

JOB SHARING SCHEME

The Council recognises the principle of job sharing for all employees including Single Status, Craft and Teaching, and for all jobs, whether full or part-time, permanent or temporary.

Objectives

The Council supports the concept of job sharing as a means of:

- > Increasing the number and range of employment opportunities open to individuals who cannot undertake full-time working eg people with domestic care responsibilities, or those with certain types of disability.
- > Providing a means of recruiting and/or retaining skilled and experienced employees who would find full-time working impracticable.

Definition

For the purposes of this Scheme, job sharing is defined as a formal arrangement whereby two or more employees share all the duties and responsibilities of a job. Pay and other benefits attached to the job are shared in proportion to the hours each sharer works.

Principles of the Scheme

- > All jobs within the Council will be considered potentially suitable for job sharing. Strategic Leads are authorised to determine which jobs are unsuitable for sharing. Only if job sharing would result in a significant reduction in operational effectiveness should a job be excluded from the Scheme.
- > Exemption from the Scheme for all jobs, excluding those within Teaching, will be subject to agreement with the People and Culture Manager. Refusal of a job sharing request will be subject to appeal through the Council's Fairness at Work Policy.
- > Job sharing may occur only on a voluntary basis. Job sharers will not be contractually required to work additional hours to provide cover during the absence of their partner(s).
- > Where a sharer leaves, the remaining partner(s) will be offered the opportunity to work additional hours. If this offer is rejected and no replacement can be recruited, suitable alternative employment will be found within the Council for the remaining sharer(s).

- Job sharers will have the same access to training and promotion opportunities as full-time workers.

Circumstances in Which Job Sharing May Occur

Single Applications

Any employee may ask to occupy his/her job on a shared basis. This includes women on maternity leave who wish to work reduced hours on their return.

Joint Applications

Two or more employees who are in the same Service on the same grade and in jobs which are the same or broadly similar, may make a joint application to share one job.

Any employee who wishes to job share must complete and submit an application for job share (Form JS1) available from the Employee Support Team. Two or more employees making a joint/plural application must each complete a separate form.

The Strategic Lead must consider any application and approve it in principle or reject it within 20 working days of receipt of the request. (Where necessary, advice should be sought from the People and Culture Team.) The reason(s) for rejection must be given to the employee(s) in writing. The right of appeal against such a decision will be via the Fairness at Work policy.

Vacancies

A decision regarding the suitability of a job for sharing will be necessary when a vacancy is to be advertised. When a Strategic Lead is excluding a post from the Scheme, the Form JS2 (Exclusion from Job Share – available from the Employee Support Team) must be completed. Reasons for the exclusion of a job from the Scheme must accompany the job advertisement copy when forwarded to the Recruitment Team (not applicable to Teaching jobs).

Approved Applications

If an application is approved, the following will apply:

(a) Single Applications

The remaining portion of the job should be advertised on a sharing basis.

(b) Joint/Plural Applications

Two or more employees wishing to share will not need to undergo a formal selection interview as a full discussion about their suitability for the job with Supervisor/ Manager will have been part of the process of deciding whether sharing is feasible. A vacancy will have been created and it will be for the Strategic Lead to decide whether this should be filled. If so, normal recruitment procedures should be followed.

(c) Vacancies

These will be advertised in accordance with normal procedures, with the advertisement indicating that the job is open to sharing.

Normally, existing employees who apply to job share should not be allowed to reduce working hours until a partner(s) is found. In some circumstances, eg where full-time work will create particular practical difficulties, the Strategic Lead may consider an interim reduced hours working arrangement but will need to be aware of the difficulties in maintaining service level, if a job sharing partner(s) cannot be identified or recruited.

If, after normal recruitment and selection procedures have been carried out, no suitable job share partner(s) can be found, the job share applicant must be advised and further action considered, eg, advertising the job again after a reasonable period, or considering alternative working arrangements.