



**Moving +  
improving**  
Honiton/Exmouth  
office relocation

# WorkSmart: the way we work

Version 2.8

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# 1 Introduction

## East Devon District Council is relocating to Honiton and Exmouth.

Even without the impetus of relocation we need to embrace opportunities to work smarter for our customers. This means creating the right environment and providing the right tools for people to be able to do their jobs to the best of their ability.

As identified in our Transformation Strategy, transforming the way we work is vital to making sure that we can provide the services our customers expect and demand now and in the future.

Moving to two sites and having greater levels of flexible and mobile working will mean that we will have to challenge all the assumptions of our traditional ways of working and bring in new approaches to management and teamwork with a sharp focus on management by outcomes.

As our WorkSmart Workshops have shown, we will need to develop new skills and shared expectations about how we will operate in our new environment with new technologies to support us. This guide incorporates the key principles which have been developed following staff feedback from the WorkSmart Workshops carried out in 2015 and then again in 2016.

# 2 Vision

We want to create an even better working environment where people can work more smartly, more flexibly and be more productive.

Our promise as a Strategic Management Team is that through WorkSmart, we are committed to an approach of challenge and continuous improvement by taking a comprehensive and strategic approach to modernising the way we work.

The outcomes for adopting WorkSmart will be:

- Greater productivity and services delivered more effectively.
- Better opportunities to work collaboratively and network across the organisation.
- The costs and environmental impacts of work reduced as space is shared and used more effectively.
- People having more choice about when, where and how they work, supported and connected by effective and appropriate use of technology.
- People have the opportunity to lead more balanced and healthier lives.
- Business continuity will be improved by the ability to work in an all electronic environment and from a much wider range of locations.

# 3

## Key principles of WorkSmart

New ways of working are based on the following principles.

- New ways of working underpinned by the right technology aim to deliver **simplicity, flexibility and empowerment** for customers, colleagues and Members.
- Our WorkSmart strategy is consistent with systems thinking principles and the way people work.
- Work will increasingly take place from a variety of locations. This means at the most effective locations and at the most effective times, respecting the needs of the task, the customer, the individual and the team.
- Space will be allocated to activities, not individuals.
- Ours will increasingly become a culture where flexibility is the norm rather than the exception. Limitations on flexibility are based on clear operational need.
- A shared and agreed approach to WorkSmart which balances the freedom to choose with the responsibility to meet business needs.



# 4

## What will this mean in practice?

For each service, this will mean a thoughtful approach to thinking about the way people work in terms of our WorkSmart principles.

Processes that people are asked to comply with will need to be continuously challenged to make sure they are fit for purpose. As a result of the greater flexibility, services will become more adaptable to change.

For individuals this means being empowered to choose the best times and places to work supported by flexi time and other policies which support this. Within the scope of our WorkSmart principles, individuals will have the opportunity to work in such a way that allows them to vary start and finish times and choose the work settings that suit the work they are doing and their personal preferences.

New ways of working will increasingly require managers to focus on the output whilst providing our staff with the scope to choose how it is delivered whilst of course ensuring the principles are met. Management by results rather than by presence – which is best practice in any case – will be further embedded as a core management competence.

This trust based relationship provides greater autonomy which will increase the opportunity to lead more balanced and healthy lives. We will need to continuously challenge by asking the following questions?

- Why are we doing this?
- Why are we doing this here?
- Why are we doing it in this way?
- Why are we doing it at this time

Having identified practices and processes that could be done differently, the next questions to ask are whether using WorkSmart principles and new technologies, there are ways of doing these things that are:

- Faster?
- More flexible?
- Lighter – less heavy on resources, time, energy and physical resources?
- More in line with customer needs?
- More in line with individual aspirations?

People are encouraged to propose new ways of working that will deliver benefits. Focusing on practice questions in this way not only delivers benefits, but will help to embed the WorkSmart mindset.

# 5

## WorkSmart – workstyles, flexible place and flexible time

Managers will need to challenge old assumptions of necessity around traditional working places and times and the default position of working 9am to 5pm at the office. Managers and team members will need to think increasingly how changing times and places of work can improve effectiveness.

Determining flexibility of workstyle, flexible place and flexible time will involve consideration of the WorkSmart principles especially '**work takes place at the most effective locations and at the most effective times, respecting the needs of the task, the customer, the individual and the team.**'

Managers will need to use the [Council's Flexible Working Policy](#) and to examine the following factors:

- Critical service delivery needs
- Adequacy of tools and communications
- Employee preferences
- Customer preferences
- Critical collaboration needs
- Effectiveness of time/location choice
- Financial cost of time/location choice

## 5.1

### Flexible place options include:

#### Mobile working

Officers who work in many places will need to be empowered and equipped to work when travelling, working in appropriate public settings and touching down in offices as needed.

#### Sharing space in the office

Officers will not own their desk but will work from shared desks in team zones or choose a work setting appropriate to the task in hand such as break-out spaces.

#### Working from other offices

Officers may choose to work from other offices from time to time – offices belonging to EDDC or partner/client offices as appropriate.

#### Working as virtual teams

To prevent frequent travel officers can use online communication and collaboration tools.

#### Working from home

Officers may work from home regularly for a few days per week or may be based at home full time. More mobile staff may work using home as a base rather than or as much as using the office as a base. Our [Home working Policy](#) outlines more information for employees based at home.

## 5.2

### Flexible time options include:

- Flexi time – our [Flexi Time Policy](#) allows staff to vary start and finishing times.
- Annualised hours – officers are contracted annually to work a set number of hours, which can be worked flexibly over a 12 month period. This is useful for services where there are peaks and troughs in workloads.
- Compressed working week – in some cases officers can work fewer days such as two weeks' work worked in nine days.
- Term time working – this enables staff who are parents to work around school terms and holidays.

- Part time working – sometimes staff are recruited on a part time basis while others seek to reduce their hours.
- Job share – this is particular form of part time working where two people share a full time job.

## 5.3 Workstyles

New ways of working are require different workstyles and these are defined as follows:

- **Office based:** employees who are based in the office for most of the time
- **Mobile:** employees who are out and about most of the time around the district touching down at home, the office or various locations across the district. Employees who work in many places will need to be empowered and equipped to work when travelling, working in public settings and touching down in offices as needed.
- **Flexible:** employees who work between home and office.
- **Home worker:** employees who work at home for the majority of their working time

# 6

## Flexible space

Unlike traditional offices which are based on ranks of personally allocated desks, modern office environments aim to have a mix of work positions and meetings spaces to accommodate the way we work.

The Way We Work aims to create a great working environment which supports our new workstyles, increases the flexibility of the space we have and increases our productivity.

Office space will be designed around the way we work and will comprise the following types of working environment. Individual and team needs will vary depending on the type of work they are doing.

- Flexible meeting spaces – small meeting rooms, breakout spaces and café style areas.
- Meeting rooms and touchdown spaces, some with standing only facilities.
- Space for confidential work and phone calls.
- Touchdown spaces for people on the move.

# 7

## Choosing Workstyles

East Devon District Council already has a very good track record in responding to requests for flexible working. WorkSmart takes this a stage further as there are now increased possibilities for working at different locations and at different times to increase the effectiveness of how we work.

It is important to challenge old assumptions of necessity around traditional working places and times, and the default position of working 9-5 at the office. Managers and teams will need to think about how changing times and places of work can improve effectiveness, reduce travel and resource use and drive down the cost of work.

Some roles may have more hands-on, place specific or time specific components to the work and this may restrict the range of flexible options that are possible. However, these officers will be working with others whose workstyle is changing so that the nature of the tools they use and the interactions with colleagues are likely to change as a consequence.

It is important to avoid as far as possible new working arrangements that inject new inflexibilities that can compromise operational efficiency. Examples of this might be people saying they must always work in a local office or at home on a certain day. Whilst respecting existing flexible arrangements it is important to have the flexibility to alter them on occasion to meet service delivery needs or for essential face to face meetings.

# 8

## Our Protocols A to Z - A new culture for WorkSmart

The Way We work in the 21st Century involves developing and evolving our culture.

This is not about doing things in the old way with some new technologies and redesigned offices – it is about new ways of working using new tools, new processes, and new approaches to management and team work. This requires different types of behaviours and different expectations about how work is done.

Our culture will evolve naturally through having a different working environment, for example a more collaborative culture develops from sharing space and resources more effectively and through having different kinds of meetings. However, we will need protocols, support and training to help support our changing culture.

### 8.1

#### Our protocols A to Z

Given our underpinning principles of flexibility, simplicity and empowerment, our protocols will be owned by everyone and where they are not being observed we will all work together to make sure they are reinforced. It is our stated intention to avoid long lists of rules and regulation and let our positive culture create an environment where our straightforward protocols are observed by everyone – sensibly.

It is important to note that the changes affect mainly team members who are based in the office. There needs to be a single culture of working according to shared values and respect for the team as a whole avoiding a situation where a traditional office culture dominates amongst office based staff (e.g. relying on face to face interaction and management by presence)



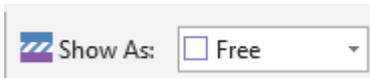
while mobile and flexible officers operate according to different more modern principles.

## Calendar sharing and contact details protocol

- Keep your calendar up to date.
- Don't put in meetings for information only as this looks like you are busy.

Important:

- Incorrect use of the Outlook calendar can inadvertently set yourself - or your colleagues - into a Busy status.
- When creating a meeting, the default will be to set yourself as 'Busy'. If you add other attendees into the meeting then they too will be made Busy.
- This also applies with all day calendar appointments.
- If you to put an entry into your calendar as a reminder, you should remember to set the Show As dropdown to Free.



- Regarding the "Away\ Yellow" status - this automatically applies after 5 minutes of inactivity (by default, this can be extended and the Strata Service desk will advise).
- Don't forget to padlock meetings where these are private.
- Don't forget to include travel time if you are attending a meeting off site.
- Don't forget to use self service I Trent to update your phone numbers.

## Desk sharing and clear desk protocol

- Space is not allocated on the basis of habit, seniority or personal preference.
- Teams agree that exceptions to this desk sharing protocol should be few and based on genuine need such as reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities or special adaptations or a specialist function requiring particular confidentiality.
- Where team priority zones are defined, this should not be seen as exclusive team space and it will be available to other employees of the organisation as the need arises – there may be minor exceptions relating to confidentiality.
- Where people have specially adapted chairs, you are respectfully asked not to use these when colleagues require them or to adjust these as they can take a lot of time to set up. Wherever possible, use one of the standard office chairs which have been specially

chosen by staff as they were considered to be the most comfortable.

- People from other teams should be made to feel welcome and this will provide opportunities for cross team working.
- Make sure you are using the right space for your activity – e.g formal meetings should not take place at desks but in break out areas or meeting rooms.
- If your plans change, rethink where you need to be working and move to the right type of space.
- Successful space sharing requires a clear desk policy which means that your personal items must be cleared from all desks and tables when you leave. These items should be stored in personal lockers and team storages areas.
- When you are not using your desk because you are going out for an all morning or all afternoon meeting, store your stuff so someone else can use the desk.
- Store your personal items in lockers when you are not using the desk space.
- When you leave a desk area it should be left completely clear and clean for use by other members of the team.
- You can eat hot or cold food at the desk but please be respectful of others. Ideally, you are encouraged to use a space designed for this purpose because it's much better for you to get up and eat away from your desk.
- At the end of the day, use the wipes available to wipe down the desk ready for whoever will be using it next.

## **Email protocol**

When colleagues are working from different locations and at different times, it stands to reason that we will need to rely on email as an important communication tool. It is important to follow some basic rules so that this tool is used as effectively as possible.

- Be clear in the subject line what the email is about.
- Long winded emails are a thing of the past now that email volumes are typically very high – stick to the point and stay on topic!
- Only send it to one person if is for action by one person; you can copy others but you need to be clear in the main body of the text who is to action and who is for info only.
- Never hit the 'reply to all' if you only need to inform the initial sender of a response i.e 'yes okay, will be at the meeting' or 'thank

you'. That doesn't need to go to anyone other than the person sending out the initial email.

- Do not forward emails that you have received without being sure that the sender would approve of it and that any irrelevant content is first removed. This can maintain privacy and avoid embarrassment in certain circumstances.

## **Locker protocol**

- All lockers will be individually numbered and will be available for any member of staff based at Exmouth Town Hall and Blackdown House Honiton.
- Keys for lockers will initially be issued by the Relocation Team, and following this, any problems or queries should be directed to Property Services.
- If a key has been lost and immediate access is required, please contact your line manager who will have access to the master key, which will be stored securely in a keysafe within the building.
- No food or drink is to be stored in the lockers and it will not be permitted to affix anything to the interior or exterior of the lockers.
- Personal lockers are designed for your personal effects. For example, personal stationery, favourite mug, headset, etc., together with a secure place for you to leave your handbag/rucksack, laptop, keys, etc.
- Any work related items, such as case files, applications or customers correspondence should not be stored in your personal locker. Work related paperwork will need to be stored within your allocated filing cabinets.
- Managers are responsible for retrieving locker keys from leavers.

## **Meetings protocol**

So that we don't undermine the benefits of WorkSmart with insistence on attending routine meetings, new technologies and ways of working provide opportunities to:

- Replace physical meetings by online interaction.
- Replace 'set piece' formal meetings by shorter interactions, in person, online or mixed physical and virtual.
- Reduce the number of people at a meeting for the whole session, calling people in remotely when needed or having them ready to respond to questions by instant messaging if needed.

## Respecting reception protocol

- Reception should be informed of the dates, times, room numbers, names and organisations of your known visitors in a timely way.
- Let Reception know if you are running late in collecting your visitors.

## Sensitive data protocol

Some people have asked about data protection in our new office environment so we are taking this opportunity to remind you about the importance of managing confidential information and personal data (“sensitive information”).

We have always worked in a ‘data sensitive’ environment but going forward we may need to be extra vigilant. This advice note is intended to help ensure that you fulfil your individual responsibility in ensuring sensitive data remains confidential.

In your respective roles, you will understand what constitutes sensitive information and how it is handled, so this advice just reinforces the need for a sensible approach the exercise of the good judgement you have already been using.

If you want a reminder about Data Protection, this course is available to you through e-learning.

Also see our [Data Protection Information Handling - Good Practice Guide](#)

### Telephone calls and discussions

- Although the offices in Exmouth Town Hall and Blackdown House are open plan, you will normally work in your ‘zone’ (as set out in WorkSmart: the way we work) where people around you are members of your team and so are already likely to have access to the sensitive information anyway. If this is the case there is no reason not to have a telephone call or discussion where sensitive information is discussed.
- Where there are other staff in the same area close enough to overhear the conversation think about what they might hear. Remember that anyone listening will only overhear your side of the conversation. Often just the use of a name on its own won’t actually reveal who you are talking to, therefore by being careful about what you say, there is very little risk of sensitive information being overheard.
- If the call or discussion will involve highly sensitive information which is inappropriate to be overheard by other people (such as personnel / employee matters for example) then you should

consider whether you should have the telephone conversation or discussion in private by going to a breakout area or meeting room.

#### Good practice

- The following 'top tips' (the principles of which are covered in other policies) will help minimise the risk of sensitive information being seen by others;
- Activate the screen saver when leaving your desk even for short periods;
- Sensitive information must always be securely stored and not left lying around the office;
- Any printing should be cleared from printers immediately and not left lying around;
- Ensure use of the confidential waste bin for sensitive information and don't use the ordinary waste bin.

With the above principles followed, the new challenges relating to sensitive information should be appropriately managed.

However, it is possible that on occasion you may see or hear sensitive information unconnected to your role. It is critical to remember that the Council is under legal duties to ensure confidentiality and protection of personal data. So, by way of reminder, the Employee Code of Conduct, Data Protection Policy and your contractual terms, all require you to ensure that any sensitive information you may have accessed, by whatever means, is kept confidential and appropriately protected. Not only will a failure to do so potentially lead to reputational issues for the Council, it may also lead to disciplinary proceedings against the individual concerned.

#### **Smarter storage protocol**

- Files and other resources used by the team should be stored in team storage areas.
- Personal storage should be kept in lockers provided.
- Teams will use regular 'junk fest' days to make sure clutter does not accumulate.
- The use of electronic document management will reduce the need for storage but nevertheless some paper documents have to be maintained. Our focus is on office space being prioritised for officers not storage so it is important to move physical storage off the office floor as much as possible.

#### **Teamwork protocol**

- A requirement to let others know where and when you are working.

- Letting others know who to contact in your absence.
- Sharing of calendars and schedules.
- Rigorous use of electronic document management so that work is easily accessible.
- Being flexible about flexible working – to ensure that others are not disadvantaged by your choices e.g in providing office cover or attending evening meetings.
- If you are in the office, please ensure your electronic devices are not disturbing colleagues (alerts, ringtones etc).
- Not adjusting colleagues specifically adapted chairs.

## 8.2

### Support

The evidence from implementations of WorkSmart is that more problems are anticipated than actually arise. We have to remember that we are already working in a flexible environment where many officers are already mobile or work some time from home.

All the same problems can occur as in any traditional workplace. It is the responsibility of teams to look out for each other and for managers and members of dispersed teams to spot problems and resolve them before they become major issues.

Our Organisational Development team can help provide support either directly or referral as they do currently when issues arise.

## 8.3

### Training

Training in new technology is something that has come out loud and clear through the WorkSmart Workshops. People want to understand the technology and have comprehensive training in different systems so that they can do some basic trouble shooting themselves.

Managers have access to training which will help them manage increasingly dispersed teams and home workers so that they can ensure people do not feel isolated; that team spirit is kept alive and that they can manage performance effectively. We want to make sure our 'cultural glue' is still strong when we move despite being dispersed.

Our Strategic Management Team have all attended training in 'managing dispersed teams' and this is also mandatory for all other managers, supervisors and team leaders.

Our training portfolio will be expanded so that Officers will have access to training in new communication tools and training relating to chairing and participating in virtual meetings.

# 9

## Technologies for WorkSmart

With the right technology choices, people can work more effectively in the office and away from it using the internet; broadband and wireless communications at the most effective times and locations.

The government is committed to modernising services by making them available online – Digital by Default.

This has implications for the way we work in delivering services and our Open for Business project aims to deliver more self service options for our customers. Many processes that used to require manual intervention are becoming automated and the need to reprocess information supplied by residents and partners is being reduced. Overtime, the requirements to work in particular places and at particular times will reduce.

The range of technologies for WorkSmart include the following.

- Electronic document management
- New building back scanning
- New telephony project
- Global desktop
- Open for business
- WorkSmart
- New intranet
- New time and attendance system
- New door access system
- New meeting room audio visual system
- New office bookings system
- New hybrid mail system
- Electronic mailroom