

Mid Devon District Council balances serving the community with providing flexible working to employees



Striking a balance between servicing the community & employees

Delivering essential public services requires council staff to operate well beyond traditional 9-5, Monday to Friday working. Accurately tracking hours and enabling employees to have visibility of their accrued flexi-time was once a challenge. Since implementing the hfx integrated flexible working solution, Mid Devon District Council is able to actively manage and track working patterns, offering employees a better work life balance through flexible working.

Serving the community and benefiting employees

“The hfx solution has enabled us to meet the needs of serving the community whilst allowing our employees to work more flexibly, for example, buying additional leave or working from home.” commented Lisa Lewis, Development Manager at Mid Devon District Council.

Lisa continues: *“We are able to manage an unlimited number of working patterns, which is essential for us. We have a diverse workforce delivering a multitude of services to a largely rural community and therefore flexibility is fundamental. With this solution we can provide flexibility to our employees and to date approximately 75% of our workforce is using the hfx solution.”*

hfx’s flexible working solution has a comprehensive and user friendly web interface that employees can access to view time accrued; make and request corrections to their time - such as booking annual leave or using their accrued flexitime; view absence records and also make miscellaneous time requests. Employees use the web interface to clock in and out of the system regardless of their geographical location, for example if they are working at a different site or from home.

Forward planning

Mid Devon District Council uses the hfx solution as their time recording, absence analysis and planning system, enabling employees to record annual leave, training days and other absences. This real-time data, presented as a dashboard, provides Council management with a complete picture of workplace staffing levels, enabling them to plan scenarios and ensure sufficient resourcing levels for vital council services. Lisa highlights: *“Transparency of staffing levels is imperative; we have employees on call or on emergency cover 365 days of the year and the ability to advance plan is incredibly important to us. Also, at any point we have employees temporarily leaving the Council, for example, on maternity leave, dependents leave or long term sickness. Supporting our employees to seamlessly re-enter the work place is imperative; by ensuring effective staffing levels we can assist employees during their transition back into the work place through provision of flexible working policies.”*

Flexible functionality

The hfx solution has powerful configuration options so that almost any combination of terms and conditions can be accommodated. At Mid Devon the solution includes variable booking instructions, whereby different hours are paid at different rates determined by the contract of employment, for example, different rates for overtime at the weekend. This ensures that staff are automatically paid the correct rate, saves time and eliminates rekeying errors.

The system has been tailored to automatically allot part-time staff members a credit when there is a public holiday. It also handles hours accrued through time off in lieu (TOIL) differently to standard flexi-hours. TOIL hours can be carried over at month end, regardless of the balance of hours, whereas there may be a limit for flexi-hours, ie. if they are not used, they may be lost.

Security for staff and data

The nature of the work that the council does means that citizens' personal data is stored and processed by staff meaning that site security, both internally and externally, is a priority. By using hfx's one card solution, access control, flexitime and photo ID card is combined, so that staff need carry only one card for all work related time, location and security related logging activities.

Mid Devon District Council uses the hfx solution to provide visibility of staff whereabouts, which is important in the event of an emergency evacuation. Staff are able to log either on their PC or via a time recording unit, they are noted in the system as being present in the building. This is particularly useful for lone weekend working. Additionally the system is configured so that staff can log out during a lunch break, but are not leaving the building, for example eating at their desk, or when taking a cigarette break. In the event of an emergency or a building evacuation, the system has a log of all employees currently on site.

"We have been really impressed with hfx; we are currently looking into their mobile worker solution which we plan to implement soon. Once enabled, we will have 95% of our employees on the hfx platform." commented Lisa.

Migration path

Mid Devon District Council upgraded to the latest version of the hfx platform, to take advantage of innovative features and benefits. The new system has a contemporary feel and the web interface is even more user friendly, saving time and increasing employee engagement with the system. Lisa explains: *"The hfx team have a great track record of product implementation and service delivery. They have proved to be very helpful and supportive, the migration was swift and seamless with no business disruption. The future roadmap is to integrate further with the hfx solution and interface with our HR and payroll solutions."*

Technology as an enabler

The UK labour market has one of the most diverse ranges of working patterns in Europe and at Mid Devon District Council they are proud to be leading the way with their approach to flexible working. They have championed flexible working through flexible shift patterns, home working, reduced and compressed hours. By doing this Mid Devon District Council has achieved tangible improvements in employee engagement, motivation and loyalty but without impacting the delivery of public services. The hfx flexible working solution has been the technological enabler to the council's philosophy of attracting and retaining talented and hardworking people.

About Mid Devon

Mid Devon covers an area of 353 square miles in the rural, agricultural heartland of Devon, between Dartmoor, Exmoor and the Blackdown Hills. Over half the population of 78,000 is scattered in villages, with the balance divided between the three main towns of Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton. Delivering access to vital public services across a rural district such as Mid Devon can be challenging, however by operating a flexible working environment Mid Devon Council has struck a balance between servicing the needs of both their citizens and employees.

About hfx

hfx's 'one card – one solution', incorporates access control, photo ID, time and attendance recording, flexitime management and provides seamless integration with major HR and payroll systems can be configured to meet exact requirements and supports unlimited numbers of work patterns.

hfx services clients across the public and private sectors throughout the UK, including Home Office, Merck, Bentley Motors, adidas, Buhler Sortex Ltd, The Society of Motor Manufacturers & Traders (SMMT), Eaton Limited, MoD, National Farmers' Union, Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk, North Lanarkshire Council, East Renfrewshire Council, Isle of Man Government, MoJ, Met Police, Flintshire County Council, Office for National Statistics, UK Intellectual Property Office, NHS Business Services Authority, Pembrokeshire County Council, Science and Technology Facilities Council and many more.

Apply any flexible working policy securely, transparently and with consistency.

To find out more about **hfx** and our solutions please call **01438 822170**, visit **www.hfx.co.uk** or email **sales@hfx.co.uk**