Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lincolnshire (OPCC)

<u>AGILE WORKING POLICY</u>

1. Introduction

1.1. The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) recognises the potential benefits to both the employee and the organisation of taking, when appropriate, an agile approach to working.

1.2. The OPCC takes a permissive approach to agile working providing employees with options with regards to where they undertake their roles by introducing an element of choice, with line manager approval, which will ensure that the needs of the organisation are best met. As some roles are more flexible than others, agile working will be adopted at varying levels across the OPCC as a whole. (See section 6.1 for more detailed guidance).

1.3. This Policy document should be read in conjunction with the 'Agile Working Assessment Framework' **(see Appendix A).**

1.4 This Policy has been extended to include members of staff employed within the Regional Collaboration Team based in the OPCC.

2. Agile Working

2.1. For the purposes of this policy the OPCC considers agile working to be when an employee works flexibly from any location that isn't their primary office base including the Force estate, other external sites and/or by varying degrees of home working as part of their routine work pattern (i.e., a blended approach, routinely working from an office base and home / remote locations). The different ways in which agile working can be undertaken will be dependent on the demands and needs of each role.

2.2. It should be noted that under normal circumstances, there is no expectation that employees shall work away from their primary office base and any change in working practice must be mutually agreed between the employee and their line manager.

3. Guiding Principles

3.1. The principles that will guide decisions regarding the OPCCs approach to agile working are:

3.1.1 That the OPCC delivers efficient and effective functions in support of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and in service to the people of Lincolnshire.
3.1.2 That the safety and wellbeing of employees is properly controlled.
3.1.3 That fairness and inclusivity are central to our approach.
3.1.4 That employees are consulted over any proposed changes to their working practices.

3.1.5 That due consideration is given to shared services that include both OPCC and Lincolnshire Police employees.

3.1.6 That investment in ICT and/or other equipment and infrastructure is proportionate and appropriate to support agile work patterns.

3.1.7 That employees and leaders take a flexible, open, and constructive approach.

4. Objectives

4.1. The objectives for adopting an agile approach to working are:

4.1.1 To maintain or enhance the effectiveness of the OPCC.

4.1.2 To maintain or enhance the efficiency of the OPCC.

4.1.3 To maintain or enhance the effectiveness of direct services delivered to the people of Lincolnshire.

4.1.4 To deliver value for money for the resources allocated to the organisation.

4.1.5 To keep employees safe and valued.

4.1.6 To realise the potential benefits of taking an agile approach to work, for both the organisation and employees.

5. Purpose

5.1. The purpose of this policy is:

5.1.1 To describe what 'agile working' means

5.1.2 To clarify the approach to implementing 'agile' working when appropriate.

5.1.3 To outline the guiding principles and key objectives when adopting agile working to help facilitate the implementation of safe, effective, and efficient agile working practices.

5.1.4 To act as a reference point for managers and employees engaged in decision making and discussion related to agile working.

6. Permissive Approach

6.1. An employee wishing to adopt an agile work pattern must first discuss the matter with their line manager in accordance with the 'Agile Working Assessment Framework' (at Appendix A to this policy). The assessment framework will ensure that discussions cover key issues that must be considered when permitting an employee to work in an agile way. The aim of the discussion will be to reach an agreement on the most effective and efficient work pattern that both meets the needs of the organisation and the role/preferences of the employee.

6.2. Once agreement has been reached and the agile approach implemented, then a review of the 'new' work pattern will be conducted to assess its effectiveness. As a minimum this should be conducted after an initial 6 months of operation and thereafter as part of an annual review incorporated into the PDR process.

6.3. This policy and any agile working agreement reached between the employee and manager does not affect the terms and conditions of employment.

7. Health and Safety

7.1. Agile working arrangements are covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. This means that the OPCC is responsible for the health, safety, and wellbeing of its employees whether working remotely or based solely in our offices.

7.2. If working from home, the employee will ensure that they have a suitable workspace. This must include appropriate seating, space, light, and ventilation. It should also be free from unnecessary interruptions and disruptive noise. If these conditions cannot be met, then the employee should work from an office.

7.3. Where a laptop is used remotely even for a short duration, the employee should still try to work in an ergonomically safe position.

7.4. In addition, a Display Screen Equipment (DSE) self-assessment (conducted at home) must be carried out by anyone who wishes to work from home as part of their agile work pattern.

7.5. It is recommended that a DSE self-assessment is carried out at least annually or when changes are made to an employee's workspace. This assessment should be discussed between the employee and their line manager to ensure a safe working environment is maintained.

8. Employee Welfare

8.1. Employee welfare is of paramount importance in the OPCC therefore all members of staff working in an agile way should ensure:

8.1.1 That working hours and patterns comply with the Flexi Time Scheme.
8.1.2 That their outlook calendar reflects any remote locations they are working from (away from either their home or primary office base) and that it can be viewed by their line manager and team members.
8.1.3 That any concerns arising over working practices or patterns are raised with their line manager or, if unavailable, a member of the OPCC Senior Management Team, as soon as practicable.
8.1.4 That they keep in regular communication with their line manager and team members. Examples include personal welfare checks, team meetings, one-to-one meetings, etc. Ideally a blended approach incorporating a mix of virtual and face-to-face approaches should be taken.
8.1.5 That where 'hot desking' or similar workspace sharing systems are in place within the primary office base a workstation is booked well in advance of attending the office, to ensure a safe and appropriate working environment is available for all.

9. Information Security & Connection to the Internet / Force Network

9.1. It is the responsibility of each employee to ensure they have a suitable internet connection to enable safe and secure agile working from home or remote locations outside of the OPCC / Force estate. If these conditions cannot be met, then the employee should work from a OPCC / Force office.

9.2. Employees are responsible for the information they handle, and extra care must be taken when working away from the office in terms of accessing, storing, transporting, and viewing information. Employees must ensure their agile working practices remain safe and compliant with current policy and legislation regarding data and information security. If in doubt, please refer to current policy documents including:

9.2.1 Remote access operating procedure policy PD147
9.2.2 Force Security Policy PD 55,
9.2.3 Protecting Data Stored on Portable Media Devices PD 139,
9.2.4 Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information policy PD 141.
9.2.5 Government Security Classification PD 228 or contact the force Information Security Officer for advice.

9.3. The following key requirements must be adhered to:

9.3.1 It is NOT ever permitted to use public Wi-Fi networks. **These types of Wi-Fi connections are typically found in public spaces such as coffee shops or fast-food outlets, hotels, stations etc**, **as they pose significant risks to the Force network and data security. (Except where express permission has been granted by the Force Information Security Officer.)**

9.3.2 Documents must not be printed when working away from an OPCC / Force office, regardless of their security classification or published status.

9.3.3 Only ICT equipment provided by the Force / OPCC can be connected to your work laptop / mobile phone (including printers).

9.3.4 Do not use personal equipment / email to transmit official information.

9.3.5 All documents containing official /sensitive information must be securely disposed of at a main office location - do not use household waste disposal.

9.3.6 ICT equipment (e.g., screens / monitors / docking stations) should not be removed from the office without the prior permission of your line manager and any such items should be itemised and a record maintained by the line manager.

9.3.7 Any concerns or questions relating to information security should be raised with your line manager in the first instance or referred to the Force Information Security Officer, based in the Information Management Unit (IMU) at Police Headquarters.

9.3.8 Any concerns over the safety or security of internet / Wi-Fi connections should be raised with the Force ICT service desk.

10. Personal Costs & Allowances

10.1 Each employee of the OPCC is issued with a laptop, and carry bag, (and integral SIM Card / mobile phone when appropriate) to help facilitate their working flexibly and remotely.

10.2 The OPCC will not be responsible for any personal costs incurred from choosing to work in an agile way. Examples include the cost of heating your home, insuring your home or its contents, installing and maintaining an internet connection at home, or the purchase of home-office / ICT equipment.

10.3 The cost of travelling to remote locations for work purposes will be re-imbursed in accordance with the **Travel Expenses policy- PD225.** I.e., where travel is for work purposes not personal preference.

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