

**Report of a survey into
flexible working within
Local Authorities in England,
Northern Ireland and Wales**

Supported by the LGE

March, 2006.

**Author : Marylou Lousvet
Director
WiseWork Limited**

Regd.Office : 7 Baron Way, Kingwood, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon, RG9 5WA

Tel : +44 (0)7092 121 495
E'mail : info@wisework.co.uk
Website : www.wisework.co.uk

Report of a survey into flexible working within Local Authorities

Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Executive Summary	3
Introduction and survey methodology	4
The main points	6
Detailed Results	7
Conclusions	24
Appendix One Results of survey carried out in July 2005 by the Employers' Organisation	25

Report of a survey into flexible working within Local Authorities

Executive Summary

Many local authorities have allowed flexible working of one type or another, for some staff, for some time. There are now the drivers and opportunities to develop an even more creative approach to flexible working, bringing together employee aspirations for different working patterns and customer demands for different patterns of service delivery. In February 2006, a survey was carried out by WiseWork Ltd. with support from the LGE, formerly the Employers' Organisation (EO).

The purpose of this survey is to build on a shorter survey conducted in June 2005 by the EO, through regional employers' organisations, on flexible working policy and to explore in greater depth the organisational drivers for and take-up of flexible working within Local Authorities.

Senior Human Resource staff from Local Authorities across England, Wales and Northern Ireland, who had signalled that they were willing to be contacted further during the 2005 survey, were surveyed by telephone during February 2006.

The main findings are:

- There is wide variation in progress towards implementation of flexible working options, with some excellent examples identified;
- Evaluation of the business benefits of flexible working is not well developed;
- From the HR perspective, the explicit link between the implementation of flexible working, evaluating the impact of flexible working and how flexible working can contribute to councils meeting their efficiency targets is not clear;
- Take up of technology, as the driver for change in work practices, is not widely shared and often not evident to corporate HR departments;
- Cost reviews of accommodation are driving some councils to implement increased technologically-assisted nomadic and home working;
- Whilst the main drivers identified are improving recruitment and retention, not all councils feature the availability of flexible working in their recruitment campaigns, and if they do, not always in the job advertisements thus not capitalising on this aspect;
- Progress in remote and nomadic working is strongly linked with certain functions;
- The main barriers to greater flexibility were reported as managers' attitudes and skills.

Introduction

The purpose of the survey was to explore in greater depth the organisational drivers for, and the implementation of, the flexible working within local authorities.

The terms 'flexibility' and 'flexible working' are used to describe a wide range of work styles and employment practices and understood differently by different functions. In this survey, they are used to describe patterns of employment that differ from the traditional fixed hours or traditional shift pattern supported by a permanent employment contract. "Flexibility" can therefore relate to any aspect of how, when, and where work is done as well as who does what.

The link between employee aspirations and customer demands for different patterns of service delivery in local government has been strengthened by

- the Pay Commission Report 2003, which recommended further promotion of such opportunities in local government;
- the Pay and Workforce Strategy 2005, which emphasises the need for a flexible workforce;
- and the Efficiency Review which has set targets for productive time.

Survey methodology

The surveyed councils were drawn from those who responded to a short survey conducted by the EO through regional employers' organisations in June 2005. That survey concentrated on whether councils had a policy in certain specific areas: the results are attached as Appendix 1. The results may therefore not truly represent the views of those authorities without a flexible working policy.

The questions for this survey were developed by a joint team from the EO (now the LGE) and WiseWork Ltd. The draft questions were then piloted on a small group of councils, redrafted and agreed.

This survey was carried out by telephone during February 2006 with Human Resource staff from the councils. In some cases copies of the questions were sent - without the analysis categories - to enable responses to be prepared. When interpreting the data it is important to bear in mind that the majority of respondents did not receive notice of the questions and were unaware of the analysis categories. We contacted human resource staff in corporate functions who had some responsibility or interest in flexible working options.

45 councils were surveyed during the survey period. A representative sample of councils was surveyed (by type and geography) covering all regions of England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The breakdown of these councils is:

	No. of responses per type of council	Number in UK	Response rate: % responses by council type	Sample make up%
Shire District	19	238	8	42
County	7	34	21	16
Metropolitan District	5	36	14	11
London Borough	6	33	18	14
English Unitary	5	47	11	11
Northern Ireland	1	26	4	2
Welsh Unitary	2	22	9	4
	45	436		

In order to maintain confidentiality the names of the councils which took part have been withheld. As the numbers are small in some of the categories we have grouped together all the types of councils that are not shire districts. This was based on the detailed analysis of the responses when the functions and services that the councils deliver and the size of the council were shown to have a small influence on what flexibility was being implemented.

In some questions the 'don't know' response could have a positive interpretation. It could mean that local managers have been empowered to make decisions about flexible working practices, rather than indicating lack of awareness or interest corporately.

Detailed Results

The results of the survey are described below in the order they were asked.

Question 1

The main drivers for implementing flexible working are identified as HR issues such as recruitment and retention and improving the work-life balance of staff. This may reflect the fact that we interviewed HR staff only. No guidance was given to the interviewee, other than drivers could be individual, managerial or organisational.

<i>What are the main drivers for flexible working in your Council?</i>	Shire	Other	Total
Recruitment problems	11	21	32
Retention problems	12	19	31
Desire for improved work-life balance	9	17	26
Added employee benefit	6	10	16
Improved customer services/service delivery	2	14	16
Other ?	6	10	16
Lack of accommodation/ space issues	1	14	15
Improved staff morale	3	10	13
Employment legislation	4	8	12
Efficiency & productivity - Need to improve	1	9	10
Environmental policy	3	7	10
Staff demand	3	7	10
Diversity - Access to work strategies	2	7	9
Cost savings		8	8
Culture change required		6	6
Commercial competition for clients, e.g.. leisure & building control	3	2	5
Operational reasons, e.g.. Shift patterns		5	5
Supportive of general Diversity objectives	1	4	5
Trade Union priority		1	1

Responses to the 'other' category included drivers such as:

"Employer of choice & modernising agenda & business re- engineering" County

"iIP - retaining commitment to this and staff" Shire District

"Unions focus on Equitable Treatment" Shire District

"Government "encouragement", availability of technology" Shire District

Additionally we recorded comments made by the interviewees and have included a small selection of the relevant comments with each question:

"Maximise business outputs by retaining skills" County

"Want to be flexible to meet customer's demands and can only do that through our people; if staff have balance in their life they will be engaged and therefore be better at meeting customer's needs"

"There has been a move towards business drivers from HR drivers. Accommodation strategy"

Unitary

"FWP is an integral part of our "Green Travel" Programme" Shire District

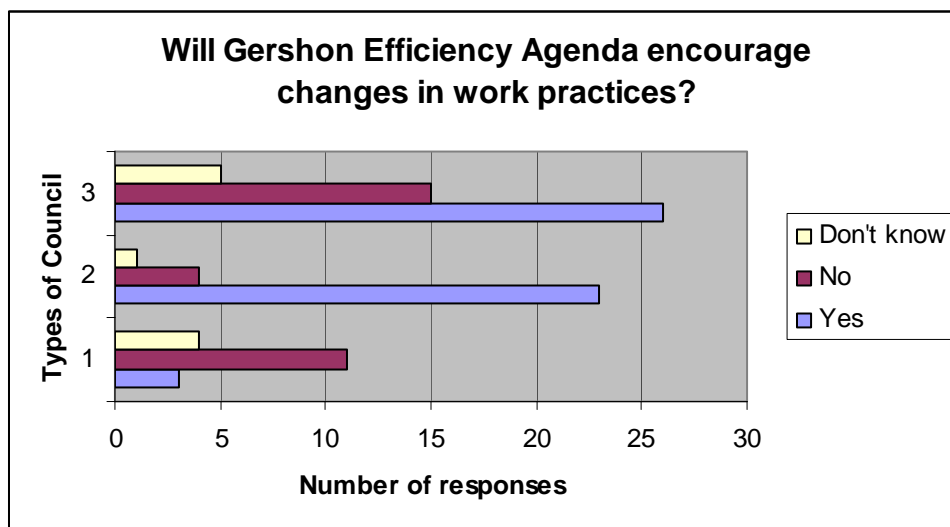
Question 2

One area we wanted to explore was whether the current emphasis on cost saving and efficiency expressed within the Gershon Efficiency Agenda was having any impact on the implementation of flexible working. There is a difference in responses between shire district councils and the others in the reported impact of this agenda on planned action.

An assessment was made about whether the interviewee was familiar with the term 'Gershon'. A large majority were familiar with the term (86%): although there was a difference between the shire districts and other councils - 76% to 92%. However, fewer than 60% had identified the potential flexible working could have on achieving Gershon targets.

<i>Will the "Gershon Efficiency Agenda" encourage you to make changes in working practices?</i>			
	Shire	Other	Total
Yes	3	23	26
No	11	4	15
Don't know	4	1	5
<i>Did the interviewee recognise the phrase "Gershon Review"?</i>			
Yes	13	24	37
No	3	2	5
Don't know	1		1

Legend: 3 Totals
 2 Other
 1 Shire District



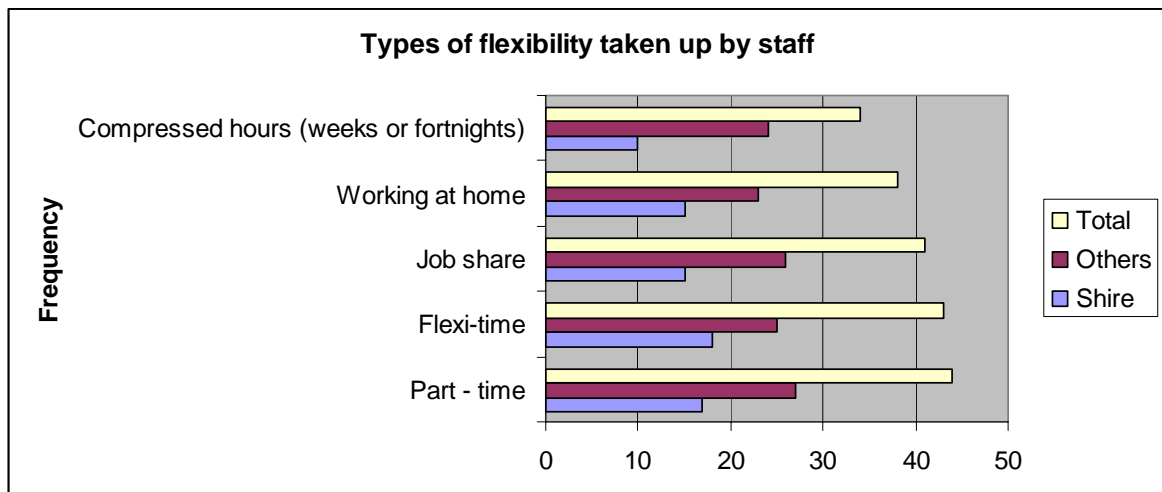
One comment received was "Gershon provides a useful framework for what we are already doing". County
 However another comment was "Gershon may produce unwanted results through focus on savings rather than performance." Shire District

Question 3

It is not a surprise that part-time, flexi-time, job share scored highly as some local councils have offered those options for many years. Working at home is also common with 84% reporting employing staff working in this manner.

During the survey, it was stressed that we were interested in whether staff have actually **taken up** these options: not whether there was a policy allowing for it.

<i>What types of flexible working options have been taken up by staff ?</i>	Shire	Others	Total
Part - time	17	27	44
Flexi-time	18	25	43
Job share	15	26	41
Working at home	15	23	38
Compressed hours (weeks or fortnights)	10	24	34
Reduced hours	10	22	32
Career breaks	7	21	28
Working while out / on the move	7	20	27
Desk sharing at main (base) office	9	15	24
Annualised hours	8	12	20
Personal choice of working hours	4	13	17
Other? term time	3	10	13
Sabbaticals	3	9	12
Regional / Local offices	0	10	10
Flexible benefits including additional leave	3	5	8
Other? extended special leave	1	1	2



Other options included:

- “Officer based outside council area working from home; elder care -1 day at home” Shire District
- “Staff have stayed on after retirement; term time working; bike for work; computers for home” Shire District
- “Ground maintenance do annualised hours” Shire District

Question 4

Asked if they thought that flexible working would increase or decrease over the next 3 years, no respondent thought that the take up of flexible working would decrease. The reasons for the increase were varied. Several councils felt that it would increase slowly as a result of fully implementing the policies.

<i>What do you think will happen in the next 3 years to the take up of flexible working?</i>			Total
Decrease	0	0	0
Increase slowly	11	11	22
Increase more rapidly	7	16	23

They were then asked why they thought it would increase. Typical comments were:

“Age legislation in October means we will be offering staff the option to continue working beyond retirement age” London Borough

“Just formalised & publishing to staff the options available and increased flexi-personal working pattern” Shire District

“Raised awareness of the need to achieve a better balance between work and home” Welsh Council

“Introduction of suitable IT is able to support it, H&S considerations are addressed and employees see the benefits” Shire District

“Driven by severe office accommodation problems & overcrowding” London Borough

“It is positive and part of the culture; most staff already work within the flexible working arrangements so increase will be gradual”

Question 5

Next we asked an open question about what types of flexibility they saw increasing most rapidly. A number commented that they were going to introduce or encourage greater take up of existing options rather than introduce new ones. The most frequently mentioned were compressed hours; desk-sharing in main offices and flexi offices and formalised home working, especially where it is ad hoc at present. Comments received were:

“Compressed weeks: 25-33% have some flexible working at present but there is a limit to more in council with only 430 staff” Shire District

“Flexibility of hours worked approaching retirement” Shire District

“Led by desk-sharing in main offices and formalised home working” London Borough

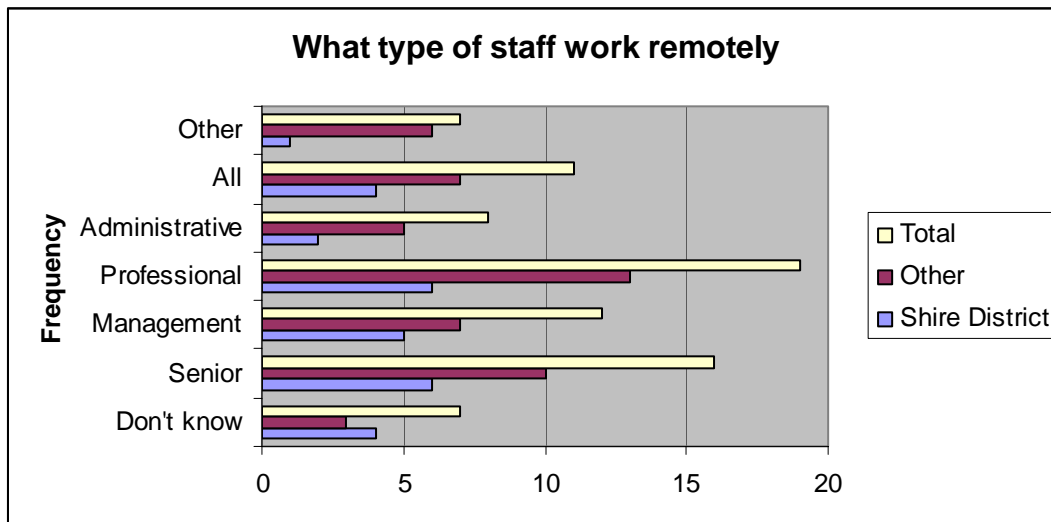
“The way people work their hours; working from home on an occasional basis; compressed fortnights; it will be more council led, it has been employee led so far.” County

Question 6

Next a series of questions were asked which explored whether there was any identifiable group of staff which worked remotely more frequently. The answers depended on the type of council, the functions involved and how far down the path towards full mobile working the council was.

6. 1 The staff groups of senior, managerial and professional groups predominate in working remotely although a significant number 24% of councils have all levels of staff working flexibly.

<i>Of those who work remotely, what level of staff are they?</i>	<i>Shire</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
Don't know	4	3	7
Senior	6	10	16
Management	5	7	12
Professional	6	13	19
Administrative	2	5	7
All	4	7	11
Other	1	6	7



Some additional comments:

- “Direct service providers work remotely - not decided by level” Unitary
- “Mixed depending on the type of service being provided” Welsh Council
- “Project based workers work remotely – so type of work decides this” Shire District

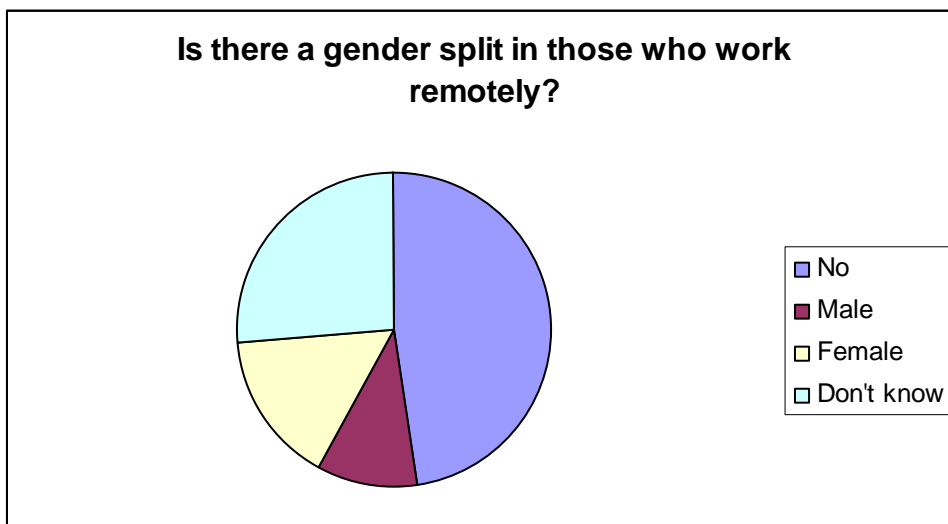
6.2

We asked for the functions where flexible working predominates. This is where the response depended on what services the councils provided. They fell into a number of groups, listed in order of frequency of mentions:

1. Benefits, Revenue and Taxation staff especially those who make home visits such as benefits advisers;
2. Enforcement Services such as Planning, Building Control, Environmental Services, Trading Standards;
3. Social Care and Social Work.
4. Clerical and information processing work
5. Housing staff
6. Education Inspectors
7. Engineers
8. Project based staff: Strategic, IT and HR; Learning
9. Professionals and managers
10. Central services

6.3

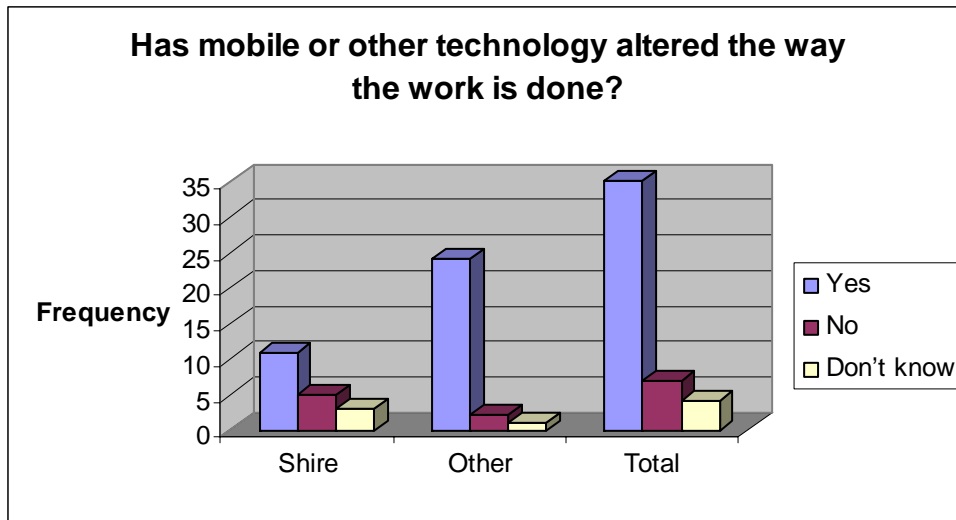
The answer to the question about gender split in remote working should be treated with caution as many councils do not keep records on this basis. The answers are likely to represent the impressions of the interviewees, rather than evidence-based responses, hence the high frequency of 'don't know' as a response. The slightly higher tendency of female staff working remotely was associated with comments about staff based in social services, benefits and revenues and those who had requested flexible working under the legislation. One council reported that, as they employed more female staff overall, more worked remotely.



6.4

A question was asked about whether either the type of staff, function or gender question above were different for those who work at home rather than nomadically. Only four respondents said yes (9%).

6.5 When asked whether mobile and other technology had changed the way the job is done, 76% of the respondents said that technology had changed the way in which the job is done.



Some examples given were:

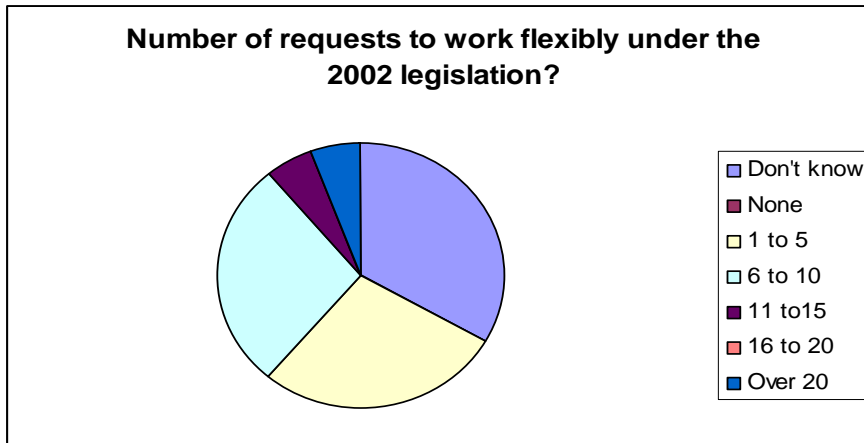
- “Building control/planning services have made use of hand held technology that has assisted the remote working of staff” Shire District
- “Service delivery staff collect and deliver data remotely using laptops etc.” London Borough
- “Staff are able to spend more time on the road” Metropolitan Borough
- “The use of tablet PC's for Social Services when working in people's homes has improved service times” County
- “So far use of IT&C has helped to streamline some business processes. Now piloting PDAs & Laptops” Shire District
- “Appropriate IT support is essential to successful remote working. We are supporting most of our mobile working with Tablet PC's” Metropolitan
- “Cutting down paperwork, electronic forms” Unitary
- “Thin client technology allows access remotely to central files” District
- “Service delivery staff collect and deliver data remotely using laptops etc” London Borough

A follow up question was asked about any particular functions that worked remotely. Many had no information or were unable to differentiate between flexible, home and remote working. A few comments were received:

- “Professional and Technical functions Most (albeit ad hoc) with a mobile element to their working patterns”
- “All trades” Shire District
- “Currently being monitored but no clear patterns yet available” London Borough

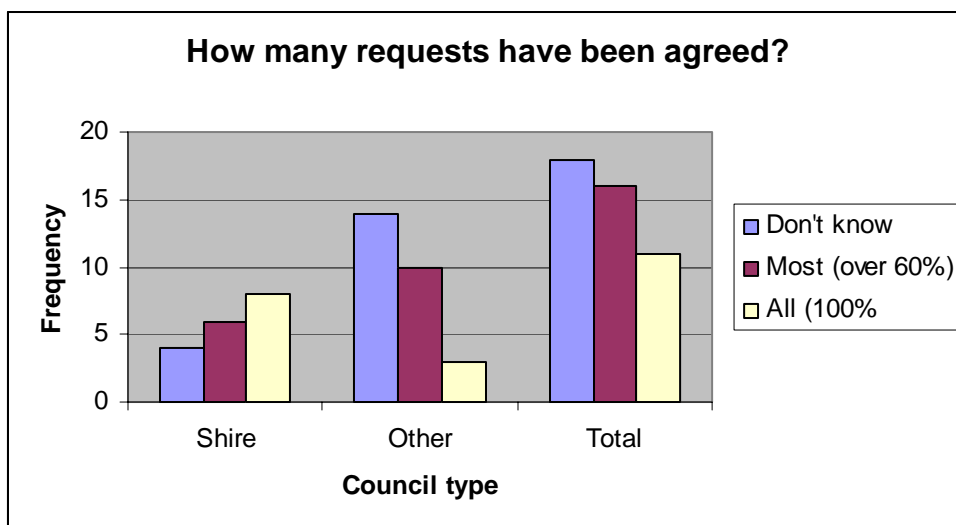
Question 7

A number of related questions were used to explore the availability of flexible working practices. They started with a question about the right to ask for flexible working open to certain parents under the legislation implemented in 2003. The predominance of the 'don't know' answer reflects the fact that we were mainly talking to central HR staff and in many councils the decisions are taken locally by operational managers and records are not kept centrally.



(No 'none' and 16-20 responses were received.)

The next question dealt with how many requests had been agreed under the legislation. Interviewees were given options ranging from none through to all. However answers were only received for 'don't know', 'most' and 'all' as shown in the table. In all cases where the answer was most, the number refused was small, being one or two requests only.

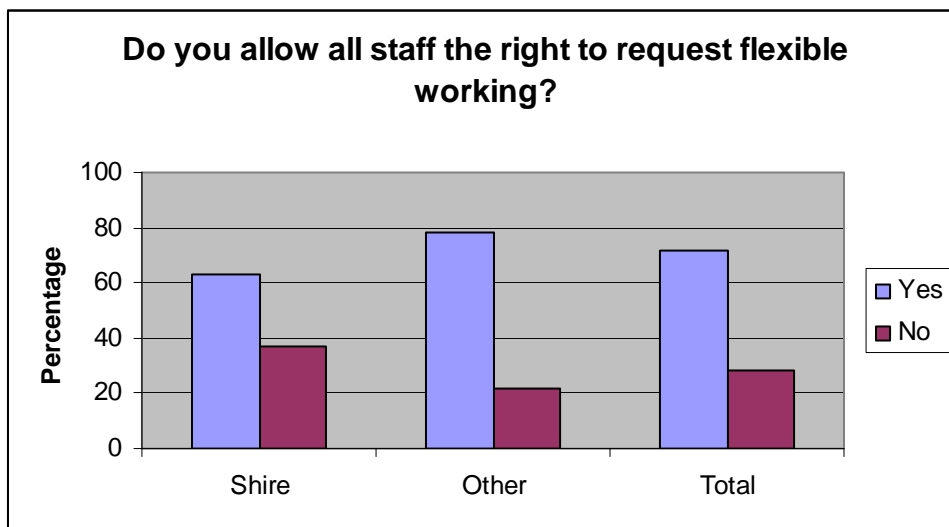


Question 8

A series of questions was asked next about how the right to ask for flexible working is managed.

8.1

Overall 72% of councils allow all staff the right to request flexible working, although there is a slightly higher tendency to do so in councils which are not shire district councils. We also asked if any staff group were excluded from this wider right to ask. Groups mentioned were school staff; some front line service staff and staff who are deliver 24/7 care.



Comments were:

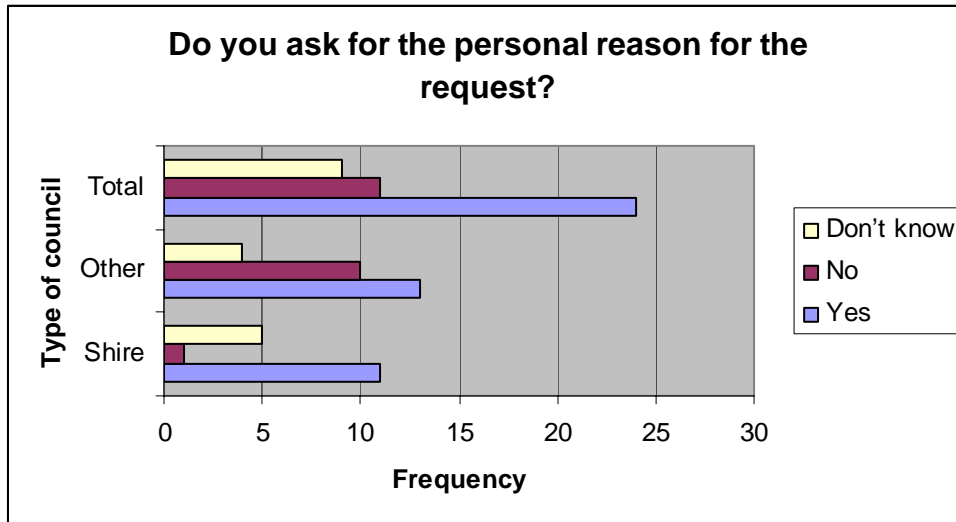
"Yes, but we have no policy in place (for all staff) so each request is dealt with as it arises, and not many requests are received" Welsh Council

"Largely informal. HR only involved if there is a dispute" Shire District

The following series of questions examines how decisions are made about whether to agree to requests from staff for flexible working. The majority of councils ask for a personal reason for requesting flexibility and take it into account when making their decisions.

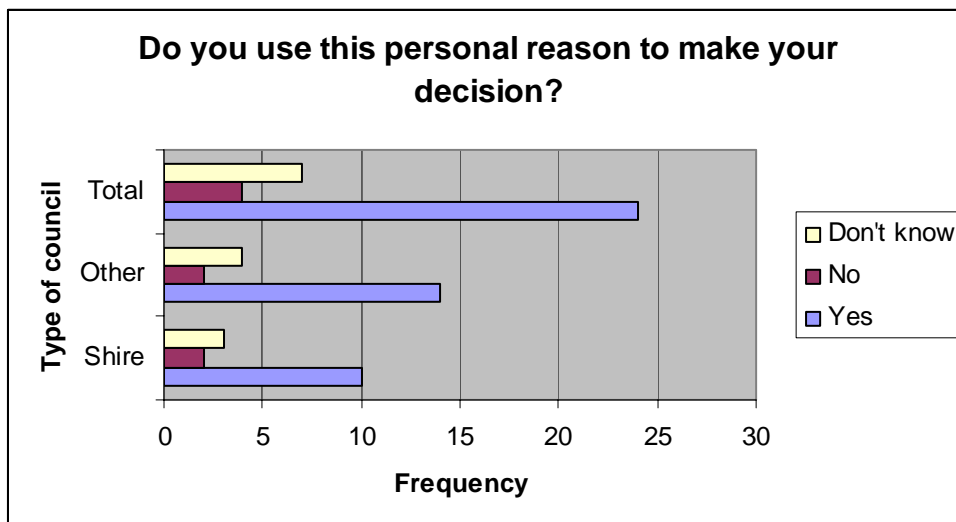
8.2

There is a greater tendency for shire district councils to ask for the personal reason for asking to work flexibility from staff not covered by the legislation than for other councils.



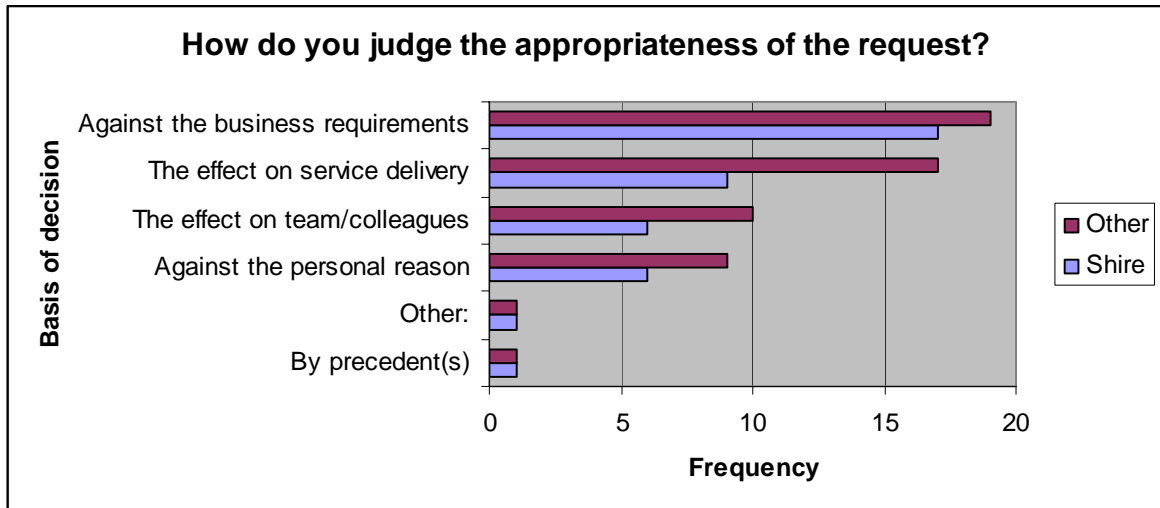
8.3

When asked if this personal reason would be considered when making the decision to agree or not to the request, most councils said they would.



8.4

A broader question was then asked about all the factors taken into account when making the decision to agree to a request to work flexibly.



There are some differences in these responses between shire district and other councils.

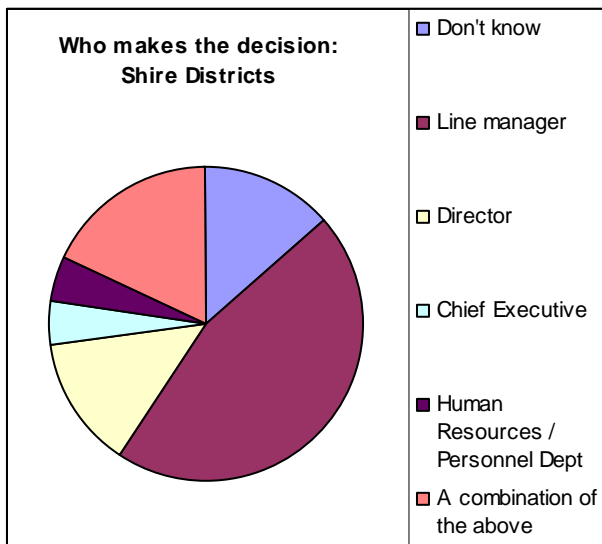
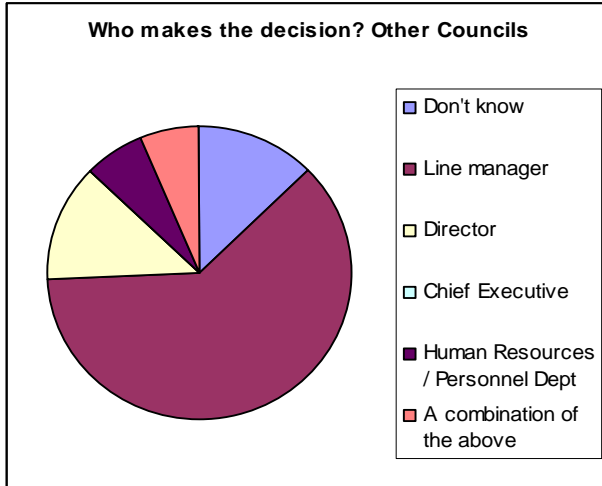
Some comments were:

“Staff applicant submits a business case to the line manager who then has to prove that it won't work - or grant the request! This case includes whether appropriate HR support will be available!”
 London Borough

“Health & safety must be considered” County

8.5

In answer to a question about who makes the decision to allow an employee to work flexibly, it is clear that line managers have been given this responsibility in the majority of councils, although less so in shire district councils.



Question 9

The survey then asked whether there were any plans to extend the flexible working policies. About two thirds of councils intend to extend them with slightly fewer having this in their business plans for the coming year.

<i>In the next year do you intend to extend Flexible working policies?</i>	Shire	Other	Total	%
Yes	10	21	31	67
No	8	6	14	30
Don't know	1		1	2
<i>Is this in your Business Plan for next year? Yes</i>	8	19	27	59
No	8	7	15	32
Don't know		1	1	2

These are some of the flexible working policy plans mentioned:

“Hot desking and working at home to free accommodation” London Borough

“We have all the policies; we now need to promote it” Shire District

“Working at home as losing a car park for building extra accommodation” London Borough

“Responding to any legislative changes re age” County

“Extend take up of mobile and home working; allowing changes for sudden caring responsibilities” County

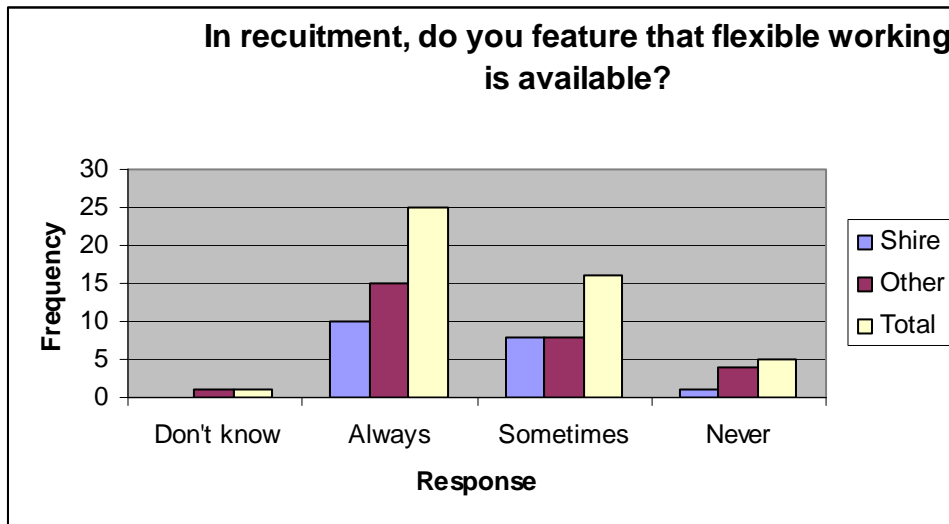
“The current 3-yr Corporate Plan has FWP as a key way of implementing WLB measures across all departments - under the heading of "New Ways of Working" Shire District

“The new IT&C Platform (from April, 2006 onwards) will enable more formalised FWP. Will also introduce Flexi-Time across all departments at the same time” London Borough

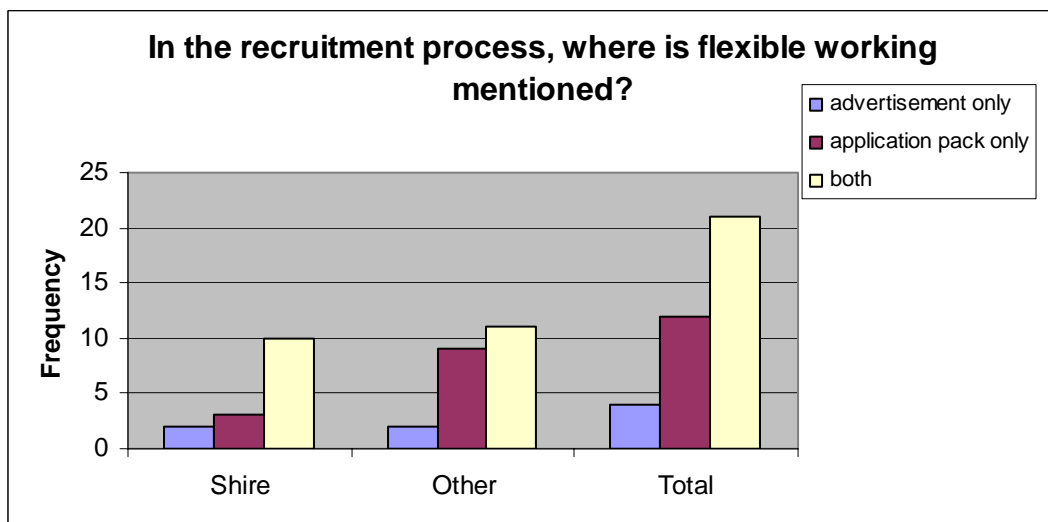
“Offer FWP to all over 65's or over 60's” London Borough.

Question 10

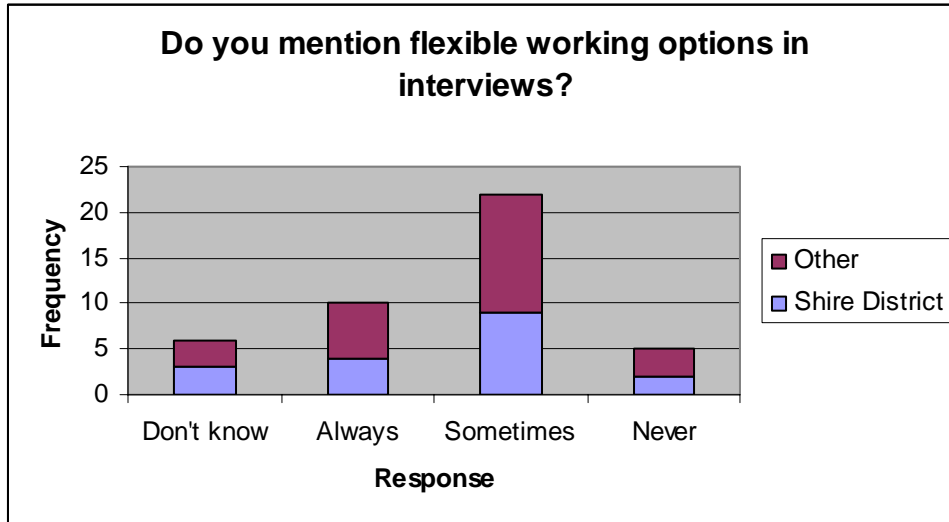
This group of questions explores how far councils are featuring flexible working as part of their recruitment strategy. As improving recruitment and retention was stated as one of the main drivers for introducing flexible working, there appears to be an opportunity to capitalise on its availability in the recruitment process.



The next question in this series asked about where the flexible working options were mentioned. 'Web sites' were mentioned on only one or two occasions and these have been added into 'application packs' totals.



The next question asked about whether they mentioned flexible working options during the interview. The 'don't know' response reflected the fact that in some councils, interviews are carried out by line management. There was no significant difference between the types of councils surveyed for this question. The high 'sometimes' response reflects the frequent comment "that it depends on the nature of the job".

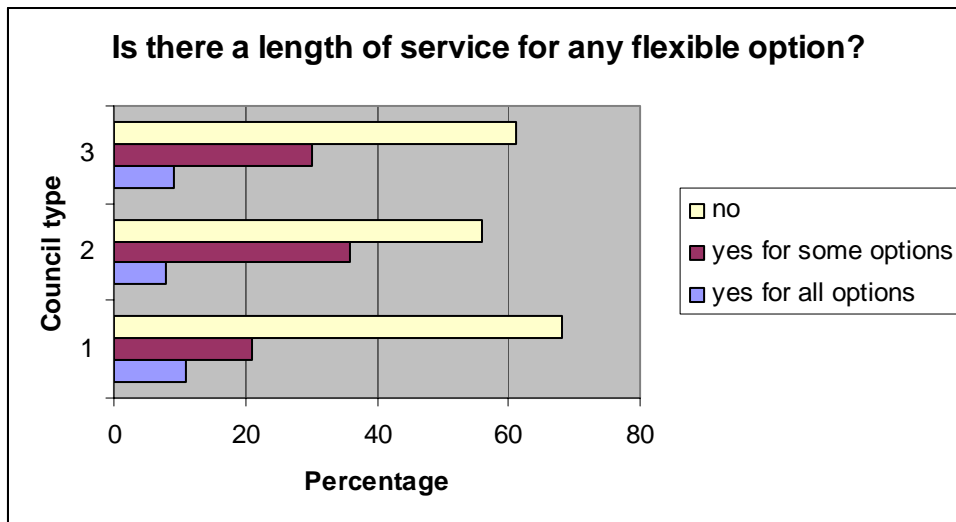


Question 11

This question asked whether there is a length of service qualification period for taking advantage of flexible working policies or options. The answers to this question should be treated with caution. Some respondents mentioned a general probationary period to establish permanent employment status others did not. The high ‘no’ response may include some councils that have no length of service criterion within their flexible working policies but where there may be a general probationary period. However, several councils were clear that all staff had access to flexible working policies from their first day of employment. The most frequently mentioned policies with a length of service criteria were career breaks and sabbaticals. The following comments illustrate these points:

- “We have a 6 months’ service length to apply for more flexibility” County
- “Yes, 6 months and completion of probationary period” Shire District
- “No; but all new staff, whether home or office based must undergo a lengthy corporate induction process” Shire District
- “FWP is available to all staff from their first day of employment” London Borough

Council Type: 1=Total; 2= Other; 3= Shire District



Question 12

This question explored opinions about the main barriers to achieving greater flexibility within the council and represent the opinion of the interviewee, rather than any council wide view. The respondents were not prompted with the categories, though answers may have been explored. The main barrier identified was managers' attitudes followed by their skills and the effect on service delivery.

<i>In your opinion what are the main barriers to greater flexibility?</i>	Shire	Other	Total
Managers' attitudes	8	23	31
Managers' skills	4	16	20
Effect on service delivery	10	9	19
Constraints of IT&C systems	2	12	14
Lack of trust	2	9	11
Other	2	9	11
Effect on colleagues	2	6	8
Lack of awareness of the options (communications)	0	8	8
Lack of control	0	7	7
Employee concerns	2	4	6
Manager's time	0	6	6
Size: total employee numbers and size of teams	5	0	5
Costs; budgets	1	3	4
Prevailing culture	1	3	4
Fear of unknown	1	1	2
Health and safety	1	1	2
Isolation	1	1	2
Pressure of work	2	0	2

Other barriers that were mentioned once:

- Perception of colleagues
- Lack of opportunity for staff to socialise
- Self management skills of staff
- Staff having to put across business case
- Working with business partners
- Petty procedures
- Public service attitudes
- Lack of fairness
- Lack of interest from staff
- Type of jobs - need staff presence
- Unions

Some of the comments were:

"They vary depending on department we employ 12,000 staff" Unitary

"Petty procedures e.g. travel expense from home has stopped flexibility" Shire District

"The cost of equipment and resistant managers see it as difficult to manage remote staff"

Metropolitan

"Manager's skills: Especially setting 'SMART' objectives" County

"The culture that performance = attendance" Unitary

"Employee not always clear what they want when they ask" County

"Concern that home based people will be isolated from organisation as well as managers' skills in managing them" Shire District

"Managers' understanding of how it can work; still think it is only for women" County

Question 13

The penultimate question in the survey was “Are you able to identify hard business results and/or produce evidence, obtained from introducing flexible working?”

15 (33%) of responding councils said they were not able to identify any clear evidence of the impact of flexible working on the business.

Those that said they could identify evidence were asked to specify the type of evidence they had. As can be seen from the 30 councils that could provide evidence, the most popular categories are staff turnover and retention, followed by decreased absence and increased employee satisfaction and morale. This bias may be a result of interviewing human resource staff.

<i>Yes, in which areas can you identify business results?</i>	<i>Shire</i>	<i>District</i>	<i>Total</i>
Decreased staff turnover / increased retention	9	8	17
Decreased absence	3	9	12
Employee satisfaction	4	6	10
Morale	3	7	10
Increased productivity	3	6	9
Improved recruitment	4	2	6
Cost reductions / savings	1	4	5
Improved customer services	3	1	4
Improved access hours to services	1	3	4
Results for employees (reported improved work-life balance)	2	2	4
Culture change / improvement	2	1	3
Team working	2		2
Skills base	1		1
Other		1	1

Some of the evidence provided during the survey was impressive such as;

“The council tax collection is now in upper quartile and impressive productivity figures have been achieved within in Building Control for plan checks” Shire District

“Turnover rate fallen from 16% to 10%” Shire District

“Sickness was 10.5 days and is down to 8.7 days; turnover was 12% and is down to 10%” County

“WLB is built into performance appraisal”

“Now have over 90% staff satisfaction” London Borough

“We start collecting Corporate HR data from April, 2006 in these areas” County

The councils were then asked what the source of this evidence was. The results may reflect the fact that all our interviewees were form HR function.

Source of evaluation	Shire	Other	Total
Employee attitude surveys	7	11	18
HR data	4	13	17
Normal monitoring of work	3	8	11
Customer surveys / Service user surveys	1	6	7
External assessments	4	2	6
Other	2	2	4

Other sources mentioned were monitoring of pilots that had been run and anecdotal reports. This was the last question in the survey

Conclusions

The main findings were:

- There is wide variation in progress towards the implementation of flexible working options, with some excellent examples identified.
- Evaluation of the business benefits of flexible working is not well developed.
- From the HR perspective, the explicit link between the implementation of flexible working, evaluating the impact of flexible working and how flexible working can contribute to councils meeting their efficiency targets is not clear.
- It is not always evident to our respondents in corporate HR departments when mobile technology is the driver for change in work practices
- Cost reviews of accommodation are driving some councils to implement increased technologically-assisted nomadic and home working.
- Whilst the main drivers identified are improving recruitment and retention not all councils feature the availability of flexible working in their recruitment campaigns, and if they do, not always in the job advertisements thus not capitalising on this aspect.
- Progress in remote and nomadic working are strongly linked with certain functions.

This raises some further questions:

1. What is the role of the Human Resource function, especially corporate departments, in the implementation of flexible working for business based reasons such as service flexibility?
2. How can HR maximise the contribution that flexible working can make to Gershon targets rather than simply as an employee benefit?
3. How can improvements and innovations in practice arising from a number of drivers in separate areas be shared across all departments in councils?
4. What will enable managers to take full advantage of the benefits of flexible working?
5. How can managers' skills in managing remotely be developed?
6. How can the phrase "flexible working" be equated as strongly with "service flexibility" as it appears to be with "work life balance"?
7. How can the balance between flexible working as an individual benefit and as a way of improving service delivery be achieved?

Appendix 1

NJC Flexible Working/Work-life Balance Snapshot Survey: summary results

The EO conducted a snapshot survey of local authorities in June 2005, via the regional employers' organisations, on behalf of the NJC for local government services, following the setting up of the Employment Practices Group to work on the Pay Commission recommendations. It looked at whether authorities had policies in place for various types of flexible working, who was covered by the policy, and whether policies had been agreed with trade unions.

150 responses were received, representing 37% of local authorities in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Overall figures

Question	Policy	All staff	FT	PT	Agreed with TUs
1.Flexi-time which goes beyond a traditional/standard flexi-scheme	56%	35%	3%	3%	53%
2.Compressed weeks/fortnights	50%	35%	2%	1%	41%
3.Averaged/annualised hours	57%	28%	2%	2%	39%
4.Voluntary changes in hours (including between full-time and part time)	77%	69%	6%	4%	58%
5.Term time working (other than for school based staff)	55%	42%	3%	3%	43%
6.Sabbaticals/career breaks	53%	51%	3%	3%	45%
7.Swapping of shifts/hours within teams	39%	20%	3%	2%	19%
8.Self-rostering within teams	23%	12%	2%	2%	13%
9.Home-working	66%	39%	3%	3%	43%
10.'Mobile working' (ie flexibility about 'work-base'/hot-desking)	45%	25%	2%	2%	25%
11.Initiatives to address long hours working	27%	15%	2%	2%	15%
12.Pre-retirement leave/downshifting/flexible working	25%	17%	2%	2%	14%
13.Childcare Allowances/vouchers/subsidised nursery places	46%	38%	5%	5%	31%
14.Workplace crèche/nursery	13%	11%	3%	3%	8%

The most likely policy to be in place was one enabling a voluntary change in hours (including between full and part time). This was followed closely by a homeworking policy. The least likely policies were having a workplace crèche or nursery, or having self-rostering teams.

By region

Yorkshire and the Humber were the most likely to have flexible working policies in place, and this was the case for every item in the questionnaire. There were less likely to be policies in authorities in Northern Ireland.

By Authority Type

Metropolitan authorities were the most likely to have policies in place, except for pre-retirement/downshifting/flexible working, which was exceptionally low. Authorities in Northern Ireland were the least likely to have policies in place, except in the case of averaged/annualised hours, which was exceptionally high.

Q. no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	resp
Region															
East of England	57.9	47.4	36.8	78.9	57.9	42.1	42.1	26.3	52.6	36.8	31.6	10.5	52.6	21.1	19
East Mids	50.0	55.0	100.0	65.0	45.0	45.0	25.0	15.0	55.0	15.0	20.0	30.0	60.0	5.0	20
North East	77.8	33.3	55.6	88.9	33.3	44.4	33.3	33.3	66.7	55.6	33.3	22.2	33.3	11.1	9
North West	72.7	45.5	63.6	81.8	72.7	63.6	27.3	18.2	81.8	27.3	9.1	0.0	18.2	9.1	11
South East	58.8	64.7	41.2	88.2	58.8	52.9	23.5	17.6	76.5	64.7	35.3	35.3	64.7	11.8	17
South West	70.0	50.0	45.0	80.0	55.0	65.0	50.0	20.0	70.0	45.0	30.0	35.0	45.0	20.0	20
West Mids	44.4	61.1	38.9	72.2	44.4	44.4	38.9	22.2	66.7	50.0	33.3	16.7	27.8	0.0	18
Yorks & Humbs	80.0	80.0	100.0	100.0	80.0	80.0	80.0	40.0	100.0	80.0	40.0	40.0	100.0	20.0	5
London	53.3	46.7	46.7	73.3	66.7	66.7	53.3	33.3	73.3	73.3	20.0	33.3	60.0	20.0	15
Wales	30.0	20.0	70.0	70.0	60.0	40.0	40.0	30.0	60.0	40.0	20.0	20.0	10.0	10.0	10
N Ireland	16.7	33.3	83.3	50.0	33.3	66.7	33.3	16.7	33.3	16.7	16.7	33.3	33.3	16.7	6
Authority Type															
Counties	56.3	75.0	62.5	81.3	75.0	68.8	31.3	12.5	81.3	75.0	25.0	12.5	43.8	31.3	16
Districts	54.8	45.2	49.3	74.0	39.7	41.1	34.2	17.8	63.0	34.2	24.7	27.4	45.2	5.5	73
Mets	91.7	83.3	75.0	83.3	83.3	91.7	41.7	58.3	66.7	66.7	41.7	8.3	41.7	0.0	12
London Boroughs	53.3	46.7	46.7	73.3	66.7	66.7	53.3	33.3	73.3	73.3	20.0	33.3	60.0	20.0	15
N Ireland	16.7	33.3	83.3	50.0	33.3	66.7	33.3	16.7	33.3	16.7	16.7	33.3	33.3	16.7	6
English UNIs	66.7	50.0	66.7	94.4	72.2	55.6	50.0	22.2	72.2	33.3	38.9	27.8	66.7	27.8	18
Welsh UNIs	30.0	20.0	70.0	70.0	60.0	40.0	40.0	30.0	60.0	40.0	20.0	20.0	10.0	10.0	10
Total	56.0	50.0	57.3	76.7	54.7	53.3	38.7	23.3	66.0	44.7	26.7	24.7	46.0	12.7	150

Lowest
Highest
Average