

# Brief for HOS for Employee 121 Consultation

APPENDIX 'A'

## PURPOSE

AGENDA ITEM 6(B)

To ensure that all employees have the opportunity to discuss the new ways of working with their manager during the formal consultation period. This includes the customer service reviews, relocation to Wallfields and the opportunities of flexible working/home working. These discussions should take place during December/January, being completed by **31 January 2009**.

## PROCESS

Managers should carry out a 121 meeting with each employee using the 121 consultation form.

These should be returned to Lucy Birch in a batch for the team rather than individually. These will then be loaded to a single database and the information used to inform the C3W Programme Group.

The 121 consultation form should be completed only by way of a personal meeting with the employee.

## THE 121 DISCUSSION

Give a brief overview of the C3W programme using the change management tool kit. You need to discuss the various options open to the employee on new ways of working for the team.

Emphasise that we want to make sure people have a number of opportunities to express their views and concerns as these are important to us to finalising the structures and addressing issues about accommodation and new ways of working. We therefore need to collect a huge amount of information to enable this process and to ensure that employees are supported appropriately throughout the move to Wallfields.

**This information gathering is only the start of the process and therefore it is important to confirm to employees that you or the Programme Group may not have all the answers to their particular situation but this process will help them be identified and a resolution found.**

The form has been split into various sections and should be used as a framework for the 121 discussions. If there is anything that isn't covered that the employee has concerns about or would like us to note, they will have the opportunity to do this at the end of the discussion in the last section on the form.

Unison has been fully consulted and is aware that the 121 sessions will be taking place. A copy of these guidelines and the form has been provided to them.

## Guidance on how to complete the form

### SECTION 1 – PERSONAL INFORMATION

Ask the employee to confirm their details.

### SECTION 2 – JOB INFORMATION

This information is required by us in order to make sure that the accommodation is fit for purpose and appropriate for the needs of all employees.

New ways of working will also enable increased levels of flexibility and employees will be provided with space, equipment and working facilities appropriate to their needs.

This consultation meeting will enable us to assess some of those needs as well as ascertain whether mobile working is currently utilised or even if there are any barriers to this taking place.

Employees will be moving into new ways of working but it will be helpful to confirm how they currently work as follows:

#### Categories of worker:

An 'always in' worker works the majority of their time at an East Herts office location. They may occasionally work at home or another location but typically on an ad hoc basis to do a particular piece of work or due to family circumstances.

An 'in & out' worker works flexibly and tends to have a regular pattern of working from home or from different offices.

A 'mostly out' worker works the majority of their time at other sites, and will only occasionally visit the fixed office location. This would include Field based staff that

spend the majority of their time in the field but may use the office to collect and deposit work.

A home worker works for most of their working week at or from home on a permanent or temporary basis of more than 1 month's duration.

### **SECTION 3 – MOBILE WORKING**

This section allows you to start exploring the different types of mobile working available. The Flexible Working Policy included in the change management tool kit provides detailed information on each of the mobile working types and should be read in conjunction. It provides useful information that should be considered by the employee and management before agreeing any change to the way a person works.

#### **Home working**

Home working can be defined as where an employee works at home for the majority of their working week. They will be required to attend an office base for meetings, performance reviews and other customer/staff meetings. When attending an office base they would not have a permanent desk or PC and therefore would use a team base.

#### **Flexible working**

Flexible working is where an employee may have more than one office base. They may have a desk/PC at work but also work from home occasionally or another location.

#### **Field based**

Applies where an employee's primary work base is home or office based to deposit and collect work. They are frequently mobile, visiting sites, offices etc. They may have access to shared facilities at a team base.

#### **Job sharing**

Job sharing involves two employees voluntarily sharing the responsibilities of a full-time post, dividing the role and responsibilities between them according to the hours. They would normally share a desk.

#### **Compressed hours**

Employees working compressed hours will work their standard hours over fewer days by extending the working day. Examples of this include a four and a half day week, nine day fortnight or 18 day month (based on a four week month). Compressed hours can be a means of introducing some flexibility into jobs which do not meet the requirements for flexi-time. Similarly, compressed hours enable

extended service availability beyond the standard day or provide quiet time for work at the beginning and/or end of the day.

### **Term time working**

Term time working is where an employee only works during the school term. This may be particularly beneficial to services which are linked to schools or parts of the community that are school aged. If employees request to work a reduced number of weeks per year they will be paid pro-rata accordingly.

It is important to start establishing a picture of the working pattern the employee may wish to work. This will help the Head of Service (HOS) to start comparing service need with employee's preferred working patterns.

Other options are also available to employees as listed below. This could be an ideal time for managers and employees to explore these.

### **Career breaks**

Career breaks involve an employee taking an unpaid break from their employment with the Authority for an agreed period (from 3 months to 1 year). Reasons for taking the break may be varied, including pursuing further education, because of family commitments or for personal development.

### **Secondment**

Secondment is where an employee transfers to another service or authority for a set period of time and has the right to return to a similar role at the end of the secondment.

### **Flexible retirement**

This is an option where an employee (aged 50+) can continue working part-time while drawing their local government pension.

### **Part time (voluntary reduced hours)**

This allows an employee to voluntarily reduce their standard working week by working fewer hours, generally known as part time working. Hours can be reduced on either a temporary or permanent basis and paid accordingly.

### **'Early Adopters'**

If it is beneficial and practical for HOS and the employee to agree a change in working pattern before their service phase, then HOS must consult with HR at the earliest opportunity to ensure current process and employment legislation is adhered to.

### **Flexi-scheme**

One option open us is to review the flexi scheme hours and extend these. Our current flexi scheme is from 8.00am to 6.30pm Monday to Friday. Possible options could be to extend the flexi scheme hours 7.00am to 7.00pm Monday to Friday (although the impact on Facilities need to be explored) and Saturday am.

## **SECTION 4 – TRAVEL**

We know that travel to a new office base is always a concern for employees. In order to make sure we can plan effectively and enable all our employees to have a trouble free journey to Wallfields we need to collect information on where the employee will be travelling from and how their journey to and from work will be affected.

We will look at travel from the point of view of the individual – i.e. how we can best support the employee.

## **SECTION 5 – DISABILITY & CARING**

### Disability

Disability is defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as

*‘a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities’*

Examples may include diabetes, hearing or speech impairments, mobility impairments etc

It is important that we collect this information as it allows us to take into consideration whether we need to make reasonable adjustments to the workplace to support the member of staff relocating or working more flexibly.

### Caring

There may be personal or family circumstances that may make a move to a different location or working from home difficult for individual employees. It is important that we are aware of their concerns as soon as possible, so that we can try and put in place supportive measures, to try as far as possible to mitigate these difficulties.

## **SECTION 6 – TECHNOLOGY**

This is an opportunity to explore the ICT provisions which are currently used, and to establish whether they will meet the needs of the staff after the move. As we are moving to more flexible ways of working, the Programme Group needs to make sure that employees have the right equipment to do the job and that there are no barriers to using it in the form of any outstanding training needs.

The employee should give details of any additional ICT training they feel they need to develop prior to the move. This information will enable the Programme Group to plan effective, timely training for those who need it. The information gathered as part of the self-assessment tools will also help to inform the wider development needs and plans for the whole department.

Managers will also need to build into their PDR discussions ongoing learning and development needs to support the changes ahead.

## **SECTION 7 – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

As mentioned at the start this is an opportunity for the employee to talk through any concerns or worries they have about the new ways of working including the relocation to Wallfields, so that managers, HOS and the Programme Group can respond and follow up any issues raised.

There are also other several feedback channels open to the employee if they think of anything subsequent to the consultation meeting:

- ask to speak to HOS/manager
- ask to speak to a member of the HR team
- e-mail via Programme Group
- ask to speak to a member of the Programme Group
- Unison

Any follow up actions agreed by the manager or HOS and employee should be noted on the form and explored. HR update as necessary.

After consultation has taken place and a 121 form has been received, a HR Officer will discuss each individual member of staff's situation with their manager or HOS and record as either Red, Amber or Green (please see definitions below). The Programme Group will then work with the manager/HOS to gain a green status for employees.

## TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM

**Green** – the employee is able to move to the new ways of working /Wallfields site. They may have some minor issues but these can be easily worked through.

**Amber** – the employee has some issues regarding the new ways of working /move to Wallfields site, but these should be resolved between the manager and employee.

**Red** - the employee has stated that they either do not want or are unable to adopt the new ways of working or move to the Wallfields site due to legitimate reasons, i.e. care of dependent or travel difficulties. Individual solutions will need to be explored and agreed.

These categories are then recorded on HR database, to enable the Programme Group to have an up to date accurate account of potential movers and non movers. This is then monitored ongoing until we have a suitable resolution. This could be where there is agreement to the employee working flexibly (hours change to meet travel needs) or (location change, working from home on some occasions) or (employee is redeployed into an alternative position).

The quicker consultation and assessing of red amber green takes place the better chance of resolving the issues and concerns.

Please contact Emma Freeman or a member of the Programme Group should you require any further information or assistance.