



# Principles of a clear desk

## Introduction

This document introduces the requirements of clear desk principles and the introduction of a more flexible approach to the way that we utilise our available office accommodation and deliver the service outcomes that are required in the future.

## Background

Nottinghamshire County Council currently has a clear desk requirement as part of its information management and data quality policy, which requires staff to protect sensitive and confidential information by keeping it in a secure environment when it is not in use.

See the [Information Management](#) pages on the intranet for more information on what is best practice for sensitive and confidential information.

## What needs to change?

With the increase in flexible working options, we need to have consideration for our colleagues who may be sharing the workspace that we use.

This means that we all need to clear the desk that we have been using of work and personal items at the end of each day or if we are going to be away from it for a period in excess of 2 hours.

For mobile workers and those using touchdown areas in locations that are not their designated work area, e.g. managers checking email when attending a meeting in another building; this means that the desk should be cleared immediately prior to leaving it.

## What about my personal items?

Personal items can be kept in your personal storage locker so that they are safe when not in use. This applies to items such as tablet devices, mugs, tea/coffee, photographs, handbags etc.

## What about the papers that I am working on?

Nottinghamshire County Council is committed to reducing our reliance on paper documentation and using electronic storage where possible, as part of rationalising our storage. Where we do have paper documents, these will need to be stored in the team storage areas which will be located in the designated area for your team, so that they are available for your colleagues to use.

## What about the reference material that I use?

The designated work areas for each team will have an area for reference material that is used by the team.

## What happens if I forget or I get called away suddenly?

There will be instances where meetings overrun, you get an emergency to deal with or something else stops you from clearing the desk that you have been working on. In these instances your colleagues may need to remove your working papers etc. for you, they will put them in a designated safe place within the team neighbourhood, so that you can find them when you are next in the office.

## Responsibilities

**ALL staff** – are responsible for maintaining these principles and respecting the workspaces that are shared with others.