

SHETLAND ISLANDS COUNCIL

JOB SHARE POLICY



Operational Date: January 1995
Applies to: All Staff

Shetland Islands Council

JOB SHARE POLICY

Operational Date: January 1995

Review Date: To be confirmed

1	WHAT IS JOB SHARING.....	2
2	APPLICATION	2
3	RECRUITMENT.....	2
4	ADVANTAGES OF JOB SHARING.....	3
5	DISADVANTAGES OF JOB SHARING.....	5
6	PLANNING A JOB SHARE.....	6
7	CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR JOB SHARING POSTS.....	7
8	FURTHER INFORMATION.....	10
9	CHECK LIST OF POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION.....	11

APPENDIX 1

1 WHAT IS JOB SHARING

- 1.1 Job Sharing is an arrangement where two people share the duties and responsibilities of one full-time job.
- 1.2 The pay and benefits are shared between them in proportion to the hours each sharer works.
- 1.3 The nature of the work will determine how the duties and responsibilities can be shared.
- 1.4 Where work is easily divisible there is a choice of job sharing or splitting the post into 2 part-time posts.
- 1.5 Some jobs may require greater communication between the sharers and the manager, and a period of overlap of working is usually necessary.
- 1.6 Job Sharing opens up the quality of part-time employment to provide a wider range of employment and career prospects to employees who can only work part-time.

2 APPLICATION

- 2.1 All posts should be considered eligible to job share.
- 2.2 Applications should be submitted and considered as defined in the Job Share Policy (See Appendix 1)
- 2.3 Directors will consider each post as to its suitability for job sharing;
 - on application from an employee in post.
 - at recruitment stage for a vacant post.
- 2.4 Personnel will advise departments regarding posts that are considered exempt from the Job Share Policy. The appropriate trade union will be informed of posts that are exempted from the Job Share Policy.

3 RECRUITMENT

As a general principle the council's existing procedures for shortlisting, interviewing and selection should be followed.

3.1 Request to Recruit

Directors will consider posts at recruitment stage as to their suitability for job sharing. Where a department regards a post as unsuited to job sharing it should inform Personnel giving clear reasons for this decision. Personnel may then advise the department of the legal implications should there be an appeal against the decision. The appropriate trade union will be notified of exemptions to the Job Sharing Scheme at this stage.

3.2 Advertising

Advertisements for all jobs considered suitable for job sharing will contain statements encouraging sharers to apply e.g. Applications from job sharers are welcome.

Where an application for a post to be job shared is approved for the postholder, the other half of the job share should be advertised in the normal way including internally, as existing part-time staff may be interested in the post.

3.3 Shortlisting

Shortlisting criteria should be applied equally to both job share applications and full-time applications.

3.4 Interview

The selection panel should aim to get the best person for the job. If that best person is a candidate wishing to job share then the panel needs to decide:

- Whether there is any other suitable candidate from those interviewed who would match in a job share.
- Whether the best candidate should be appointed and the other half of the post be advertised as a job share post.

If the situation arises where job sharers are applying for a post as a pair, the following example illustrates interview time allocation:

E.g. where full-time candidates are allocated 30 minutes for interview, each job sharer is to be interviewed for 20 minutes separately and together for 20 minutes (to consider feasibility of job share).

3.5 Returning from Maternity Leave

Women returning from Maternity Leave who wish to return on a job share basis should make a written application to their department manager three months before they intend to return to work so that their post may be considered as to its suitability for job sharing. Directors should consider and reply to applications **within one month** of receipt of application.

4 **ADVANTAGES OF JOB SHARING**

4.1 Recruitment and Retention

The introduction of a job share policy allowing applications on that basis for most posts, will enlarge the pool of potential candidates and assist in recruiting the 'best' candidate for the job.

Job sharing is often regarded as a favourable option for women returning to work after maternity leave. This allows them to continue their career whilst maintaining a balance with family commitments. In many cases the Council

already has an investment in these individuals in terms of training and development and initial recruitment costs and to retain experienced and skilled staff on a job share basis would in effect achieve a saving in those areas.

4.2 Using Job Sharers Effectively

Benefits can be obtained from having two sets of viewpoints, experience and skills which complement and reinforce one another, within one post, leading to greater flexibility to develop personnel using the skills and experience of one sharer to give the other sharer 'on the job' training.

4.3 Working Towards Retirement

Members of staff nearing retirement age may wish to work their final years by job sharing their post and be able to pass on their knowledge and experience to their partner.

4.4 Absenteeism

There may be corresponding lowering of absenteeism rates after implementing a job share policy. This may be attributed in part to the easing of the pressure of domestic commitments.

4.5 Continuity Through Absence

50% of the post is always covered during times of sickness, holiday, and staff vacancy and there can be the flexibility to increase staff hours to cover particular peaks in the workload.

4.6 Increased Efficiency and Productivity

There is a considerable amount of evidence concerning concentration and attention span levels to show that there are periods during the day when these levels cannot be maintained. In jobs that are complex or tedious, it is difficult to attain a high level of concentration throughout a full working day. A post that is being job shared is likely to receive the input of periods of sustained concentration and creativity by each sharer and this intensity will increase efficiency and productivity.

There may be advantages in terms of wider geographical coverage of the post because of the flexibility of using the postholders, if necessary, in two places at the same time.

4.7 Staff Turnover

The introduction of a job share policy can be a factor in reducing staff turnover as employees tend to stay longer in a post if it allows them to combine work and family responsibilities.

4.8 Employment of Disabled Persons

An opportunity would exist for individuals with disabilities that would prohibit full-time working, to submit applications for many more posts within the

Council and would help to fulfil the Council's statutory responsibility to employ a quota of registered disabled persons. It may be considered as an alternative to dismissal or early retirement where an employee becomes chronically ill or disabled.

4.9 Difficult to Recruit to Posts

The mutual support job sharers can give each other can offset the disadvantages of posts which are particularly isolated or stressful.

4.10 Breaking Down Discriminatory Barriers

There is the opportunity to offer career development and more demanding, responsible employment than is normally available on a part-time basis.

5 DISADVANTAGES OF JOB SHARING

5.1 Employment Costs

The employment of two job sharers rather than one full-time employee will mean that the Council will need to administer two sets of contracts, National Insurance, Pension, tax deductions and any other appropriate allowances.

5.2 Office Space

Where extra office space is provided to accommodate job sharers there may be increased costs especially when office space is at a premium. Sharers should use the same desk and filing systems, where appropriate.

5.3 Recruitment Package Costs

Shetland has high recruitment costs when recruiting outwith Shetland which may prohibit the advertising of posts on a job share basis in the National Media.

5.4 Administration

The administration of staff rotas, shifts, holidays and Public or Extra-Statutory holidays will be more complex.

5.5 Allowances

There will be extra costs to the authority where the post qualifies for Essential Car User Allowance, or provision of accommodation.

5.6 Training and Development

There may be extra training and staff development costs although these will also bring benefits back to the organisation.

5.7 Saturation

If a high percentage of posts within a team or section were being filled on a job share basis, then further application of the policy to remaining posts may become a problem. Managers should anticipate this eventuality and make a case for exempting the remaining posts from the policy and other possibilities such as transfer to another team could be considered.

5.8 Management and Supervision

There may be a need for extra management and supervision with some posts. Where senior and managerial posts are being job shared junior staff may have difficulties with two supervisors and may play one off against the other. There may also be problems with management continuity and approach.

Managers may also have to ensure that job sharers divide their work in an equal and fair way so that one sharer does not keep the 'best' work for themselves or try to avoid unpopular areas of their work by claiming they are 'too busy' with other tasks.

6 **PLANNING A JOB SHARE**

- Good planning will help job sharing to be introduced smoothly.
- The following points may be considered by management and staff together at the planning stage.

6.1 Salary/Wages

A lower grade post may become less attractive when the salary is halved, this may also have an affect on employment rights of the sharer.

E.g. May not earn enough to pay National Insurance Contributions;
May affect redundancy payments, pension etc.

If further advice is required please contact Personnel.

6.2 The Nature of the Work

Examine the job description and decide how it can be divided. Agree this division with the job sharers.

E.g. Case load or project based;
How will the responsibility and decision making be shared.

6.3 The Pattern of Work

There may be peaks and troughs in the workload throughout the year/month/week. There may also be requirements for full days to be worked for economic and continuity purposes. These requirements need to be taken into account when dividing the working week.

6.4 Communications

Clear lines of communication are the key to successful job sharing. An overlap period for exchange of information is recommended, supplemented as appropriate by common diaries and log books.

6.5 Management and Supervision

How job sharers receive supervision and manage staff should be made clear from the beginning, with each sharer aware of their lines of responsibility and adopting a co-ordinated approach.

7 **CONDITIONS OF SERVICE FOR JOB SHARING POSTS**

7.1 Salary/Wage

Basic salary/wage shall be calculated pro rata to the basic salary/wage of the full-time post.

N.B. Job Sharers will be paid the part-time rate for a contracted number of hours per week.

7.2 Allowances

7.2.1 **Consolidated Allowance:** In addition to basic salary a consolidated allowance of £1,223 is paid pro rata, which comprises the Distance Islands Allowance and Temporary Construction Allowance.

7.2.2 **Essential Car User Allowance:** If it is a condition of the employment that each sharer has a full current driving licence and a car available in order to carry out the duties of this post, together with appropriate mileage rates then the full allowance is payable to each partner of the job share post.

7.2.3 **Weekend Work/Night Working/Standby Duty/Sleeping-in Allowance:** Payment for the above allowances where these working arrangements are part of a normal week, will apply to a job sharer whose working arrangements qualify for payment in terms of the relevant Scheme of Conditions of Service.

7.2.4 **Irregular Hours/Shift Allowance:** Irregular hours and Shift Allowance will not normally be applicable to job share posts.

7.3 Hours of Work

Hours of work to be agreed between the manager and job share partners within the nationally agreed hours of work of 37 hours per week exclusive of meal breaks.

Examples of how the week(s) may be divided:

- Split day - One partner working mornings, the other works afternoons.
- Alternate weeks - Each partner works one week in every fortnight. (See 'Continuity of Employment').
- Split weeks - Each partner works 2½ days per week.
- Concurrently - Partners work the same hours.
- Uneven hours - One partner works 20 hours, the other works 14 hours.

In the event of one of the Job Sharers being absent due to sickness or annual leave, the other partner may under the terms of their contract be required to work additional hours up to the equivalent of full-time hours unless other arrangements can be made.

7.4 Variations of Work

The duties may, in consultation with the job sharer be varied in accordance with the needs of the Council.

7.5 Overtime

Job Sharers who are required to work additional hours not exceeding a total of 34 hours worked in any week, are paid for the additional hours on the basis of their normal part-time hourly rate.

Where the normal hours of work are less than those nationally agreed (37 hours) the first three hours of overtime undertaken in any week in excess of 34 hours are not paid. However, after 37 hours are worked, overtime payments apply. (The hourly rate of pay in these circumstances is annual salary divided by 1924, i.e. 52 weeks of 37 hours).

7.6 Annual Leave

Annual leave will be calculated on a pro rata basis according to the hours worked and the individual's entitlement.

7.7 Public and Extra-Statutory Holidays

The Council has agreed that specific days should be allocated as paid staff holidays to be taken on those days specified by the Council, these replace any general or public holidays. Public and Extra-Statutory holidays are to be divided between the sharers pro rata, to ensure that one sharer does not benefit disproportionately to the other. Please contact Personnel for further advice on pro rata division of public holidays if required.

7.8 Continuous Period of Employment

Service dates from commencement with the Shetland Islands Council or its predecessors provided such service has been continuous.

7.9 Continuity of Employment

Where sharers choose to work alternate weeks this may break continuity of employment. If this arrangement is being considered please consult Personnel for further advice.

7.10 Redundancy

All local authority employees will be able to claim entitlement to Statutory Redundancy Rights after 2 years continuous public service. Redundancy payments will be calculated according to the hours being worked when the redundancy notice is served.

7.11 Sick Pay

A Contractual Sickness benefit scheme is in operation complementary to any Statutory Sick Pay (S.S.P.) entitlement.

7.12 Employees Health

Employees shall be entitled to take such reasonable time off without loss of pay as is required for the purpose of preventative medical examination.

7.13 Pension

Employees working for a period in excess of 12 weeks may opt to join the Pension Scheme. Those participating pay 6% and the employers contributions vary according to fund management requirements. Previous pension benefits can be transferred from many other employers. A contracting-out certificate is in operation.

N.B. Employees wishing to job share who are nearing retirement age should be aware that reduced working hours may affect their particular pension rights, e.g. when a pension is based on the final annual salary, the option to job share could reduce the amount of pension they will receive.

7.14 Medical Clearance

Confirmation of satisfactory health by medical examination or questionnaire may be required before the appointment is confirmed, within 6 months of commencing employment, or entry is permitted into the Pension Scheme, or at any other time, where relevant to the employment.

7.15 Probationary Period

A probationary period of 6 months may be applied to junior entrants to the Authority during which time the new employee will be expected to establish their suitability for the post. A probationary period may also be applied to other entrants, at the discretion of the interviewing panel, where the previous employment is not regarded as wholly appropriate to the post. Where a probationary period is applied, following satisfactory service during the period of probation, the appointment will be confirmed.

7.16 Retirement Age

The normal retirement age of the Council for all employees is 65, (See Retirement Policy). **N.B. Pension benefits may be affected by reducing hours near retirement age.**

7.17 Period of Notice

The minimum period of notice required to be given by either party is one calendar month. Employees with five or more years of service are given one weeks notice for each year of continuous service, up to a maximum notice period of twelve weeks. Notice, which should be given in writing, dates from the receipt by the employer of the notification.

7.18 Grievance/Disciplinary Matters

These will be dealt with initially by the supervisor. The employee will be notified of the right of appeal against any disciplinary action against them. The right of appeal on the decision to refuse a request to Job Share an established post, and to exempt it from the Job Share Policy will operate through the appropriate grievance procedure.

7.19 Post Entry Training

Job Sharers will have access to training opportunities on the same basis as full-time employees. Staff are required to make themselves available for training relevant to their present or future responsibilities.

7.20 Job Evaluation

Where the content of a job description substantially changes and it is a post that is being job shared, it is the whole post that becomes subject to a review under the Job Evaluation Scheme and any changes in grading will affect both job sharers. It may then become necessary to look at the division of work between the two sharers to maintain an equal distribution of responsibility and decision making.

7.21 Contract of Employment and Written Statement of Particulars of Terms Employment

Each sharer will receive: -

- An offer of employment setting out the details of the contract of employment;
- A written statement of Particulars of Terms of Employment within 8 weeks of commencement of employment.

8 FURTHER INFORMATION

Personnel holds a copy of the Job Share Policy and can provide further information if required in the form of booklets and leaflets.

More copies of this guide can be obtained from Personnel, Organisational Development, Executive Services. The Policy can also be found in the Personnel section of the Council Intranet.

9 CHECK LIST OF POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Is this job suitable for job sharing?
2. How will the work be organised?
3. How will the hours of work of each sharer fit in with the operating responsibilities of the Department/Service?
4. What impact will job sharing this post have on the conditions of service of each sharer?
5. Are there special considerations that should be included as a condition of employment in the offer of appointment to the sharer?

E.g. a requirement to cover certain duties or responsibilities in the absence of one of the sharers. This may mean sometimes working more than the agreed hours.
6. Is the work and responsibilities of the post divided fairly and equally between each sharer?
7. Has the proposed job sharing arrangement been fully discussed with both partners?

Statement of Intent

Shetland Islands Council as an Equal Opportunities Employer is committed to enabling posts within the Council to be available to persons wishing to job share. All established posts may be considered as to their suitability for job sharing.

What is Job Sharing?

- Job Sharing is an arrangement where two people voluntarily share the duties and responsibilities of a single full-time post.
- The pay and benefits are shared on a pro rata basis according to the hours each works in a normal working week.
- Each sharer will receive a personal contract of employment, written statement, and salary payment.
- Job sharers will normally be appointed to established full-time posts and the appropriate terms and conditions of service apply.

Equal Opportunities

As part of an equal opportunities policy, job sharing offers opportunities of employment to individuals who would otherwise be unable to work. This includes; employees with caring responsibilities for children, disabled or elderly relatives; people with health limitations or disabilities; and single parents.

Responsibility for Implementation of the Job Share Policy

- Chief Officers will consider each post as to its suitability for job sharing:
 - (i) on application from an employee in post;
 - (ii) at recruitment stage for a vacant post.

Personnel will advise departments regarding posts that are considered exempt from the Job Share Policy.

Eligibility

All posts should be considered eligible to job share with the exception of the following:

- Trainee posts;
- Residential posts where the Council would have to bear the additional cost of providing accommodation for the second sharer;
- Where the result would be an unavoidable and significant detrimental effect on service to the public, other council departments or outside agencies;
- Where the job responsibilities can only be met on a single appointment basis and that job sharing would not be an effective use of resources.

Any post that is considered exempt from the Job Share Policy will be reviewed when the post falls vacant.

The right of appeal on the decision to exempt a post from the Job Share Policy will operate through the appropriate Grievance procedure.

How Job Sharing Works

- Employees wishing to job share in their present established post should make a written application to the Director of the Department.
- Application can be made by internal and/or external candidates for any vacancy stating clearly that the application is being made on a job share basis.
- Applications for consideration for job sharing can be made singly or jointly by job share partners.
- Consideration and reply to applications to job share an established post should take place within a time period of one month of receipt of application.
- When an application to job share a post has been approved, managers and the sharers must agree the terms on how the post will be shared.
- How the post is shared needs to be agreed by the manager and the sharers to provide an efficient and effective use of resources for the manager and to satisfy the requirements of the sharer.
- In the event of a partner of a job share partner leaving the post the following options may be open to the remaining partner:
 - (i) To continue to work on a part-time basis until the other half of the job share post is filled; or
 - (ii) To work full time on a temporary basis until the other half of the job share post is filled; or
 - (iii) To undertake the duties of the post on a full-time basis.

If a partner cannot be found after a reasonable period, there may be a need to consider redeployment. If this is not possible or the sharer declines what is available the contract will be terminated with due notice.

Recruitment Expenses and Removals

The costs of national recruitment would normally make it prohibitive to advertise posts on a job share basis in the National Media because of the costs involved in offering two recruitment packages. (Currently a maximum, of £16,000).

Terms and Conditions of Service

The terms and conditions of service of employees opting to work on a job share basis may be affected by the reduction of hours worked. Details of these should be included in the Conditions of Service Summary where appropriate.