.3	.0	.0	.0	100	33.3	66.7
	Finance	50.0	39.5	7.9	2.6	10.5	89.5	10.5	89.5
	Workforce Strategy	14.3	71.4	14.3	.0	16.7	83.3	14.3	85.7
	Legal Services	18.8	68.8	6.3	6.3	7.7	92.3	33.3	66.7
	Overall Strategic Directorate	44.6	44.6	7.6	3.2	9.2	90.8	24.3	75.7
	OVERALL	36.2	46.1	14.2	3.5	12.1	87.9	22.0	78.0

Table 8. Employees Responses on Lieu Time by Service Directorate

Strategic Directorate	Service Directorate	Accrue Lieu Time		Hours May Accrue in Four Week Period			
		Yes	No	< 7.5	8 -15	16 - 25	>25
Deputy Chief Executive n = 41							
	One Council Communication	70.0	30.0	28.6	71.4	.0	0
	Strategy and Performance	42.9	57.1	58.3	16.7	25.0	0
	Overall Strategic Directorate	51.2	48.8	45.0	35.0	20.0	0
Health and Social Care n = 173	Older People services	26.8	73.2	31.6	42.1	21.1	5.3
	Mental Health, Learning Difficulties & Disabled People	50.0	50.0	40.9	36.4	22.7	0
	Care Services	27.8	72.2	40.0	40.0	20.0	0
	Putting People First	46.4	53.6	0	38.5	7.7	0
	Overall Strategic Directorate	37.1	62.9	41.3	39.7	17.5	1.6
Children and Young People's Services n = 115	Inclusive and Learning Communities	60.0	40.3	55.6	44.4	.0	.0
	Performance, Policy and Partnerships	12.5	87.5	100.0	.0	0	0
	Safeguarding and Specialist Services	47.8	52.2	53.1	31.3	9.4	6.3
	Learning, Achievement and Schools	63.6	36.4	21.4	50.0	14.3	14.3
	Overall Strategic Directorate	50.4	49.6	45.6	36.8	8.8	8.8
City Development n = 129	Transport	33.3	66.7	42.9	37.1	14.3	5.7
	Economic and Cultural Development	72.2	27.8	64.0	18.0	8.0	10.0
	Planning and Sustainable Development	20.5	79.5	60.9	26.1	13.0	0
	Major Projects	32.7	67.3	28.6	57.1	0	14.3
	Overall Strategic Directorate	36.4	63.6	53.3	29.5	9.8	7.4
Neighbourhoods n = 596	Safer Bristol	39.1	60.9	44.0	36.0	16.0	4.0
	Environmental and Leisure Services	50.9	49.1	63.5	19.2	7.7	9.6
	Strategic Housing	13.0	87.0	56.5	34.8	0	8.7
	Landlord Services	31.3	68.7	53.8	28.8	7.7	9.6
	Neighbourhoods Development Unit	35.1	64.9	41.7	41.7	16.7	0
	Overall Strategic Directorate	30.5	69.5	54.2	29.5	8.4	7.8
Transformation , Resources n = 102	Integrated Customer Services	17.2	82.8	33.3	57.1	9.5	.0
	Information, Communication and Technology	26.3	73.7	42.9	33.3	14.3	9.5
	Shared Transactional Services	15.3	84.7	58.8	23.5	5.9	11.8
	Transforming Bristol Portfolio	16.7	83.3	100	0	0	0
	Finance	9.8	90.2	41.7	41.7	16.7	0
	Workforce Strategy	16.7	83.3	25.0	75.0	0	0
	Legal Services	22.2	77.8	60.0	33.3	6.7	0
	Overall Strategic Directorate	17.0	83.0	46.2	39.8	9.7	4.3
	OVERALL	29.6	70.4	49.6	33.6	10.7	6.1

Table 9. Managers WLB

Service Directorate	How many Staff have Work Life Balance Arrangement				If have Work life Balance arrangement able to:	
	All	Half	< Half	None	Adjust start and finish time within core hours	Take flexi leave
One Council Communication	0.0	50.0	50.0	0.0	50.0	100.0
Strategy and Performance	0.0	0.0	40.0	60.0	100.0	100.0
Deputy Chief Executive	0.0	12.5	50.0	37.5	80.0	100.0
Older People services	21.1	15.8	36.8	20.0	100.0	78.6
Mental Health, Learning Difficulties & Disabled People	20.0	20.0	40.0	50.0	85.7	87.5
Care Services	0.0	0.0	50.0	25.0	100.0	100.0
Putting People First	8.3	16.7	50.0	0.0	100.0	100.0
Health and Social Care	17.4	15.2	39.1	28.3	96.8	87.5
Inclusive and Learning Communities	0.0	0.0	50.0	50.0	100.0	100.0
Performance, Policy and Partnerships	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0
Safeguarding and Specialist Services	0.0	46.7	6.7	46.7	75.0	87.5
Learning, Achievement and Schools	11.1	11.1	22.2	55.6	100.0	100.0
Children and Young People's Services	3.3	26.7	16.7	53.3	85.7	85.7
Transport	0.0	3.3	63.3	33.3	75.0	85.0
Economic and Cultural Development	3.1	3.1	28.1	65.6	90.9	90.9
Planning and Sustainable Development	0.0	11.1	40.7	48.1	53.8	92.9
Major Projects	0.0	8.3	33.3	58.3	100.0	100.0
City Development	1.0	5.8	42.7	50.5	70.6	90.2
Safer Bristol	20.0	0.0	60.0	20.0	100.0	100.0
Environmental and Leisure Services	8.7	4.3	47.8	39.1	92.9	100.0
Strategic Housing	0.0	28.9	51.1	20.0	94.3	100.0
Landlord Services	7.8	7.8	60.8	23.5	83.8	86.8
Neighbourhoods Development Unit	0.0	28.6	28.6	42.9	100.0	100.0
Neighbourhoods	6.8	13.7	54.1	25.3	87.2	93.6
Integrated Customer Services	0.0	0.0	74.3	25.7	65.4	84.6
Information, Communication & Technology	0.0	8.7	47.8	43.5	91.7	84.6
Shared Transactional Services	0.0	12.5	56.3	31.3	85.7	85.0
Transforming Bristol Portfolio	0.0	33.3	33.3	33.3	100.0	100.0
Finance	2.6	21.1	52.6	23.7	78.6	96.6
Workforce Strategy	0.0	28.6	42.9	28.6	80.0	80.0
Legal Services	6.3	6.3	56.3	31.3	88.9	100.0
Transformation, Resources	1.3	12.1	56.7	29.9	76.4	88.2
OVERALL	4.5	12.4	48.8	34.3	85.0	91.8

Table 10. Employees Responses on Work Life Balance by Service Directorate

Strategic Directorate	Service Directorate	Currently have Work Life Balance Arrangement	
		Yes	No
Deputy Chief Executive n = 41		Yes	No
	One Council Communication	50.0	50.0
	Strategy and Performance	25.0	75.0
	Overall Strategic Directorate	31.7	68.3
Health and Social Care n = 173	Older People services	25.4	74.6
	Mental Health, Learning Difficulties & Disabled People	45.5	54.5
	Care Services	22.2	77.8
	Putting People First	53.6	46.4
	Overall Strategic Directorate	36.5	63.5
Children and Young People's Services n = 115	Inclusive and Learning Communities	26.7	73.3
	Performance, Policy and Partnerships	50.0	50.0
	Safeguarding and Specialist Services	36.8	63.2
	Learning, Achievement and Schools	31.8	68.2
	Overall Strategic Directorate	35.1	64.9
City Development n = 129	Transport	18.7	81.3
	Economic and Cultural Development	16.7	83.3
	Planning and Sustainable Development	16.4	83.6
	Major Projects	22.4	77.6
	Overall Strategic Directorate	18.1	81.9
Neighbourhoods n = 596	Safer Bristol	26.1	73.9
	Environmental and Leisure Services	19.1	80.9
	Strategic Housing	29.2	70.8
	Landlord Services	15.9	84.1
	Neighbourhoods Development Unit	29.7	70.3
	Overall Strategic Directorate	23.0	77.0
Transformation , Resources n = 102	Integrated Customer Services	10.7	89.3
	Information, Communication & Technology	23.2	76.8
	Shared Transactional Services	20.3	79.7
	Transforming Bristol Portfolio	25.0	75.0
	Finance	29.9	70.1
	Workforce Strategy	20.8	79.2
	Legal Services	20.8	79.2
	Overall Strategic Directorate	21.2	78.8
OVERALL			

Discussion

Response Rates

Examination of Table 1 shows a varied and wide ranging response rate from both Strategic and Service Directorates. Whilst Strategic Directorate responses were low overall, rates from some Service Directorates were high (eg CYPS 8.8% overall, whilst Inclusive and Learning Communities was 83.3%).

Overall response rates were noticeably low for Health and Social Care (8.6%) and Children and Young People's Services (8.8%). In particular, Care Services had a 1.2% response and Safeguarding and Specialist Services had 8.8%.

It is suggested that care be exercised in using findings from Service Directorates with a low response rate.

Accrual and Taking of Flexi Leave

Examination of Table 2 shows that the vast majority of Service Directorates allow the accrual of 2 days flexi leave. Overall 77.2% say they allow 2 days (range 36.6 - 94.2).

Most allow 2 days to be taken (73.1% overall) although there were notable exceptions to this eg ICT in Transformation (23.7%).

If 2 days or more allowed then most took these 'sometimes' (50.3% overall) or 'often' (22.3%). Deputy Chief Executives used this most and Health and Social Care the least.

Table 2a shows a similarity of 'days allowed to accrue', 'days permitted to take' and 'frequency of taking' between respondents who provide to 'the public', 'other council employees' and 'both'. All were of the same order as the overall figures shown below:

- 14% 1 day allowed, 77.2% 2 days allowed, 8.8% >2 days allowed
- 22.1% permitted to take 1 day, 73.2% 2 days, 4.8% >2 days
- 9% take never, 50.3% sometimes, 22.3% often, 18.3% always

Response from Managers to the 'One Day Proposal'

Table 3 shows the responses to the impact:

1. *'It would be easier to ensure adequate staff cover to maintain service delivery'*
For those who allow 1 day accrual there was ambivalence whilst those who allow 2 days to be accrued were mainly in disagreement
2. *'Staff would be less happy and less motivated'*
For those who allow 1 day accrual there was ambivalence whilst those who allow 2 days to be accrued were mainly in agreement
3. *'Sickness absence levels would increase'*
For those who allow 1 day accrual there was mainly agreement whilst those who allow 2 days to be accrued were mainly ambivalent
4. *'Staff retention levels would decrease'*
For those who allow 1 day accrual there was mainly disagreement whilst those who allow 2 days to be accrued were mainly ambivalent
5. *'It would be more difficult to attract staff'*

For those who allow 1 day accrual there was divided opinion. Those who allow 2 days to be accrued were also divided in their opinion.

Response from All Respondents to the 'One Day Proposal'

Table 4. shows the responses to the impact:

1. *Increased costs for child minding/nursery*
For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual most were unaffected. Similarly most of those whose managers allow 2 days were unaffected. However slightly more of those who were allowed 2 days were in agreement.
2. *More time spent commuting/travelling time*
For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual most were either unaffected or unsure. Most of those whose managers allow 2 days were in agreement.
3. *Less flexibility within the working day around the school run*
For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual most were unaffected. Similarly most of those whose managers allow 2 days were unaffected. However slightly more of those who were allowed 2 days were in agreement.
4. *Less time for myself/my own interests*
For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual most were in agreement. Noticeably more of those whose managers allow 2 days were in strong agreement.
5. *I don't believe there would be an impact*
For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual there was divided opinion. However the majority of those whose managers allow 2 days were in strong disagreement.
6. *I would consider making a request for a formal work-life balance arrangement*
For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual there was divided opinion. However the majority of those whose managers allow 2 days were in agreement.

Response from Managers to the 'Two Day Proposal'

Table 5 shows the responses to the impact:

6. *It would be more difficult to ensure adequate staff cover to maintain service delivery'*
For those who allow 1 day accrual there were more in agreement whilst those who allow 2 days to be accrued were mainly in disagreement
7. *Staff would be more happy and less motivated*
For those who allow 1 day accrual there were more in agreement whilst those who allow 2 days to be accrued were mainly in strong agreement
8. *Sickness absence levels would decrease*
For those who allow 1 day accrual there was mainly agreement whilst those who allow 2 days to be accrued were mainly ambivalent
9. *Staff retention levels would improve*
For those who allow 1 day accrual there was divided opinion. Similarly those who allow 2 days to be accrued had divided opinion.
10. *It would be an incentive to attract staff*

For those who allow 1 day accrual most were in agreement. Similarly most of those who allow 2 days to be accrued were in agreement.

11. *It would be more difficult for me to manage and monitor accrual arrangements*

For those who allow 1 day accrual most were in disagreement. Similarly most of those who allow 2 days to be accrued were in disagreement.

Response from All Respondents to the 'Two Day Proposal'

Table 6. shows the responses to the impact:

7. *Fewer costs for child minding/nursery*

For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual most were unaffected. Similarly most of those whose managers allow 2 days were unaffected. However slightly more of those who were allowed 2 days were in strong agreement.

8. *Less time spent commuting/travelling time*

For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual most were in agreement. Most of those whose managers allow 2 days were were in agreement.

9. *Flexibility within the working day around the school run*

For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual most were unaffected. Similarly most of those whose managers allow 2 days were unaffected.

10. *More time for myself/my own interests*

For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual most were in agreement. Noticeably more of those whose managers allow 2 days were in strong agreement.

11. *It would be difficult for me to manage my workload*

For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual most were in disagreement. However the majority of those whose managers allow 2 days were in strong disagreement.

12. *I don't believe there would be an impact*

For those whose managers allow 1 day accrual there was divided opinion but more were in agreement. Similarly for those whose managers allow 2 days most were in agreement.

Managers Responses on Lieu Time by Service Directorate

Examination of Table 7 shows a similarity between Strategic Directorate on the use of lieu time to deliver services: 36.2% 'never', 46.1% 'sometimes', 14.2% 'often' and 3.5% 'always'. However there are exception within Service Directorates reflecting both higher and lower usage (eg Economic and Cultural Development and Integrated Customer Services)

If lieu time is used, the vast majority of strategic and service directorates do not use more than 15 hours.

Most Service Directorates say they are unable to absorb lieu time by paying overtime within existing budgets.

All Responses on Lieu Time by Service Directorate

Examination of Table 8. shows that overall the majority of staff (83%) do not accrue lieu time. However this does vary across the Service and Strategic Directorates. Of those that do accrue,

most either accrue <7.5 hours or between 8 and 15 hours (46.2% and 39.85 respectively). Again there are variations between Service Directors.

Managers Response on Work life Balance

Examination of Table 9. shows that most managers say most of their staff do not have an agreed work life balance arrangement. 48.8% say less than half and 34.3 % say none. Again there is Service Directorate variation.

Of those managers who say their staff have an arrangement the vast majority say that staff are allowed to Adjust start and finish time within core hours (85%) and Take flexi leave (91.8%).

All Responses on Work life Balance

Examination of Table 10 shows that the vast majority of staff (78.8%) say that they do not have an agreed work life balance arrangement. Again there were wide Service Directorate variations.

Draft

Equalities Impact Assessment For Policy Review Corporate Flexitime Scheme

Identify the aims of the policy/service/function and how it is implemented

1.1 Is this an existing or a new policy / function?

Answer

- This is an existing policy, adopted in 2001 and last reviewed in 2006
- On the 20th October 2008 the Workforce Development Strategy Group raised the council's Flexitime Scheme as being in need of a review. Problems have arisen in relation to divisions moving to different departments, exposing inconsistencies around such issues as core hours, entitlement to carrying over lieu days, and different arrangements for part time/job share employees. These changes date from historic differences in schemes between Bristol District Council, and Avon County Council. Further variations in departmental practice have arisen since. The council's Flexitime Scheme covers minimum provision only, and is too loose given more recent flexible working, etc.
- On the 22 Jan 2009 the issue was raised at HRMT. The SLT has also asked for a review. They are concerned about different rules operating in different directorates now that working groups are being brought together under NWoW

1.2 What is the aim, objective or purpose of the policy/ service/ function?

Answer

- This scheme is an integral part of the council's declared intention of having a flexible approach to employment practices, linked to service improvements.

1.3 What outcomes do you want to achieve with this policy / function and for whom?

Answer

For the organisation: Having a flexible approach to employment practices, linked to service improvements. Management must ensure that work is carried out effectively and service delivery maintained. At times it will be necessary to vary the attendance hours of employees to meet the needs of the section/department within the standard day, and this condition is implicit in the flexitime scheme. It may even be necessary to operate a rota to maintain cover on a regular basis

For employees: Flexibility to adapt start / finish / break times to respond to peaks and troughs in workload in a flexible way. There is an acknowledgement that in some parts the flexitime scheme is being used inappropriately to supplement annual leave

For service users: To extend access to quality services by having service cover over longer hours. To experience on going service improvements

1.4 Who is the policy/function being aimed at / who are the main stakeholders?

Answer

- In principle, every post in the City Council, whether existing or new, will be considered

- suitable to be covered by flexitime working.
- Managers are stakeholders in so far as they manage teams who use the Flexi-scheme
- Strategic Directors are stakeholders by virtue of the fact that they have discretionary powers to amend bandwidths and core hours within their areas of work to support business objectives
- Trade unions/staff are stakeholders as consultees on proposed variations to the Flexi-time scheme
- Service users - in so far as they should ideally benefit and at worst see no service reduction as a result of the implementation of the scheme
- The City Council's support of flexitime is based on the premise that there will be no significant loss of efficiency or decrease in the level of service provided. On this basis, there may be genuine operational reasons for excluding certain posts.

Action

- Any proposed changes to the scheme must be consulted upon with the SLT, Trade unions and staff on behalf of their members.

1.5 Who defines or defined the policy / function? How much room for manoeuvre is there?

Answer

- The flexitime scheme can be applied throughout the Council, where flexitime is worked on the basis that it is compatible with or supplements, other flexible working arrangements
- This is a corporate scheme, However currently the Strategic Directors can, subject to appropriate consultations with the recognised trade unions and staff involved, vary details of the corporate scheme to meet essential operational/service delivery requirements.
- Each Strategic Director currently also has discretion to vary the length of bandwidths and core times set out in this scheme, by agreement with the staff/unions or through special arrangements under the work life balance policy
- The proposal for the revised scheme is to remove the discretion afforded to Strategic Directors to vary the explicit provisions of the scheme in order that all staff covered by the scheme are subject to the same provisions.

Action

- In work areas where teams have been brought together exposing inconsistencies around such issues as core hours, entitlement to carrying over lieu days, and different arrangements for part time/job share employees, service managers will need to review the arrangements in consultation with the trade unions and staff to ensure that any variations are objectively justifiable and support business need. These reviews must also consider the equality of treatment between part time and full time staff and employees working job share. Where agreement can not be reached the corporate flexi-scheme should apply

1.6 Who implements the policy function? Is it possible for bias/prejudice to creep into the process?

Answer

- Service managers and Strategic Directors implement the scheme. Some local variations to the corporate scheme will have been agreed in consultation with trade unions
- It is possible for bias / prejudice to creep into the process where managers use the scheme as a reward tool for staff rather than a business driven scheme. For example, staff should only accrue flexi time where there is an evidenced need for them to work additional hours within the band range for the achievement of a specific task or piece of work. However, it is recognised that often employees aim to accrue flexi hours in order to supplement their leave entitlement

- Some managers are more 'generous' than others around the issue of carrying +/- hours from one month to the next. Anomalies range from being able to carry over 20+ hours to 7.5 and a debit range from 15 to 7
- Core hours vary from 08:30 to 10:00 hours start time and 15:00 to 16:30 hours finish time

Action

- Following this review of the scheme - managers and employees to be informed of the changes and reminded of the scope of the scheme - via Source article and dissemination via HR managers / Assistant managers and advisers
- Identified anomalies - where current arrangements can not be objectively justified and where there is no business need for the arrangement will be realigned with the corporate scheme

1.7 How do these outcomes (see 1.3) meet or hinder other policies, values or objectives of the public authority

Answer

- There are links between the flexi time scheme and the New Ways of Working policy, the Work Life Balance Policy the recruitment and selection policy and retention
- New Ways of Working: the NWOW policy encourages flexible ways of working with particular regard to where the work is being undertaken. Use of the flexitime scheme allows of greater desk sharing and maximisation of available resources where employee's hours span a wider bandwidth rather than concurring over a shorter period of time
- Work Life Balance Policy: This policy enables employees to make a formal application for longer term flexible working arrangements rather than relying on the flexi-scheme. The provisions of the flexi scheme will not apply.
- Recruitment and Selection Policy: Flexi time is attractive to new recruits as well as acting as a retention tool - as not all employers offer flexi time systems

Action

- Ensure that all flexible working arrangements (including WLB) are reviewed, in conjunction with TUs/Staff, to ensure that these support effective service delivery.

1.8 What factors or forces are at play that could contribute or detract from the outcomes identified in 1.3?

Answer

- Manager's wish to retain the flexi-scheme patterns they have agreed could detract from implementing an effective scheme which supports service delivery.
- Potential conflict between the views of the scheme as a business driven versus an employee benefit
- Employees wishing to retain the flexi time scheme arrangements which they are currently operating to
- Loss of 'flexibility' through assimilation of staff onto the corporate scheme
- Potential strategic move towards a 24/7 operating system which would require review of numerous policies including a review of bandwidths and core hours
- One Council' approach to service delivery suggests that similarities in bandwidth and core hours should prevail

Action

- Proposed changes to the scheme to be consulted upon as necessary

1.9 Consider if any of the six equalities groups have particular needs relevant to the policy.

Answer

In principle, every post in the City Council, whether existing or new, will be considered suitable to be covered by flexitime working. However, the scheme excludes certain groups of workers. Examples include: Shift workers, JNC 1st and 2nd Tier staff and employees in locally managed schools

- BME: Unaware of any particular needs with regards to this policy
- LGB: Unaware of any particular needs with regards to this policy
- Age: Young people who join BCC will often have lower levels of annual leave entitlement due to a lack of continuous service. This may make the flexi-time scheme especially attractive to them for the purposes of supplementing their ability to take paid days off work
- Disability: some employees may use arrangements outside core hours as reasonable adjustments - starting later in the day for example to allow more time to get ready or to have longer breaks at certain stages of the day to attend to their specific needs
- Religion & belief: Flexi-time allows greater flexibility around the observation of religious ceremonies and prayer time
- Gender: Women often benefit disproportionately from flexi schemes to attend to child care. Conversely, women are more likely to be in posts (eg caring positions or school based posts) where flexi time does not apply due to service needs.
- Part time and job share posts are often held by women. In one part of HSC flexitime does not apply to job share or part time posts. This could have a disproportionate impact on women

The flexi time scheme does not apply to Culture and Leisure (Neighbourhoods) front of house and operations staff in museums who work to a rota and to cems and crems staff who work standard hours. Library front line and branch library staff are also excluded as are Docks staff. Furthermore it doesn't apply to PTSD staff in parking services, Licensing and some employees in street lighting

Not applicable to NHS staff in Emergency Control, Scheme Managers in services to Older People, Caretaking, some of Waste Ops. Limited application in A2B and CSPs.

YOT practitioner staff are also excluded

Or staff with fixed WLB arrangements in local tax

1.10 Taking the six strands of equalities is there anything in the policy that could discriminate or disadvantage any of these groups?

Answer

- BME: Scheme thought to be impact neutral for this equality group
- LGB: Scheme thought to be impact neutral for this equality group
- Age: Restricting the amount of 'carry over' of flexi-time may disproportionately impact on some young people where flexi time has been used to supplement annual leave
- Disability: restricting access to flexi-time scheme for some work groups may impact disproportionately on some disabled employees- although reasonable adjustments may address this outside of the scheme
- Religion & Belief: Some core hour boundaries may conflict with set prayer times
- Gender: The exclusion of some work groups from the scheme will have a disproportionate impact on women and men depending on the work group. Overall, more women are likely to be excluded from the scheme by virtue of the type of work which they undertake

1.11 From your perspective, how does or will the policy actually work in practice for each equalities group?

Answer

- For the majority of staff across BCC the flexi-time scheme offers the opportunity to enhance business and personal life requirements .
- The scheme contains an appeals process which all staff can use if they feel that they are being unfairly treated with regards to the flexi time scheme
- See above for anticipated impact on different equality groups

Action

- Service delivery needs are paramount, however, specific needs/difficulties arising from any change in the flexi-scheme entitlement should be considered during consultation.

Consideration of available data, research and information

2.1 What do you already know about who uses and delivers this scheme?

Answer

- The 2006 exit questionnaire analysis showed that 7.83% of voluntary leavers listed flexible working as the aspect of their job which they enjoyed the most. In 2007 the figure rose to 13%
- See http://intranet.bcc.lan/ccm/cms-service/stream/asset/?asset_id=1718423 for the employee survey results (page 8 relates to work life balance)
- See appendix A (Flexi time scheme variations)

Action

- Investigate the possibility of having flexitime scheme users' information entered systematically against the individual post on the HR database? Identify whether there is there a dedicated field for this in Vision?

2.2 What quantitative data do you already have?

Answer

- See above
- SNAP Survey (Appendix A to HR Committee Report December 2010)

2.3 What additional information is needed to ensure that all equality groups' needs are taken into account? Do you need to collect more data, carry out consultation at this stage?

Answer

- The Snap survey proved very informative. Additional information should be considered through consultation with individual service areas.

Action

- Service Directors to ensure adequate consultation with staff/tus through DJCC

Assessment of Impact

3.1 Have you identified any differential impact on any group and does this

adversely affect any groups in the workforce?

Answer

- Depending on the post women can be both winners and losers under the scheme as they are more likely to need / want flexible working arrangements to fit in with caring responsibilities, but they are also more likely to be in posts which are excluded from using the scheme due to their front line nature / operational needs
- Disabled employees may benefit from the scheme to allow them more flexible start / finish times and break times during the working day.
- Disabled employees will be able to request flexible ways of working - including a flexi time system as a reasonable adjustment under the DDA provision
- The scheme allows for local variations to be applied in response to business need

Worklife Balance options can be sought by all staff.

3.2 Is the policy directly or indirectly discriminatory

Answer

- No

Action

- N/A

3.3 If there is an adverse impact can it be avoided, can we make changes, can we lessen it etc?

Answer

- There is not necessarily an adverse impact on any specific equality group, but there are current inconsistencies which need to be removed to ensure fair treatment for all

Action

- The implementation of the corporate scheme council-wide utilising appropriate discretion to ensure service delivery is efficient will mean that some staff will operate on a slightly different allocation (one or two days flexi). Employees may make a formal work life balance request to accommodate their specific needs.

3.4 Does the policy meet any particular needs identified for any of the equalities groups?

Answer

- Flexibility for women and men with caring duties and flexibility for disabled employees. Potentially, flexibility for those wishing to carry out religious observations during the working day

Action

- If there is a decrease in flexi entitlement, staff may make a formal work life balance request.

3.5 Are there additional measures that could be adopted to further equality of opportunity in the context of this policy/service/function?

Action

- Ensure regular review of posts excluded from the flexi time scheme to ensure that the justifications are still valid
- Review scheme and local variations regularly to ensure that discretions are being applied

appropriately and consistently

Formal Consultation

4.1 Who do we need to consult with

Answer

- Strategic HR Group
- Trade unions
- Self Organised groups

Action

- Report to SHRG May 2009
- Report to TUs June 2009
- Report to Self Organised Groups June 2009

4.2 What method / form of consultation can be used?

Answer

- DJCC

Monitoring

5.1 Who will carry out monitoring?

Answer

- Employee Relations
- HR managers
- Corporate consultation

Action

- Periodic review

5.2 What needs to be monitored?

Answer

- relevance of the scheme's objectives in line with corporate business drivers
- any disproportionate dissatisfaction / appeals from equality groups
- staff satisfaction

Action

- See answer above

5.3 What method(s) of monitoring?

Answer

- Monitor suitability of the scheme in line with changing business needs and alignment with other policies such as the WLB policy and NWoW
- Monitor appeals submitted under the WLB policy
- Monitor staff satisfaction with flexible working

Action

- Periodic review of policy
- Analysis of appeals against flexi time scheme issues by equality group
- Analysis of staff satisfaction survey

- Analysis of exit questionnaire responses

5.4 How will the monitoring information be published?

Answer

- Through the equality impact assessment and periodic reports to HRMT and / or TU officers meetings

Action

-

Key changes in the flexi time scheme

6.1 What are the key changes between the existing policy and the proposed one

The changes approved by HR Committee in July are summarised as follows:

- i) Harmonising core hours as being 10:00 to 15:00 hours. Some departments currently have core hours which commence at 09:30 hours, which can cause starting time difficulties for employees with children;
- ii) Extending the bandwidth hours, to cover the 'gap' in hours which also fall outside WAP;
- iii) The 'carry over hours' will continue to be a maximum of 15 credit hours and 7.5 debit hours.
- iv) On a one off basis, and for a specific operational reasons, a line manager may authorise the accrual of hours in excess of 15 hours and the carry forward of these hours for a further 3 accounting periods within which the excess credited time must all be taken, in line with the provisions of the flexi scheme. Managers also have discretion to pay additional hours in line with the Working Arrangements Policy.
- v) Greater clarity has been provided regarding the application of the scheme for part time workers, where the flexitime provisions should be applied on a pro rata basis, council-wide.
- vi) The revised policy addressed the existing ambiguity between 'flexi leave and time off in lieu', with both being included with the revised arrangement for credit and debit hours.
- vii) Where an employee elects to work flexible arrangements under the Worklife Balance Policy, the agreed arrangements will supercede the provisions contained within the flexi policy.

HR Committee (December) will consider the proposal that up to two days flexi may be provided within the scheme, subject to departmental review to decide whether one or two days is appropriate.

- viii) Harmonise flexi-leave ("lieu days") on the basis of a maximum of 1 day per 4 week period. Additional credit hours up to a maximum of 15 hours can be carried over from one accounting period to the next. Currently some directorates/sections operate a maximum of one lieu day (in accordance with the existing provisions of the scheme), whereas others permit two lieu days per accounting period.

6.2 Is there any anticipated disproportionate impact on any of the six equalities groups from these specific changes?
--

BME: TBC

LGB:

Age:

Disability:

Religion& Belief:

Gender:

Action

EIA Draft Action Plan (based on 1.9 - 1.11 & 3.1 & 3.5)

Action	Lead	Timescale	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SH, BW and HC to prepare draft report for Head of HR to consider 	BW, SH, HC	23 February 2009.	done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper to WDMG to review flexitime policy, addressing: primary purpose(s) of flexitime scheme relationship between WLB and flexitime scheme whether we need one Council-wide flexitime scheme whether we need scheme with standardised core hours; and consider common bandwidth, and business-driven exceptions implications of recent regulatory/statutory changes re employees' right to ask for flexible working implications where contracts currently provide for flexitime 	BW, SH	by 2 March for meeting on 10 March 2009	done
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any proposed changes to the scheme must be consulted upon with the Trade unions on behalf of their members. 	BW/ AS	Report to TUs 19June 09	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult on any proposed changes with the relevant equality groups 	BW/ AS	Report to Self Organised Circulated w/c1June09. For comments by 19 th June.	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any staff who are working to variations of the corporate flexitime scheme will need to be consulted on the implications of council-wide reversion to the provisions of the corporate scheme (eg. Reversion to 1day per month maximum flexi leave, from 2 days discretionary) 	SNAP Survey .	October 2009	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement new Flexi Scheme Policy through consultation with TUs/staff. 	DJCC	January - March 2010	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor impact through periodic review, appeals process, exit questionnaire responses and staff satisfaction survey. Information provided ad hoc from the self organised groups will be used to inform any review of the scheme in the future and the associated EqIA 	STS	January onwards	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate the possibility of having flexitime scheme users' information entered systematically against the individual post on the HR database? Identify whether there is there a dedicated 			

field for this in Vision?			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure regular review of posts excluded from the flexi time scheme to ensure that the justifications are still valid			



CORPORATE FLEXITIME SCHEME

Correct at: 1 April 2010

Author & Owner: **Employee Relations**

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Date Adopted: August 2001

History of most recent Policy Changes – **Must be completed**

Date	Page	Change	Origin of Change (e.g. TU request, change in legislation etc)
August 01	All	Revised	
August 06		Time off for medical appointment updated	
12 October 06	All	Reviewed	
December 09	All	Council-wide review of Flexi Scheme	

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1. Statement of Intent

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This scheme is an integral part of the council's declared intention of having a flexible approach to working hours. The Scheme aims to enhance service delivery by varying the attendance hours of employees to meet the needs of the section/department within the standard day. For all other formalised arrangements, please refer to the Work Life Balance Policy.

2. Basis of Scheme

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- 2.1 This is a corporate scheme which allows up to two days flexi to be accrued and taken within a flexi period (four weeks). It is at the discretion of the Service Director whether one day or two days are allowed, based on service delivery needs. Please note that arrangements will be periodically reviewed and may need to be modified in line with changes to service delivery. If amendment of the allowance is necessary this will be done with reasonable notice, subject to appropriate consultations with the recognised trade unions and staff involved.
- 2.2 Management must ensure that work is carried out effectively and service delivery maintained. At times it will be necessary to vary the attendance hours of employees to meet the needs of the section/department within the standard day, and this condition is implicit in the flexitime scheme. It may even be necessary to operate a rota to maintain cover on a regular basis.
- 2.3 Any queries or requests for further information on flexitime working arrangements should be addressed to the Shared Transactional Service.

3. Eligibility and Exemption

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3.1 Eligibility

In principle, every post in the City Council, whether existing or new, will be considered suitable to be covered by flexitime working.

Where a part time or job share employee's contract of employment includes working during core hours as agreed by the employing department, the employee may be eligible for the flexitime scheme subject to the exigencies of the service and with the prior agreement of their line manager.

3.2 Exemption

The City Council's support of flexitime is based on the premise that there will be no significant loss of efficiency or decrease in the level of service provided. On this basis, there may be genuine operational reasons for excluding certain posts.

Examples include:-

- shift workers;
- where an employee's contract requires them to work specific hours for operational reasons and these cannot be varied without detriment to the service;
- where an employee elects to work specific flexible arrangements under

the [Work-life Balance Policy](#)

- posts dealing directly with the public, where staffing levels do not allow flexi-time working without eroding the service provision.
- JNC 1st and 2nd tier staff
- employees in locally managed schools

3.3 If a post is to be designated as 'unsuitable', this should be done solely on the grounds of operational efficiency/service delivery requirements and must be done before it is advertised. The establishment of unsuitability will be the responsibility of Directors (2nd tier officers) within departments who will take into account such factors as the nature of the duties undertaken and the degree of continuity required, service delivery/efficiency, the impact on other members of staff and members of the public, committee requirements and the need to respond to external timetables (eg court attendance).

3.4 Service Directors will advise the staff involved and trade union representatives in advance when a post is not suitable to be covered by flexitime working. In the event of the matter not being agreed or resolved, an appeal may be lodged using the appeals procedure as set out in the [Work-life Balance Policy](#).

4. Provisions of the Scheme

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4.1 Bandwidth and Core Times

Bandwidths will be from 0700 to 2000 hours Monday to Friday which will apply where standard hours are worked. Where departments introduce flexible working, these bandwidths may no longer be applicable, and each Chief Officer will have discretion to vary the length of bandwidths set out in this scheme, by agreement with the staff/unions. Where weekend or evening working is introduced, it may be appropriate to determine new bandwidths, appropriate to the service area.

Core times are those hours each day when all employees must be present at work. Under the Corporate flexitime scheme for employees working a standard day, they are from 10.00 to 3.00 hours.

4.2 Meal / rest arrangements

A minimum of 30 minutes for meal/rest breaks must be allowed for in any working period greater than 4 hours, to be taken at a suitable period in the working session to meet operational requirements. The timing of the break shall be determined by management taking account of the minimum number of employees that must be present at any one time during the rest breaks for service delivery reasons. Employees should not be expected to be present at the work-station during their break.

4.3 Qualifying / Accounting hours

For accounting purposes, flexitime periods shall be of four weeks' duration. The qualifying/ accounting period is the time within which employees must complete their contractual hours (eg if employees are contracted to work 37 hours per week, they will have to clock-up 148 hours on the flexitime scheme in a four-weekly accounting period). The number of qualifying hours will be reduced for part time employees, on

a pro rata basis, against a standard 37 hour week.

4.4 Credit / Debit hours /Flexi-leave

Flexi leave may be taken in respect of credit time built up by the end of the accounting period up to a maximum of two working day per four-week period. Such leave may only be taken at a mutually convenient time, and by prior agreement with the line manager.

As stated in Section 2.1 above, the level of flexi-leave permitted is at the discretion of the Service Director, based upon service needs. The maximum number of flexi-days per month is two. The timing of flexi-leave is determined by the Service Manager, taking into account:

- the size of the teams
- the level of vacancies/sickness absence
- the incidence of employees undertaking non-standard working hours under worklife balance arrangements
- workload priorities/deadlines

Flexi leave may be accrued on a pro-rata basis for part-time staff. Managers may exercise discretion to enable part-time workers to take a full day's leave providing that part-time workers are not generally treated more favourably than full-time staff. The number of hours to be deducted from the total number of hours worked in the period to cover the flexi leave taken will be commensurate with the number of hours which should have been worked during that day. (e.g. 7.5 hours Monday-Thursday, 7 hours Friday for employees working a standard day, or 9 hours for someone who was scheduled to work 8.30-6.30 under a work-life balance arrangement.)

Responsibility for ensuring that sufficient entitlement for flexi-leave exists must rest with the employee (not with the supervisor or person authorising the leave).

Responsibility for determining when flexi-leave can be taken, rests with management. Adequate systems should exist to ensure that managers can monitor flexi time.

Employees subject to the Corporate Flexitime Scheme may carry over a maximum of 15 hours credit or 15 hours debit from one qualifying/accounting period to the next, with a pro rata entitlement for part time employees. Flexi-time accrued in excess of this maximum will be lost or by agreement with departmental management, paid as overtime, (subject to the Council's Overtime Policy). Management and employees are reminded of the Working Time Directive, and hours in excess of 48 per week will not qualify as accrued hours for flexitime.

Time off will be allowed prior to having been accrued subject to the credit or debit limits not having been exceeded by the end of the accounting period.

Where employees transfer from one department to another, eg Personnel Employment Agency staff, or through promotion, they will not normally be permitted to carry forward 'credit' or debit time from one department to another. Credit time must be taken, or paid as overtime, and all debit hours must be cleared before the transfer date. Employees transferring from one department to another will be subject to the agreed flexi-provisions for the new department (this may result in an increase or decrease in flexi-leave).

4.5 Time recording

All employees undertaking non standard flexible working, including flexitime will be expected to record their hours on a formal monitoring form (link to electronic copy) as determined by management. Management will be required to monitor non standard working, and to variations to core hours and any other non standard working arrangement. Managers will also therefore be required to address any issues regarding non-productive accrual of flexi-time.

5. Provisions of the Scheme – Time Off arrangements [back to contents](#)

5.1 Annual Leave / Sickness / Day Release for College Attendance and Training Courses

Employees who are absent on annual leave, sickness, courses and meetings relevant to the City Council's operations or otherwise authorised to be absent, will be credited with the hours for a standard day (or part thereof) in accordance with their contracted hours of work, (e.g. if an employee is contracted to work 0830 to 1700 hours (Monday - Thursday) and 0830 to 1630 (Fridays). Any additional working hours lost will need to be worked at a later date within the accounting period. If the employee's contracted hours are other than the standard 37 hour week, the number of hours credited for absence will be in accordance with those stated on their contract for that particular period.

Where sickness results in a pre-booked flexi-leave day not being able to be taken by the end of the accounting period, the employee can, with the approval of the section head, carry forward the hours to the next accounting period in addition to the normal 15 hours' credit maximum.

5.2 Appointments

Employees will make up time taken for medical appointments eg doctors, dentists, opticians etc. These should be made outside of 'Core' time wherever possible for non-emergency situations. Where this is not possible the agreement of the section head should be obtained. It is recognised that emergency appointments and those which require hospital attendance may necessitate attendance anytime during the working day. Reasonable time off for attendance at health and/or cancer screening which form part of the Council's initiative or any other Council policy (eg Maternity Scheme) will be permitted during the working day.

5.3 Trade Union Meetings

Where time off is permitted for accredited staff representatives and shop stewards to attend trade union meetings/trade union training courses, the employees concerned will be allowed to record the standard hours for the day (or part thereof) as stated in paragraph 5.2 above.

Where employees are required to attend meetings outside standard hours by management/committees as part of the formal consultative/negotiating arrangements, the hours will be credited under the flexitime scheme.

5.4 Absence due to Emergencies / Severe Inclement Weather (see Authorised /Unauthorised chapter of the [leave policy](#))

Where an employee is unable to attend work or continue at work owing to emergencies (eg bomb/fire alert), standard hours shall be recorded (see 5.2 above).

Similarly, standard hours will be applied where 'severe inclement weather' is acknowledged by the Head of Paid Service and normal working arrangements set aside.

5.5 Other Authorised Absence

Where national conditions of Council policies prescribe paid time-off for such circumstances as jury service, public duties (eg school governors), election duties, territorial and auxiliary forces, compassionate leave and ante-natal care, the employee concerned will be credited with standard hours as set out in paragraph 5.2 above.

6. Overtime Working – Outside of Provision of Scheme [back to contents](#)

- 6.1 For the purpose of this scheme 'overtime' applies where an employee works outside the bandwidth period stated in paragraph 4.1 above, except where contractual overtime working over-rides the provisions of this scheme.
- 6.2 Overtime working which occurs outside the bandwidth hours shall be recorded separately, and may be paid as overtime or credited in hours under the flexi scheme.
- 6.3 There may be periods when the demands of the service require hours of work which would result in excess carry-forward of hours. In such exceptional cases, and with the prior approval of the relevant Service Director, (2nd tier post) additional carry-forward of hours from one four-week period to another may be allowed, provided these are properly recorded.
- 6.4 As indicated above, contractual overtime worked in excess of 37 hours per week, is outside the provisions of this scheme and will not qualify for credit time as set out above, unless specifically agreed by the Head of Service (2nd tier post) concerned.

7. Abuse of the Scheme [back to contents](#)

It is the responsibility of employees to accurately record their working hours and aggregated lieu time. Any employee who fails to do so, will forfeit his/her entitlement to flexitime during the period for which recording has not taken place. Employees will also be liable for disciplinary action (or dismissal whether there has been a fraudulent misrepresentation of working hours, or of lieu time taken or accrued.)

8. Appeal Arrangements [back to contents](#)

Appeal arrangements for this scheme are as stated in the Work-life Balance policy

9. Date of Implementation [back to contents](#)

This revised flexitime scheme will be introduced with effect from **1 April 2010**