PORINGLAND PARISH COUNCIL

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Flexible Working Policy

Policy Reference	PPC 36
Version Number	2
Associated Documents	• PPC8 Code of Conduct – Staff • PPC22 Absence Management Policy • PPC15 Dignity at Work inc Bullying and Harassment Statement • PPC20 Disciplinary Policy • PPC11 Equality and Diversity Policy
Last Review Date	September 2025
Frequency of Review	Two Years
Approved by	Full Council
Date for Next Review	September 2027

This is a non-contractual policy that does not require approval from employees before changes are made. Staff will remain bound by amended non-contractual policies.

FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

Entitlement to request a contract variation
You are entitled to make an application for a contract variation provided you are an employee of the Council and have been continuously employed for a period of not less than 26 weeks.

The application
In order to request a contract variation, you must first make an application to the Parish Clerk in writing which is signed and dated and contains the following details:

- it is a request for a contract variation
- you have not made a previous application within the last 12 months
- the flexible working pattern you would like and the date on which it is proposed the change should become effective
- the effect, if any, you think the change will have on the Council and how, in your opinion, any such effect may be dealt with.

The Council recognises that the working pattern that may suit any particular individual could be a unique one involving a combination of options, such as:

- job-sharing
- part-time working
- annualised hours
- compressed hours
- flextime
- term-time working
- swapping hours
- voluntary-reduced working time
- working from home
- career breaks
- flexible shift working.

Although the Council is committed to providing the widest possible range of working patterns for its workforce, both management and employees need to be realistic and to recognise that the full range of flexible working options will not be appropriate for all jobs across all areas of the business.

Where an instance of flexible working is proposed the Council will need to take into account a number of criteria including (but not limited to) the following:

- the cost of the proposed arrangement
- the effect of the proposed arrangement on other staff
- the level of supervision that the post-holder requires
- the structure of the department and staff resources
- other issues specific to the individual's department
- an analysis of the tasks specific to the role, including their frequency and duration
- an analysis of the workload of the role.

The application will be taken as having been made on the day it is received by the Parish Clerk. If you send your application electronically, this will be the day on which it is transmitted.

The meeting with you to discuss your application and the decision
The Council will hold a meeting with you at a mutually convenient time to discuss your request for a contract variation within 28 days after receiving your application. Alternatively, if, on receiving your application, the Council agrees to your application without needing to discuss it with you, then you will be notified within this period in writing and informed of the contract variation agreed to and the date from which the variation is to take effect.

When a meeting is held to discuss your application, the Council will consider your application carefully and give you notice of the decision within 14 days of the meeting, said notice to be in writing and dated.

If the decision is to agree to your application, the notice will inform you of the contract variation agreed to and state the date on which the variation is to take effect.

If the decision is to refuse your application, the notice will state the grounds, with sufficient explanation to be given as to why those grounds apply and the appeal procedure.

Appeals
If your application is refused, you will be entitled to appeal against the decision within 14 days. To appeal, you should give notice to the Parish Clerk, to be signed and dated and setting out the grounds of appeal.

Within 14 days of receiving your notice, the Council will hold a meeting with you at a mutually convenient time to discuss your request for a contract variation. Alternatively, if the Council upholds your appeal without needing to hold a meeting, then you will be notified in writing within this period and informed of the contract variation agreed to and the date from which the variation is to take effect.

Where a meeting is held to discuss your appeal, the Council will give you notice of the decision within 14 days after the meeting. This notice will be in writing and dated.

If the appeal is upheld and the original decision overturned, the notice will inform you of the contract variation agreed to and state the date from which the variation is to take effect.

If the appeal is dismissed, the notice will state:

- the grounds for the dismissal
- the sufficient explanation as to why those grounds apply.

Extension of Time Limits
In any event, the time limits may be extended by agreement. In these circumstances, the Council will keep a written record of the agreement, specifying the period to which the extension relates and the date the extension ends. This record will be dated and a copy sent to you.

A Right to be Accompanied
You have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a single companion.

Your chosen companion must be a worker employed by the Council or a Trade Union Representative as defined by the Employment Relations Act 1999. This person will be permitted to address the meeting but not answer questions on your behalf.

If your chosen companion is not available at the time proposed for the meeting by the Council, you may propose an alternative time, in which case the meeting will be postponed to the time you propose, provided your proposed date:

a) is convenient to the Council, you and your companion
b) falls before the end of the period of 7 days beginning with the first day after the day proposed by the Council
c) is one on which your chosen companion will be allowed to take time off during working hours for the purpose of accompanying you.

Withdrawal of application
The Council will treat your application as withdrawn where you have:

a) notified the Council orally or in writing that you are withdrawing the application
b) without reasonable cause, failed to attend a meeting under the terms of the paragraphs above
c) without reasonable cause, refused to provide the Council with information required in order to assess whether the contract variation should be agreed to.

The Council will confirm the withdrawal of the application in writing unless you have provided the Council with written notice.

Time off for dependents
In certain circumstances, you have the right to request unpaid time off work to deal with emergencies involving a dependent. Such requests should be made to the Parish Clerk.