



Woking Borough Council



Employee Handbook





## Welcome to Woking Borough Council

'I am delighted that you have chosen to join Woking Borough Council. You are very welcome and I hope that you find your time with the Council, fulfilling and enjoyable.

Local residents depend upon us to deliver a wide range of services and support and we take this responsibility very seriously.

It is true to say that the Council is facing a number of significant challenges as a result of historic decisions. But we are determined to correct the mistakes of the past and have a clear plan to deliver significant improvements.

Our aspirations are set out in the [Woking for All Strategy](#) which I hope will help you understand what we are seeking to achieve. With your support alongside the colleagues you are joining, I am confident that we can achieve these aspirations.

So welcome again and we look forward to working with you.'

The object of this handbook is to tell you about the policies and procedures which are relevant to your employment, not least about learning and development opportunities. If you have any feedback that you believe will improve these policies, please let me know.

If you have any queries regarding this handbook, please speak with your manager or Human Resources.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Carr  
Chief Executive



This handbook is divided into **five key sections**:

- Your health and safety at work.
- Conditions of employment.
- Employee Benefits.
- Policies and strategies.
- Learning and performance.

This handbook forms part of Woking Borough Council's policies and procedures and it is your responsibility to ensure that, along with your contract of employment, you have read and understood the contents. If there is anything you do not understand, please speak to your manager or contact Human Resources.

At points in the handbook, you will be guided towards further information or related policies that are available as PDF documents or electronic links via the staff intranet, [ewokplus](#). If you require a hard copy or any of its associated policies, please contact Human Resources on **01483 743858**

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# Section 1 - Health and safety at work

## 1.1 Health and safety

### 1.1.1 Fire and emergency

Please make sure that you are familiar with the fire evacuation procedure for your place of work. These are detailed on fire action notices displayed around the workplace and explained below. It is important that you leave the building **immediately** when you hear the fire alarm, which is two-tone siren; do not delay your exit to collect personal possessions.

Each place of work will have its own procedure for fire alarm testing. You **are not** required to leave the building for this, unless the alarm continues for more than 20 seconds.

#### Instructions to all employees

If you discover a fire, go to the **nearest fire alarm call point** (break glass) and activate the alarm if it has not yet sounded, then dial 999 (you will need to dial an extra 9 to get an outside line, so dial 9999).

- **Evacuate the building immediately** when you hear the fire alarm – a two tone siren – in an orderly manner, in accordance with the blue fire action notices posted throughout the building;
- **Do not stop** to collect personal possessions.
- If possible, close windows and turn off any electrical equipment that might be dangerous if left on (subject to safety factors and need for continuous running). However, the priority is always quick and orderly evacuation.
- Do not attempt to extinguish any fire unless you have received training in the correct use of fire extinguishers, and you are confident you know how to do so – **do not put yourself or other people in danger**.

#### Instructions to all employees at the Civic Offices

The **assembly point** for employees based in the Civic Offices is in Jubilee Square. If you work in another location, please check the evacuation procedure and assembly point for that workplace. There are arrangements in place for disabled employees who are unable to use the stairs. These arrangements are detailed on the next page and will be discussed with you when you start work.

- **The automatic** doors will close when the fire alarm is activated, but will be unlocked. You can **push the doors open**, but please note they may be quite hard to push.



## Section 1 - Health and safety at work

**Exit** the building using the appropriate fire exit route:

- if you are in the South Wing *at the time of the alarm*, use the South Stairwell, you will need your ID badge to open the doors, or if you do not have an ID card, use the green break glass to open the doors.
  - if you are in the West Wing *at the time of the alarm*, use the Civic Suite Stairwell (use the green break glass mounted on the side of the Civic reception desk to open the doors )
  - if you are in the Centre Core *at the time of the alarm*, use the Centre Core Stairwell.
  - If your exit route is blocked by fire, evacuate horizontally by moving across the building and using the other stairwells. For example, if the Civic Suite stairwell is blocked by fire, use the Centre Core Stairwell, and if that is also blocked, use the Civic Suite Stairwell
  - Employees in the Basement should leave via the Basement fire exit, which is at the end of the corridor that runs past the archives. The exit opens to fresh air at basement level then there is a metal external stairwell up to car park level. Alternatively, a staircase leads up to the Centre Core exit.
- If you leave by the South exit, **do not walk through the passageway** between the Civic Offices and St Andrews House, as this causes a bottleneck. Instead, walk along Christchurch Way to the solicitors on the corner then turn right towards Town Gate and into Jubilee Square.

Do not attempt to extinguish any fire unless you have received training in the correct use of fire extinguishers, and you are confident you know how to do so – **do not put yourself or other people in danger.**

**Disabled employees** or those unable to use the stairs can use the lift in the Civic Suite Stairwell or South Stairwell. **Do not use the two lifts that open in the meet and greet area.** If the lift closest to you is unavailable, make your way across to the opposite side of the building to the other lift. If neither the lift in the Civic Suite Stairwell nor the lift in the South Stairwell is available, wait at a **Refuge Point**. Refuge Points are marked by a sign on the wall and are located in the South Stairwell and Civic Suite Stairwell, on the landing, near the lift. There is a red emergency voice communication alarm box on the wall, and you can press the silver button to speak to employee at the fire alarm panel.

All employees should **assemble in Jubilee Square** near the War Memorial, awaiting further instructions. Employees are requested not to block access to Gloucester Walk and to be considerate to members of the public – please leave gangways so others can move around Jubilee Square. Customer Services employees only should congregate by the entrance to Ambassadors Theatre, as they will be required to re-enter the building first.

**Do not re-enter** the building until specific instruction to do so is given by a senior officer. Please note that Customer Services employees will return first. When returning to the Civic Offices, please be considerate to members of the public and ensure that you leave them enough space to walk along Gloucester Walk and to enter/exit the library.





## Section 1 - Health and safety at work

### 1.1.2 Accidents and First aid

As safe as we try to make your working environment, accidents can happen. Each workplace has First Aid trained employees who have First Aid kits. You should make sure that you know who your First Aiders are (signs are displayed in each workplace and in the Civic Offices; signs are displayed on each wing). A list of First Aiders in the Civic Offices is also available on ewokplus – the Council's intranet. If you are in the Civic Offices and need a First Aider and there isn't one based on your floor, dial **2222**, which will call all of the First Aiders and you will be able to speak to the first person who answers.

All accidents must be reported using an **Accident Report Form** available on ewokplus. Near miss situations must be reported using a near miss report form. Potential hazards in the workplace must also be reported to your manager so that they can be resolved before an accident occurs.

### 1.1.3 No smoking and e-cigarettes

The Council is a tobacco-free site.

The Council's smoking policy is as follows:

- Smoking (including any tobacco products) and "vaping" (use of e-cigarettes) are not permitted in any Council workplace, building or vehicle.
- A shared vehicle is a place of work and should therefore be smoke-free.
- Smoking is not permitted in any leased vehicle as directed by the leasing company.
- Smoking or vaping breaks, where essential, are to be taken outside, away from the immediate vicinity of entrance doors. Time out of the office should be kept to a minimum and time taken will need to be made up and breaks monitored by managers.
- Employees wishing to stop smoking will be given appropriate help and support.

Want to stop smoking? Contact Quit51.

Quit51 provide a free stop smoking service across Surrey. Their service is based upon the latest research and evidence and support is delivered by specially trained advisers who are registered with the National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training (NCSCT).

Get in touch with Quit51 to start your smoke free journey....

Call on: 0800 622 6968

Text: text 'smokefree' to 66777

Email: [contact.quit51@nhs.net](mailto:contact.quit51@nhs.net)

or go to <http://www.healthysurrey.org.uk/your-health/smoking/>

More advice is available from [www.nhs.uk/smokefree](http://www.nhs.uk/smokefree)



## Section 1 - Health and safety at work

### **1.1.4 Work-life balance**

The Council is keen to ensure that employees are able to balance work and other responsibilities, and flexible working arrangements are available to you. Read more about flexible working (flexi-time) and Transport Plan initiatives on [ewokplus](#).

### **1.1.5 Lone working**

It is important that all employees feel safe whilst at work; therefore, the Council uses the Forestcare lone working monitoring system. This is an easy to use and effective way of trying to ensure that employees are safe whilst they are working alone or in situations where they feel vulnerable and at risk. Some teams also use a handheld GPS trackable device.

More information on lone working is available on [ewokplus](#).

### **1.1.6 Personal alarms**

If you would like to carry a personal alarm while working away from your office-based location, these can be obtained from Human Resources, free of charge.

### **1.1.7 Risk Assessments**

The Council undertakes regular risk assessments to ensure avoidable risks whilst undertaking Council duties are minimised. There are stored on Sharepoint so they are accessible to all employees.

### **1.1.8 Safety equipment**

If a role requires specific safety equipment or Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), the Council will provide this.

### **1.1.9 Training**

The Council will provide all necessary health and safety training for employees.



## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment





## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

### 2.1.1 Identification passes

#### **Automatic Access Control**

Employees are issued with a photo identification (ID) card on their first day, which must be carried at all times. Employees who are based at the Civic Offices will be issued with a badge, which allows entry into the Civic Offices and the various parts of the building, subject to authorisation by their Senior Manager.

### 2.2 Terms and conditions of employment

The Council's aim is to provide the same general terms and conditions of employment for all its employees, whilst recognising the specific needs of particular jobs.

Details of your personal conditions of employment can be found in your Contract of Employment, given to you on appointment. Please keep the contract safe for your reference. Any variations to the contract will either be notified to you personally or by revision of the Employee Handbook.

### 2.3 Leave

#### 2.3.1 Introduction

Woking Borough Council is committed to developing and maintaining working arrangements that enable employees to achieve a better work-life balance. It also encourages all employees to take their full statutory annual leave entitlement every year in accordance with the Working Time Regulations 1998. For family-friendly policies, including flexible working, parental leave, maternity, paternity and adoption rights, please see the relevant sections on [ewokplus](#).

#### 2.3.2 Annual Leave

The annual leave year runs from your start date with Woking Borough Council (unless otherwise agreed).

The basic paid annual leave entitlement is 23 working days plus public holidays. This will increase to 28 working days after 5 years continuous service within local government or recognised associated employer. After 10 years service with Woking Borough Council you will receive 29 working days and after 20 years service with Woking Borough Council this will increase to 30 working days. You will be paid at normal basic salary for all authorised absence on annual leave. Applications and approval of holidays and time off are made through HR21, the Council's electronic employee self service software.

The above entitlements are pro rata for part time employees. If an employee is contracted to work less than 37 hours per week, their annual leave entitlement (as shown above) and bank holidays will be proportionate to the hours worked and calculated in hours instead of days.



## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

All employees must take a minimum of 20 days annual leave (plus 8 bank holidays) per holiday year as per the Working Time Regulations 1998 (pro rata for part time employees).

Annual leave in the employee's first and final years of service will be calculated by completed month's service on a pro-rata basis.

When an employee leaves employment with the Council they will be entitled to a pro-rata amount of their current leave year and this must be taken in agreement with the Line Manager before their leaving date. Payment for untaken leave may be an option in exceptional circumstances. To request annual leave you must give at least the relevant notice period which is double the time you are requesting (minimum being one week notice).

If an employee has taken more leave than they are entitled to at the time they are leaving the Council's employment, the Council will deduct the relevant amount of pay from the employee's final salary. This will be discussed with the employee.

Occasionally employees may wish or need to take extended periods of annual leave. Requests should not be unreasonably refused by the manager and will be dependent upon service requirements. However, consideration must be given to ensuring that an employee has adequate leave periods throughout the rest of the annual leave year.

Employees who work on a variable hours contract will accrue annual leave throughout the year. Line Managers should monitor an employees balance on a regular basis if they work on a variable hours contract.

Please view the Council's Leave Policy on [ewokplus](#) to find more information about the following:

- 9 day fortnight
- Banking annual leave
- Buying additional annual leave
- Carry forward annual leave
- Compassionate Leave
- Dentist and Doctors appointments
- Dependant Care Leave
- Flexitime
- Special paid leave



## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

### 2.3.3 Maternity Leave and Pay

All pregnant women have the right to 26 weeks of Ordinary Maternity Leave (OML) and 26 weeks' Additional Maternity Leave (AML) – totaling 52 weeks' leave. Provided you meet certain notification requirements, you are entitled to take this amount of maternity leave no matter how long you have worked for the Council, how many hours you work or how much you are paid.

You are likely to be entitled to Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) which is currently paid for 39 weeks, as long as you meet the conditions. Find out about these conditions and your rights on the **GOV.UK** website<sup>1</sup>.

In addition Woking Borough Council provides enhanced maternity pay provisions, which are over and above the statutory requirements, for eligible employees through its Occupational Maternity Pay (OMP) Scheme. If you have at least one year's service 15 weeks before your baby is due, you are likely to have an entitlement to 12 weeks' half pay provided you return to work for at least three months. This entitlement of 12 weeks' pay is repayable if you do not return to work for this three-month period.

More information on maternity pay and leave is available on [ewokplus](#).

### 2.3.4 Paternity Leave and Pay

When you take time off because your partner's having a baby or adopting a child you might be eligible for:

- 1 or 2 weeks paid Ordinary Paternity Leave (OPL)
- up to 26 weeks' paid Additional Paternity Leave (APL) - but only if the mother / co-adopter returns to work

You could have either 1 or 2 weeks of OPL. The amount will remain the same even if it is a multiple birth (e.g. twins). In addition, you could take between 2 and 26 weeks of APL, depending on how much unused maternity (or adoption) leave your partner has.

During paternity leave, you may qualify for Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP), please find the current rate on the **GOV.UK** website<sup>2</sup>. In addition, if you are eligible for SPP, you will be eligible to receive an additional discretionary payment which increases the statutory payment to the level of your normal salary for the period of Ordinary Paternity Leave under the Council's Occupational Scheme.

More information on paternity pay and leave is available on [ewokplus](#).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/maternity-pay-leave/pay>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/paternity-pay-leave/pay>



## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

### 2.3.5 Adoption Leave and Pay

Statutory Adoption Leave is 52 weeks. It's made up of 26 weeks of Ordinary Adoption Leave and 26 weeks of Additional Adoption Leave. Only 1 person in a couple can take adoption leave. The other partner could apply for paternity leave instead.

To qualify for Statutory Adoption Leave, you must:

- be an employee
- have worked for the Council continuously for at least 26 weeks by the week you were matched with a child
- give the correct notice
- give proof of the adoption - if your employer asks you for it

The weekly amount of Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP) is payable for 39 weeks. Find the current SAP rate on the **GOV.UK** website<sup>3</sup>.

To receive SAP you must:

- have worked for the Council continuously for at least 26 weeks by the week you were matched with a child
- earn on average at least £109 a week (before tax)
- give the correct notice
- give proof of the adoption

You can find full details of the adoption leave and pay arrangements on [ewokplus](#).

### 2.3.6 Unpaid Leave

In certain circumstances you may take unpaid leave at your Senior Manager's discretion.

### 2.3.7 Sabbatical Leave

Woking Borough Council recognises that there may be times when employees wish to take extended periods of time away from work during the course of their employment in order to pursue other interests outside of work, including (but not limited to): spending time with family, pursuing further education, taking an extended holiday or participating in voluntary or community work.

A sabbatical will be an authorised unpaid leave of absence. Please note: Sabbatical Leave does not constitute a break in the period of continuous service. When calculating the total length of service, the time taken on a sabbatical will not be counted. Sabbaticals are granted at the Council's discretion and are not an entitlement.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/adoption-pay-leave/pay>



## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

Please see the Sabbatical Leave Policy on [ewokplus](#) for more information.

### 2.4 Hours of work

A full time employee will be contracted to work 37 hours per week.

#### 2.4.1 Working Time Regulations (1998)

The Council encourages its managers to ensure that working arrangements are reasonable and, as far as possible, to take into account the needs/preferences of individual employees.

Hours of work comply with relevant Health and Safety legislation, including the European Working Time Directive and its associated UK legislation.

The basic rights and protections that the regulations provide are:

- a limit of an average of 48 hours a week which a worker can be required to work (though workers can choose to work more if they want to);
- a limit of an average of eight hours' work in 24 hours which night workers can be required to work;
- a right for night workers to receive free health assessments;
- a right to 11 hours' rest a day;
- a right to a day off each week;
- a right to an in-work rest break if the working day is longer than six hours; and
- a right to four weeks' paid leave per year.

For young people under 18 years, there are different regulations, please find out more on the [GOV.UK](#) website<sup>4</sup>.

#### 2.4.2 Probation Period

Appointment to your position will be subject to successful completion of a probationary period, as set out in your Contract of Employment. This is in order to resolve any difficulties on either side and to help you settle quickly into your job. You will be assisted by your manager and notified of the successful completion of the probationary period. If you join the organisation with local government continuous service, the probationary period still applies. However, we recognise continuous service as giving enhanced benefits in other terms & conditions, including the notice period we are required to give you, occupational sick pay, maternity pay and annual leave calculation.

#### 2.4.3 Overtime

The Council aims to keep overtime to a minimum, but if you have had to work additional hours, time off in lieu can be taken through the flexi-time scheme or by specific arrangement with your manager. All overtime must be approved in advance by your manager and claimed using HR21 (the Council's employee self service system).

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/rest-breaks-work/types-of-break>





## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

Please view the current overtime rates on ewokplus under the Allowances page.

### 2.4.4 Bank holidays

The Civic Offices are closed on public holidays although some employees not based at the Civic Offices may be required to work at these times due to the nature of their duties and their place of work. These employees will receive equivalent time off in lieu and/or extra pay.

### 2.4.5 Call out procedures (ad-hoc)

The Council often needs to provide ad-hoc services outside normal working hours (including weekends and bank holidays), for example in response to an emergency. Where there are no specific call out arrangements details in your Contract of Employment, you may be required to be available and provide cover by agreement with your manager, as the need arises. There may be other guidelines in place in particular circumstances (for example, emergency planning arrangements). Compensatory rest is normally taken in lieu of time spent on call.

### 2.4.6 Standby and call out procedures (managed)

In addition to ad-hoc call out arrangements, the Council provides a number of managed services where employees are required to be on standby in order to respond to call-outs as required, for a set period of time, on a rota basis. These are managed at Business Area level. An allowance is normally payable for employees on standby.

If you are called out whilst on standby, overtime is payable at the appropriate rate and, where no other arrangement exists, based on time spent attending the call with enhancement subject to the prevailing overtime limit.

## 2.5 Sickness

If you are unwell or unable to work, you must contact your supervisor or manager by phone by 10am on the first day of your absence (or as outlined in your Contract of Employment if you work on a shift system or start work earlier than usual).

You are asked to give an indication of the cause of your absence and how long it is likely to last. If you are unable to confirm the length of your absence, please make contact with your line manager each day to confirm if you are still unwell. This is to enable any meetings to be rescheduled and time sensitive tasks to be completed by colleagues.

If you return to work within seven days, you should fill in a self certification form, available on ewokplus. After absence of more than seven days (including weekends) you must provide a fit note to cover your absence.

You will be interviewed by your manager on returning to work after sickness to help you settle back into your work and to offer you support that may be needed.



## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

### Entitlements

Your entitlement to sick pay will vary according to your length of service. Calculation of sick pay entitlement will include counting any previous periods of sickness in the preceding 12 months prior to your first day of sickness. The entitlements are as follows:

Continuous Service*	Full pay	Half pay
0 to 4 months	22 days (162.8 hours)	nil
5 to 12 months	22 days (162.8 hours)	43 days (162.8 hours)
during 2nd year	43 days (318.2 hours)	43 days (318.2 hours)
during 3rd year	87 days (643.8 hours)	87 days (643.8 hours)
during 4th year	109 days (806.6 hours)	109 days (806.6 hours)
during 5th year	109 days (806.6 hrs)	109 days (806.6 hrs)
after 5 years	130 days (962 hrs)	130 days (962 hrs)

These are full time equivalent figures for an employee working 37 hours per week. The entitlement will be pro-rated for part time employees.

For example: For an employee working 37 hours per week, their entitlement in the first 4 months of employment would be **162.8 hours**.

For an employee working 20 hours per week, their entitlement in the first 4 months of employment would be **88 hours**:  $162.8 / 37 * 20 = 88$  hours

These entitlements may be extended in approved cases at the discretion of the Chief Executive.

\***Continuous Service** refers to continuous local government service, indicated in your Contract of Employment.

### 2.5.1 Occupational Health Service

The Council employs the services of experienced occupational health medical advisors to:

- advise whether potential new employees are fit for work;
- advise on the prevention of work related disease;
- promote good health at work;
- assess your health if you are on long term sick leave or returning to work after a period of sickness and offer any advice; and
- give any other medical advice as required, for example, adjustments required under the Equality Act 2010.



## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

### 2.6 Pay and expenses

#### 2.6.1 Pay and Benefits

##### Pay Grade Framework

The present grade structure has been simplified and a new *grade framework* has been developed which compresses the previous hierarchy of 31 pay grades into 12 grades with 3 pay zones. There are no over-lapping grades.

Linked grades will apply to some roles only where there is a defined structure to determine the steps in the link and that these are clear, transparent and measurable. This allows for maximum flexibility within the framework.

Outside the main framework, there are four trainee grades which will mirror the pay levels of the National Minimum Wage and therefore indexation will not apply. A flexible benefit will be available set at the equivalent of grade W1 for trainee grade T4 reducing at the same level as the hourly rate for the remaining T grades. These grades are likely to be used for junior roles and are part of the Council's ambition to create employment opportunities for those new to employment.

##### Pay Zones

The pay range within each grade is divided into three *pay zones* creating three mini pay ranges within each grade.

##### Flexible Benefit

The flexible benefit scheme allows employees to make choices as to how they wish to benefit from the flexible fund available to them.

The public sector season ticket (PSST) will be purchased using the flexible fund. Employees will now be able to opt in and out of this scheme as required. (The current PSST pay protection will remain in place for existing reduced hours employees where this applies).

Any remaining unused flexible fund can be taken as cash at 80%, payable with salary, subject to the normal deductions. The flexible fund is not pensionable, unless otherwise indicated.

Roles on a linked grade will receive an increase to their flexible benefit following progression to the next linked grade.

Please see ewokplus for the Pay Grade Framework which includes current flexible benefit rates.



## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

### Performance and Development Review

#### 2.6.2 Travel and subsistence expenses

If you incur additional expenses in the course of your employment while you are away from your normal place of work, (e.g. business meetings, seminars, conferences, study), you will be reimbursed as long as the expenses were reasonable).

Evidence of the expenditure, e.g. VAT receipts, will be required. When overnight stays are necessary, the costs should be ascertained and approved in advance before bookings are made.

#### 2.6.3 Salary overpayments

Woking Borough Council will seek to recover any overpayments of salary which may arise from time to time through a payroll deduction. If you receive an overpayment of salary, you will be consulted regarding the recovery.

#### 2.6.4 Honorarium

An honorarium may be payable where it has been agreed that you are asked to perform duties in addition to your normal job. The honorarium will be calculated and agreed by your manager and payable for the duration of the extra duties. The allowance will not be pensionable.

### 2.7 Notice period to terminate employment

The period of notice that you are required to give, in writing, if you leave the Council is set out in your contract of employment. It is likely to be 1, 2 or 3 months.

The period of notice which the Council is required to give you if it were to terminate your employment is also explained in your contract of employment. It depends on seniority and length of service. The minimum notice to which you are entitled is set out below:

Period of continuous service	Minimum notice entitlement
Less than 5 years	1 month
More than 5 years but less than 12 years	1 week for each year of continuous service
12 years or more	12 weeks

### 2.8 Pension scheme



## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

As part of national pension auto enrolment requirements, all employees will have been opted in to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) unless you specifically request to opt out after you have started employment. Although membership is not compulsory, the Council, the recognised trade union and the Government recommend that you join or remain in the LGPS.

Contributions are made by both employees (based on earnings) and a larger, proportion paid by the Council as the employer (17%). The scheme provides an index linked pension, early retirement and life assurance benefits. You also have the option, subject to certain conditions, of taking out an Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC) Plan to increase your pension. For details on any of the above please contact Human Resources.

The Pension Scheme is administered by Surrey County Council on behalf of Woking Borough Council. Surrey County Council provides an annual statement of your projected pension benefits. The Pensions Team can be contacted in a variety of ways, please find this information on this webpage<sup>5</sup>.

For more information about the Local Government Pension Scheme, visit their website<sup>6</sup>.

### 2.9 Retirement

When an employee decides they would like to retire, they need to discuss their wishes with their line manager or Human Resources.

Employees who are members of the Local Government Pension Scheme can retire and receive their benefits in full once they have reached aged 65.

For further information, please visit their website<sup>7</sup>.

### 2.10 Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) checks

Some of the Council's employees work with vulnerable groups including children and these employees are required to be checked through the Disclosure and Barring Service and for a satisfactory Disclosure Certificate to be obtained. Full details are provided for applicants where this is relevant.

The primary role of the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) is to help employers make safer recruitment decisions and prevent unsuitable people from working with vulnerable groups including children.

The type of check required will depend upon the nature of the position. These are either Basic, Enhanced or Standard Disclosures. Once a form is sent to the DBS, they search police records and, in relevant cases, barred list information, and then issue a

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.surreypensionfund.org/about-us/contact-details.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> [www.lgps.org.uk](http://www.lgps.org.uk)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.lgps.org.uk/lge/core/page.do?pageId=100347>



## Section 2 - Conditions of Employment

DBS certificate to the applicant to show their employer. This helps the employer to make an informed recruitment decision.

A check with the DBS is then made every three years, this forms part of your Contract of Employment. A criminal record is not a bar to employment. Full details of the Council's associated policy statements can be found through ewokplus. If you require any further information, please contact the Human Resources team or visit the DBS website<sup>8</sup>.

### 2.11 Politically restricted posts

Under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, a number of posts are politically restricted and will prevent an employee from having any political active role either in or outside the workplace. Those in politically restricted posts will not be able to hold or stand for elected office, and will be prevented from:

- Participating in political activities, publicly expressing support for a political party or undertaking other activities such as canvassing on behalf of a person who seeks to be a candidate; and
- Speaking to the public at large or publishing any written or artistic work that could give the impression that you are advocating support for a political party.

If a post is politically restricted this will be outlined in the advert, person specification and the contract of employment.

A list of politically restricted posts is available from Human Resources. If your post is included on this on duties-related grounds, you can appeal against your inclusion if you feel you cannot influence policy, or that the local authority has incorrectly applied the duties-related criteria. All such appeals require a letter from you formally seeking exemption and a job description of the post.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service/about>



## Section 3 - Employee Benefits



## Section 3 - Employee Benefits







## Section 3 - Employee Benefits

### 3.1. Allowances

There are allowances for employees who undertake specific duties or have certain responsibilities. Some must be claimed using a monthly timesheet and others are set up to be paid automatically. For example, some employees may be required to attend evening meetings.

Details of all allowance rates and how to claim them is available on [ewokplus](#).

### 3.2 Vehicles

#### 3.2.1 Car leasing scheme

The car leasing scheme will be open to all employees who will be able to offset the annual cost of a leased vehicle against all or part of their flexible benefit. Any further cost can be met directly from salary deductions. Any vehicle will need to meet the Council's environmental and safety criteria:

- The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions limit is set at 135g/km with effect from 1 October 2018
- NCAP 5 safety rating

#### 3.2.2 Vehicle allowance

The Council recognises that some roles require essential items in order for them to be carried out effectively and efficiently. These items may include a vehicle where no other methods of transport are available or practical. Therefore the Council will provide an additional job related vehicle allowance to roles where it has been agreed by the Corporate Management Group that a vehicle is required.

The current lease car criteria are:

- The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions limit is set at 135g/km with effect from 1 October 2018
- NCAP 5 safety rating

As an alternative to a lease car you can choose the cash alternative option. The amount paid is dependent on the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of your vehicle. A list will be made available in your Contract of Employment.



## Section 3 - Employee Benefits

### 3.3 Childcare

#### 3.3.1 Lactation Room

A private and dedicated lactation room is available at the Civic Offices for anyone wishing to utilise it. Further details are available via Building Services.

#### 3.3.2 Childcare voucher scheme

Woking Borough Council provides a childcare voucher scheme with Imagine Co-operative Childcare. You can save money on any kind of registered childcare including nurseries, child minders, out of school clubs, and holiday play schemes.

You have the opportunity to exchange up to £243 per month of your salary into childcare vouchers and pay no tax or national insurance on this amount. A basic earnings assessment will take place to confirm your maximum entitlement, for example, if you are on higher tax band, the maximum amount you would be entitled would be is £124 per month).

Further details of this scheme are available on the co-operative website<sup>9</sup>.

### 3.4 Health and wellbeing

#### 3.4.1 Health and leisure facilities

As part of the Council's commitment to helping to improve employee health and wellbeing, all employees will receive free swimming at Woking Pool in the Park. This applies to all public swimming sessions in Woking Pool in the Park on presentation of your staff ID badge (this does not apply to water fitness classes).

For opening times of Woking Leisure Centre and Pool in the Park, visit the Freedom Leisure website<sup>10</sup>.

In addition, employees can also take advantage of the corporate health and leisure membership. For more information on health and wellbeing facilities is available on ewokplus.

#### 3.4.2 Discount on health cover

You and your immediate family may enjoy a discount on subscriptions for health cover. For information on cover, take a look at the Simply Health website or email [customer.services@simplyhealth.co.uk](mailto:customer.services@simplyhealth.co.uk).

#### 3.4.3 VDU eyecare vouchers

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.flexiblebenefits.coop/childcare-vouchers/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.freedom-leisure.co.uk/centres.asp?section=841&sectionTitle=pool+in+the+park>



## Section 3 - Employee Benefits

VDU (Visual Display Unit) eyecare vouchers are available at no cost to WBC employees every two years through the Council's corporate eye test provider Specsavers.

Each voucher provides a full eye examination. Should it be identified that glasses are required solely and specifically for VDU use; the employee will be able to select a pair of glasses from the £45 range, fitted with PENTAX CR39 single vision lenses plus scratch-resistant treatment, as standard. Alternatively, the £45 contribution can be used as an upgrade to other frame ranges.

You can find the eye test form and further information on [ewokplus](#).

### 3.4.4 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

Whatever our age, background or role in life, from time to time we all have problems - whether personal, family, or work-related. Stress is a normal human reaction, and in many cases is a healthy and positive force in our lives. But it becomes a problem when we find ourselves suffering from its negative effects.

Talking to a counsellor or an advisor can help you understand a problem, make a tough decision, try a different approach or just learn how to cope with a situation that you can't change. The aim of advice or counselling is to help you find your own answer or solution to whatever is worrying you.

The helpline's team of professionally qualified counsellors, advisors and lawyers can offer support and practical advice on a variety of personal, family, legal and work-related problems, detailed below.

#### **Work-related issues**

- Workplace stress, coping with change, relationships with colleagues, bullying and harassment, discrimination or victimisation.

#### **Personal and family issues**

- Debt and money worries, divorce or separation, legal advice and information, parenting and eldercare, drug and alcohol problems, depression and anxiety.

More information about how to access this service is available on [ewokplus](#).

### 3.4.5 Sports and Social Club

All Council employees are automatically members of the Sports and Social Club and are able to make use of the staff rest area and Phoenix Bar on the 2nd floor of the Civic Offices, and participate in a variety of functions organised by the club; details of which are publicised in advance on notice boards, e-mail and on [ewokplus](#).



## Section 3 - Employee Benefits

### 3.4.6 Flexible Working

Any employee is able to request flexible working subject to the needs of the service as long as they have 26 week's service or more. In addition to this – there is a legal right which allows employees to request flexible working if they have responsibility for children up to 16 years, or under 18 years if disabled, or if they are a carer of an adult.

More information on Flexible Working is available on ewokplus and on the **GOV.UK** website<sup>11</sup>.

### 3.5 Employee loans

The Council will provide interest free loans for costs associated with your employment, including purchase of travel season tickets. Loans at advantageous interest rates are also available, subject to certain condition for cars and computer equipment for home-use.

If you are looking for a loan or savings account please contact <http://www.boomcu.co.uk/>

### 3.6 Relocation assistance

If through your appointment as an employee you need to move to the Woking area, the Council operates a relocation assistance package which may be available.

The Council may be able to assist with temporary accommodation allowance, professional fees, removal expenses or disturbance allowance.

All payments for relocation assistance are subject to approval by the relevant Senior Manager/Corporate Management Group and a proportionate refund will be required if you leave the Council's employment within three years of the date of appointment.

### 3.7 Professional subscriptions

The Council will pay your annual membership subscription to one professional institute or body provided that membership is a requirement for your job.

### 3.8 Union membership

The Council supports the system of collective bargaining and agrees that its own interests and those of employees are best served by individual employees joining an appropriate union.

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<sup>11</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/flexible-working/overview>



## Section 3 - Employee Benefits

**UNISON** is the union recognised as representing the majority of Woking Borough Council employees locally, whether its own members, non-members or members of another union. Both the Council and UNISON respect the wishes of employees who do not wish to join a union.

UNISON represents all employees in local pay negotiations and is involved in developing other local terms and conditions through regular meetings with the Council as your employer.

Some employees may belong to other recognised unions who would be consulted on matters affecting those employees. All officers may seek election and hold office in recognised unions and are allowed reasonable time off and the facilities to carry out their role effectively.

Joint consultation between Human Resources and UNISON takes place each month. More information on Union membership is available on [ewokplus](#).



## Section 4 - Policies and strategies



## Section 4 - Policies and strategies

**The policies below can be viewed on [ewokplus](#).**

Anti Corruption and Fraud Policy

Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

Being Equal Policy

Capability Policy

Code of Conduct for Employees Policy

Compensation Payments Policy

Compulsory Redundancy Policy

Confidential Reporting Policy

Disciplinary Policy

Drugs and Alcohol at Work Policy

Employer Supported Volunteering Policy

Employment Stability Policy

Employment Transformation Policy

Equal Pay Policy

Grievance Policy

Health and Safety Policy

HIV and AIDS Policy

Leave Policy

Race Equality Scheme Policy

Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy

Reserve Forces Training & Mobilisation Policy



## Section 4 - Policies and strategies

Sabbatical Leave Policy

Safeguarding Adults, Children and Young People Policy

Secure Storage, Handling, Use, Retention and Disposal of Disclosures and Disclosure Information Policy Statement

Severe Weather Policy

Work Related Stress Policy

Working at Home Policy

Workstyle Policy

### **HR related IT Security Policies**

Internet and Email Policy

Use of Information and Systems Policy





Section 5 - Learning and performance





## Section 5 - Learning and performance

### 5.1 Introduction

Woking Borough Council is committed to providing a full range of learning opportunities for our employees. We want to provide development for people to grow and fine tune existing skills and in addition, support people to learn completely new ones. We are keen to equip our employees, watch people grow in confidence and ability and play a key part in developing careers.

### 5.2 Career development

The Council's policies are geared towards maximising opportunities for employees to grow and develop in their existing jobs and to prepare for promotion. Internal promotion may be achieved in two ways, either by you developing within the existing job by progressively taking on additional responsibilities, often alongside a course of study; or as you acquire new skills and experience - i.e. you grow and the job changes with you or; you may be promoted to a higher level position. In these circumstances, vacancies are normally advertised.

There is a balance to achieve here between providing equality of opportunity and direct promotion of those who have been trained by the Council and prepared for the next step up the ladder.

All employees are free to apply for advertised vacancies. For details of vacant posts available at the Council, visit [www.surreyjobs.info](http://www.surreyjobs.info).

### 5.3 Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

To keep up to date with developments within your profession and new legislation, you are encouraged to attend relevant conferences and seminars when circumstances allow, and to maintain CPD records.

### 5.4 Behavioural Framework

To ensure the Behaviour Framework is fully embedded in the performance management culture of our organisation links have been created within the Performance and Development Review process.

There are 7 behaviours within the Framework:

- Shaping our Future
- Leading our People
- Delivering for our Customers
- Making Change Happen
- Team and Partnership Working
- Communicating Openly
- Performance Management

A full copy of the Behavioural Framework is available on [ewokplus](#).



## Section 5 - Learning and performance

### 5.5 Performance Management

Each year employees with their managers will be required to participate in a formal *Performance and Development Review* delivered via an application within Sharepoint.

This review is designed to cover:

- The contribution and performance of an individual.
- Individual behaviours, using the Behaviour Framework.
- Learning and development requirements.
- Health and wellbeing.

The Performance and Development Review process will be used as a tool to measure performance by linking it to behaviours. Employees can then be assessed on the basis of both **how** they go about their work and **what** they achieve. The **'how'** is defined through the 'behaviours' and the Council's values/priorities and the **'what'** is expressed through the achievement of objectives and targets.

Completion of a vocational qualification supported by the Council will be included as part of an assessment of performance.

At the end of the Performance and Development Review process employees will be given a rating in relation to objectives and behaviours. There are *four performance* ratings available A, B, C and D.

Please see ewokplus for the Paerformance Management ratings and descriptor tables.

### 5.6 Personal Development Plan (PDP)

It is the Council's intention that every employee should have a Personal Development Plan, to track and manage your learning throughout your employment with the Council. For new employees, it is a continuation of the induction process. The aim is to agree learning objectives and action points which you and your manager sign up to and subsequently, on how successful the action has been and what further learning may be needed.

If you are having any problems with your work, you must discuss this with your manager or supervisor. A PDP template is available on ewokplus.

This process is currently under review.

### 5.7 Training courses and programmes

There is an extensive range of training courses and programmes available, covering a wide variety of areas e.g. customer care, health and safety, letter writing and presentation skills.



## Section 5 - Learning and performance

### **Shared Training**

The Surrey Learn Partnership (SLP) have developed a successful shared training programme which enables officers from all Surrey Borough and District Councils to access an extensive range of training courses. SLP have worked in partnership to develop the Surrey Learn website<sup>12</sup> so that all officers within Surrey's local authorities can access information about the shared training programme courses and related learning information easily.

### **E-learning Zone**

All Council employees are able to access a broad range of e-learning courses, both at work and at home via the internet.

Learning is not just about going on a training course. There are many different ways to do it e.g. coaching, mentoring, work-based activity and self study.

You are encouraged to work with your manager to plan how opportunities can be best used to meet your needs. No-one is more interested in your learning and development than you, so it is up to you to take responsibility, getting the help and support of others when you need to.

The Learning and Development booking form can be found on [ewokplus](#).

## **5.8 Vocational training**

Training which results in a formal qualification is normally college or correspondence based, although occasionally it may be office based. Initially, you should discuss your intended course of study with your manager and Human Resources.

You may be allowed to use work time to attain a qualification depending on:

- staffing in your section;
- whether the intended qualification is appropriate to yours and the Council's needs;
- cost;
- the amount of work time involved;
- any previous support given; and
- obtaining your manager's support.

Once agreed, you will normally receive full salary during the course, reimbursement of course fees, exam fees and student membership fees of professional bodies, plus travel and subsistence allowances. Continued support for study is dependent on you showing satisfactory progress.

If you leave the Council during your course, or within two years of completing the qualification, you may be required to repay a proportion of the financial assistance which you have received.

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<sup>12</sup> [www.surreylearn.co.uk](http://www.surreylearn.co.uk)



## Section 5 - Learning and performance

You are able to make claims for expenses at the end of every term by completing a vocational training expenses form.

More information on the scheme and an application form is available on [ewokplus](#).

### 5.9 Management development

Good management development is recognised as a key requisite for the Council's success. All managers newly appointed or otherwise, need to continually update their management skills and knowledge, whether this is by attending relevant workshops, seminars or courses.

If you would like to attend a course to develop your management skills, please speak to your Senior Manager or take a look at the information on the Surrey Learn Management Development Programme on [ewokplus](#).

**If you have any further questions in relation to this handbook, please speak to Human Resources.**



Woking Borough Council  
Civic Offices, Gloucester Square,