

27 March 2020

Dear colleague

COVID-19 - Arrangements for Working from Home

Many of you are delivering and supporting critical services to our communities and, now more than ever before, we must work together as a team and ensure we are flexible and dynamic in how we do this. For you, this means that you will be temporarily undertaking your work from home.

While you are working from home, you should take the same basic steps in relation to your safety. This includes, as far as is possible and practical, setting up your work area at home as you would do at work; making sure you have sufficient space for your laptop/desktop in your proposed work area. You must also ensure that all information and documentation remain secure and confidential.

It is also important that you look after your own wellbeing and make sure that you take sufficient time away from work. To ensure that you have time when you are not available for work, you should aim to take a proportionate amount of your annual leave during this period of home working and should follow normal arrangements for requesting leave.

It is acknowledged that in some roles people have already worked over and above their normal weekly hours as we plan our approach to delivering essential services in unprecedented circumstances. It is also acknowledged that you will continue to do your job as best as you can, but that this may not always be easy as a result of caring responsibilities or other challenges presented by homeworking, and you may feel that you aren't always able to meet your normal working hours. As a result, a decision has been made to suspend the flexi system for homeworkers with immediate effect.

You will therefore not be required to clock in and out but, if you are not on annual leave, should follow the contact arrangements discussed and agreed with your line manager, including any plans to keep in contact with other colleagues. As you will continue to receive your normal pay, it is important that you try to work as closely to your weekly contracted hours as possible.

I would ask you to recognise that these are unprecedented times and your flexibility, understanding and support is both required and greatly appreciated.

The dynamic and continually changing landscape of this national emergency means that, although you are currently working from home, you may be required to return to a place of work at a future date to undertake critical tasks to support the delivery of key council services.

Information and regular updates will be provided for you on the council's website and I would ask you therefore to regularly visit www.westlothian.gov.uk/coronavirus

Yours faithfully

Graeme Struthers
Depute Chief Executive