



# **STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL**

## **FLEXI TIME SCHEME 2026**

### **VERSION 2**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Stotfold Town Council is committed to creating a flexible and inclusive work environment that recognises and accommodates the needs of its employees. This flexible working policy outlines the guidelines for implementing and managing flexible working arrangements within the organisation.

It is inevitable that each employee will be obliged in the performance of duties on some occasions to work outside the standard 'office' hours i.e. 8am to 6pm.

When this happens a system of flexi time is available to compensate for otherwise lost personal leisure time. The purpose of this is to allow the employee some flexibility in working hours at the contracted hours are worked in a period.

#### **2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

Employees will, where practically possible, organise their workload and time so that 'out of hours' duties or attendances are carried out as part of the normal contractual weekly hours, i.e. the total of 'out of hours' and 'office hours' will be 37 hours per week.

Employees should ordinarily perform the work duties during normal working hours 8am to 6pm except when in the period in question (normally the week) the employee is required to attend visits, meetings, committee meetings, conferences, or other duties outside normal office hours.

All employees should organise any flexi time requests so that sufficient cover will be in place amongst their team.

Flexi time is not to be accumulated or approved in such a way that a change in normal working arrangements results (e.g. every Friday is a 'flexi day'). Flexi is exceptional rather than a regular or routine occurrence.

As far as it is consistent with the aims of the service and is practicable, the employee should try to arrange visits and other appointments in office hours.

Employees may not take more than one working day per month (7.4 hours) as flexi (pro rata for part time employees), or be in deficit of one working day per month (pro rata for part time employees)

#### **3. LINE MANAGERS**

Line Managers are responsible for the day-to-day running of the flexible working hours scheme, and to ensure that there is adequate coverage to enable their service to run effectively.

Line Managers can request that employees provide them with sight of a 'virtual clock card' to support requests for flexi time at any point.

Line Managers will ensure that all employees are not working in a way that contravenes their wellbeing and work life balance or are not consistently working the hours for which they are paid. Managers must assess risks for early/late working and site visits (including DSE breaks and safe travel). No employee should work alone in buildings outside staffed hours without agreed controls (contact procedure, door access, check-ins).

#### **4. CORE TIME & LUNCH BREAKS**

Bandwidth: 07:30–19:00, Monday–Friday. Hours recorded outside bandwidth are not eligible for flexi unless pre-authorised for specific events/meetings.

Core time: 10:00–16:00 on working days unless otherwise agreed for service needs.

Cover: Managers must ensure front-of-house, phones, statutory functions, and urgent responses have agreed cover patterns before approving flexi changes.

Notice: Employees should request planned deviations at least two working days in advance, unless urgent service needs arise.

Lunch: 30–120 minutes; not counted as working time and must be recorded.

#### **5. RECORDING PERIOD & CALCULATING HOURS**

A 'virtual clockcard' record should be maintained and be available to be viewed by line managers upon request.

A working day for a full-time employee is 7.4 hours for a full-time working over 5 days.

Absences for annual leave, special leave or sickness must be recorded using the standard daily hours figure (i.e. 3.7 hours for a half day or pro-rata equivalents for part time employees). Working time recorded should include official travelling time but this should not include time that is spent travelling between your home and usual place of work.

Each recording period is four weeks. Within that period employees are required to work their contracted hours.

Employees may accrue credit or debit hours up to a maximum of 10 hours (pro rata for part timers) and this credit or debit may be carried forward to the next accounting period.

Provided that the requisite number of hours are completed in any four-week accounting period employees may, subject to prior arrangement with their line manager, take one flexi day off per month (pro rata for part time employees).

Any overtime worked and 'claimed' as such cannot also be recorded so that it is taken as flexi time.

## 6. ABUSE OF THE SCHEME

### Definition of Abuse

Abuse of the Flexi Time Scheme occurs when an employee uses the scheme in a manner that is dishonest, misleading, or contrary to the intended purpose of supporting occasional flexible working while maintaining service delivery.

### Examples of Abuse

The following are examples of actions that may be considered abuse of the Flexi Time Scheme:

- **Falsifying Records:** Deliberately entering incorrect start or finish times, or misrepresenting hours worked on the virtual clock card.
- **Excessive or Unauthorised Flexi Days:** Taking more than the permitted one flexi day per month (pro-rata for part-time staff) or accruing excessive hours to take extended time off without prior approval.
- **Using Flexi Time as Substitute for Leave:** Routinely using flexi days to extend annual leave or for purposes that should be covered by other forms of leave (e.g. annual, sick, or compassionate leave).
- **Non-Work Activities:** Claiming flexi time for periods spent on personal errands, appointments, or activities unrelated to council business.
- **Disrupting Service Delivery:** Taking flexi time when it results in inadequate office or service cover, especially during core hours.
- **Collusion:** Arranging with colleagues to cover for each other's absences in a way that circumvents the policy.

### Handling Suspected Abuse

- Any suspected abuse of the Flexi Time Scheme will be investigated in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedures.
- Employees found to have abused the scheme may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.
- Line managers are responsible for monitoring the use of flexi time and ensuring compliance with this policy.

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### Document History

Version	Date	Notes
1	January 2024	Adopted
2	January 2026	Reviewed. definition of abuse of scheme Variation of working hours