



HUMBERSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Human Resources

Agile Working Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy provides a framework for agile working within HFRS, supporting modern working practices that enhance service delivery, efficiency, and employee wellbeing. It ensures compliance with legislation, sector best practice, and organisational objectives.

Core Code of Ethics

HFRS has adopted the Core Code of Ethics for Fire and Rescue Services. The Service is committed to the ethical principles of the Code and strives to apply them in all we do; therefore, those principles are reflected in this Policy.

National Guidance

Any National Guidance which has been adopted by HFRS, will be reflected in this Policy.

2. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

HFRS has a legal responsibility under the Equality Act 2010, and a commitment, to ensure it does not discriminate either directly or indirectly in any of its functions and services or in its treatment of staff, in relation to race, sex, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, gender reassignment or marriage and civil partnership. It also has a duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled applicants, employees and service users.

3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

HFRS recognises the need to maximise performance through effective working arrangements. Agile working enables staff to work from various locations using technology, reducing complete reliance on fixed desks and promoting work-life balance. Adoption of agile working must meet Service needs and maintain service standards.

- Improve service responsiveness and efficiency.
- Support health, wellbeing, work-life balance and job satisfaction.
- Enhance productivity and resource use.
- Maintain business continuity during disruptions.
- Promote equality and inclusion.
- Attract and retain talent, and improve attendance
- Optimise use of premises and technology

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- [Equality Impact Assessment](#)
- [Homeworking Risk Assessment Form](#)
- [DSE Assessment](#)
- Legal References
 - [Working Time Regulations](#)
 - [Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)
 - [Health and Safety \(Display Screen Equipment\) Regulations 1992 \(and miscellaneous amendments 2002\)](#)
- National Guidance
There is no specific National Guidance relevant to this policy.

5. ADOPTING AGILE WORKING

- Agile working is not an automatic entitlement; arrangements depend on role requirements and organisational needs.
- Managers and staff share responsibility for ensuring arrangements are effective, safe, and compliant.
- Regular reviews (at least every six months) will assess effectiveness and address concerns.
- Working from a core or designated base
- Using a suitable Service location
- Working across partner sites with secure networks
- Home working (ad hoc, with manager approval and risk assessments; not guaranteed as a regular pattern)

All HFRS roles fit into four main work styles:

1. **Fixed Desk:** Permanent desk in one location.
2. **Fixed Location:** Hot-desking within one site.
3. **Multi-Site:** Working across multiple HFRS locations.
4. **Roaming:** Full mobility across sites and partner premises.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers must:

- Ensure arrangements support service delivery and business continuity.
- Monitor health, safety, and performance.
- Provide clear objectives, communication plans, and inclusion strategies.
- Ensure staff have appropriate equipment and training.

Staff must:

- Agree arrangements with managers.
- Maintain communication and update calendars.
- Follow health and safety and data security requirements.
- Take responsibility for wellbeing and workspace assessments.

The Service supports appropriate flexibility for employees where operationally feasible. Any informal flexibility agreed with managers must be exercised responsibly and in a manner that ensures the continuity of service, team collaboration, and meets the needs of the Service. Service need will always take precedence, and managers may review, amend or withdraw informal flexible arrangements at any time to meet said need.

If a more structured or permanent arrangement is required, a formal Flexible Working Request should be submitted under the Flexible Working policy.

Additional Requirements

- **Hours of Work:** Follow Working Time Regulations and agreed patterns.
- **Reporting:** Normal sickness and accident reporting applies.
- **Property & Insurance:** HFRS equipment is insured; staff must safeguard it.
- **Expenses:** Travel to main work location is not reimbursed; additional costs only if required by the Service.
- **Workplace:** Staff remain responsible for personal safety at all locations.

7. HOURS OF WORK AND AVAILABILITY

- A maximum of 48 hours per week, averaged over 17 weeks (unless exceptions apply, e.g., emergency services).
- At least a 20-minute unpaid break when working 6+ hours.
- For ages 16–18: a 30-minute break after 4.5 hours.
- An average of 11 consecutive hours rest between working days.
- A 24-hour rest period every 7 days.
- Annual leave must be planned, authorised, and taken.

Employees are responsible for managing their agreed hours. If managers believe long hours are affecting an employee's health (including under agile working), they must discuss concerns, agree actions, and refer to Occupational Health if needed.

Working Hours and Flexitime Guidelines

- Managers and employees must agree on an appropriate working pattern in advance, in line with the HFRS Flexitime Policy.
- Any additional hours must be pre-approved by the manager and managed under existing Flexitime, TOIL, or Overtime arrangements.

8. MONITORING AND REVIEWING AGILE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

Agile working arrangements will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure they meet Service and employee needs, as they are not a permanent agreement. If there are concerns about performance or wellbeing, these will be addressed promptly between the employee and their manager.

While employees may have some flexibility, Service needs take precedence. If an individual requires a more structured or permanent arrangement, they will need to submit a formal Flexible Working Request under the Flexible Working Policy.

9. PROPERTY AND INSURANCE

The Authority's Employers Liability Insurance will cover employees in the same way irrespective of the employee's working style.

Computers and other equipment provided by HFRS as part of agile working are covered by the Authority's insurance policy. All relevant ICT equipment will be periodically PAT tested as required.

Employees have a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to safeguard equipment from loss or damage and should report any loss or damage to HFRS equipment to their line manager/ICT immediately.

10. WORKPLACE

Service policies apply when working away from the contractual base. The host organisation is responsible for building safety; employees are responsible for their own safety and must follow site procedures. Specialist equipment may not be transferable between sites. Hot desks are available for flexible use. Adjustments under the Equality Act 2010 will be considered as needed.

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Risk assessments must be completed for all agile working arrangements. Managers and staff share responsibility for compliance with:

- Health and Safety at Work Act.
- Display Screen Equipment Regulations.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations.

Manager's responsibilities:

- Ensure workstyle risk assessments are completed for employee activities and environments.
- Provide safe and suitable equipment for agile workers.
- Communicate safety responsibilities to agile workers.
- Assess first aid needs for agile workers.
- Inform agile workers how to report accidents, incidents, hazards, and issues.
- Investigate reports, manage risks, and share lessons learned.
- Provide information, instruction, and training on hazards and workspace/DSE management.
- Ensure all agile workers have an appropriate workspace (including home setups via survey/assessment).
- Hold regular one-to-one or supervision meetings.
- Where face-to-face contact is limited, check staff wellbeing regularly to prevent detriment

Employee's responsibilities:

- Take responsibility for personal health and safety as agile workers.

- Complete and update DSE risk assessments annually or after significant changes.
- Participate in training and apply risk controls.
- Use provided equipment (e.g., screen, keyboard, mouse) to reduce health risks.
- Report defects, accidents, incidents, near misses, and concerns via the reporting system or manager.
- Complete home workspace self-assessments and share with manager as required.
- Raise welfare or wellbeing concerns with line manager
- Take reasonable precautions when travelling between sites, alone, or visiting service users.
- Familiarise yourself with building facilities, evacuation routes, and procedures.
- Review hazard checklists before visiting new customers.
- Leave visit details and timescales when working away from base.
- Confirm visit completion with manager, team member, or designated contact if not returning to the office.

Home Working

Home working may occur on an ad-hoc basis with prior approval, subject to:

- Service need.
- Health and safety compliance.
- Secure internet connection.
- The satisfactory completion of risk and DSE assessments before approval.

The employee must:

- Complete a [Homeworking Risk Assessment Form](#).
- Complete a [DSE Assessment](#) if the work is based on a computer/laptop.
- The completed self-assessments must be sent to the employee's line manager who will review the assessment and discuss/action any unsatisfactory aspects before the home working commences.

Approval Process

Approval must be sought by the manager in advance for any employee requesting agile working. If a manager declines a request for agile working, the employee should contact HR in the first instance.

If anyone requires any further guidance / information relating to this document, please contact Human Resources