

YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

7th August 2006

JOB SHARING SCHEME

Purpose of report

To seek Members approval for the revised policy on the Authority's Job Sharing Scheme.

Strategic Planning Framework

The information contained in this report is consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and its approved strategic planning framework:

- ***Best Value Performance Plan***

"Plan and manage all aspects of the Authority's business so as to make the most effective use of our resources"

Background

Many organisations offer a range of flexible working options to help their employees balance work and home life which can include a job sharing scheme. Job sharing has benefits such as a happier, more fulfilled workforce able to combine working life with a family role. Flexible working, such as this, can reduce absenteeism, increase productivity and improve commitment and the retention of skilled staff.

The Authority operates a job sharing scheme for all posts provided that there is no detrimental effect on the work of the Authority and that suitable job share partners are available to ensure the most effective split of a full-time job between them.

This policy (see **Appendix**) has been updated to accommodate modifications which have come about through custom and practice. The policy is written in accordance with the Part-time Workers Directive which was introduced on 1st July 2000. The Directive aims to improve the quality of part-time work and make it more accessible and is a mixture of legal requirements and good practice measures. The Part-time Work Regulations ensure that part-time workers are not treated less favourably than comparable full-timers in their contractual terms and conditions.

Recommendation

Members are asked to approve the revised policy.

CHRISTINE PRATT
SENIOR ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER
14th July 2006



YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

JOB SHARING SCHEME

1. INTRODUCTION

The National Park Authority supports the principle of Job Sharing for all posts provided that:-

- i) there be no detrimental effect on the efficient working of the Authority;
- ii) a suitably qualified and/or experienced job share partner is available;
- iii) agreement can be reached between the Authority and the job share partners about the most effective split of hours.

2. WHAT IS JOB-SHARING?

Job sharing is normally the division of a full-time job into two part-time jobs with the sharers being equally responsible in the full time post. Traditionally, job sharing is a way of working where two people share the responsibilities of one full-time working, each working part-time. There are usually two types:

- Shared responsibility – the two employees share all the responsibilities of one full-time job, each performing the full range of duties picking up where the other left off. This is most suited to ongoing work rather than project based work.
- Divided responsibility – the responsibilities of one full-time position are divided between two people, although they may also provide back up for each other each other as required. This is most suited to work which can be easily divided up, eg. project work.

Job-sharing can also have operational benefits:

- Part of the function can be covered during the sick leave and annual leave of one of the partners.
- Written systems for ensuring continuity of service at handover can also benefit the rest of the team and the manager.
- Two or more people can bring complementary expertise to the job that may exceed the expertise of one.
- Job sharers can bring greater flexibility than a single post holder, eg by working peak periods together.

3. WHAT JOBS CAN BE SHARED?

All jobs within the National Park Authority can be considered for job sharing subject to the conditions set out in paragraph 1 above. In particular, the suitability of a post for job sharing will be dependent upon:-

- i) the operational requirements of the Section in which the particular post is located; and
- ii) whether or not it is feasible to split duties of the post without adversely affecting efficiency or effectiveness.

4. WAYS OF SHARING JOBS

The pattern of the working week for job sharers will be determined by the Departmental Head in consultation with the line manager and with individual job sharers/job share partners. Department Heads should be satisfied that any proposed pattern of working meets both the demands of the job and, wherever possible, the preferences of the job sharers. The total hours of the job sharers will not exceed that of a full time post.

There are fixed rules regarding working patterns for job sharers and consideration will be given to all suggested work patterns on an individual basis. However, the examples below are most commonly used:-

- i) Split Day – one sharer working in the morning, the other in the afternoon;
- ii) Week Basis – each job sharer works 2½ days per week or sharing out the days to suit their requirements, eg. 3 days and 2 days or 4 days and 1 day.
- iii) Alternate Weeks –job sharers work two days one week and three days the other, eg. Monday, Tuesday and alternate Wednesday or Thursday, Friday and alternate Wednesday.
- iv) Overlap – both sharers work three short days per week; and
- v) Alternating Days – both sharers work on a one day on/one day off basis rotating over a fortnight.

5. HOW CAN JOB SHARING BE INITIATED?

A job share can be initiated in one of three ways:-

- i) existing or potential employees applying, either individually or jointly, for posts which have been advertised;
- ii) an existing full time employee formally applying to their Department Head for a job share arrangement to be agreed for their own post;
- iii) two existing employees formally applying together to job share one of their current posts. The same terms and conditions of employment would need to apply to the original post and intended job share post.

Job sharing arrangements will not be introduced for any existing employee without their agreement.

6. VACANCY ADVERTISING

Vacancies may be advertised as suitable for job sharing (except where a Department Head has demonstrated that a particular post is unsuitable for job sharing, as determined by the guidelines in paragraphs 1 and 3 above) with the approval of the Chief Executive.

The appropriate statements to be included in advertisements for these posts and in situations where one sharer of an already job shared post subsequently leaves, are as follows:-

“This post is suitable for job sharers”; or

“This vacancy is a job sharing position”;

whichever is appropriate.

7. SELECTION PROCEDURE

The short-listing and selection of both internal and external job share applicants for vacancies will be undertaken in accordance with normal recruitment and selection procedures.

It will be the responsibility of the Head of Department/Line Manager, throughout the selection process, to ensure that the skills and experience of each prospective job sharer relate to the full requirements of the job concerned.

Each short-listed candidate will be interviewed separately in the normal way. However, where communication and mutual co-operation between job sharers is considered important, Line Managers may wish to arrange a meeting for both candidates together to assess how they will jointly fulfil the demands of the post.

If only one job sharer is appointed to the post, a further advertisement to attract a job share partner will be made. If, after reasonable steps to recruit another job sharer have been taken, a suitable job share partner cannot be found, the successful candidate should be offered the post on a full time basis. However, if this is unacceptable to the candidate, the original offer of appointment will lapse.

8. EXISTING EMPLOYEES REQUESTING JOB SHARING FACILITIES

Existing employees should submit a formal request to their Department Head who will, within 28 days, make a decision as to whether or not the post is considered suitable for job sharing. It is not necessary **at this stage** for the employee to have another person to share the job with.

If the Department Head considers that the post is suitable for job sharing, approval should then be sought from the Chief Executive.

Where a joint application is initiated by two existing employees to share one of their existing posts, no advertising will take place of the then vacant post until the arrangement has been considered, agreed and implemented, at which time the subsequent vacancy will be advertised. All joint requests for job sharing will be considered on the basis that:-

- i) both applicants are considered suitable to job share the post; and

- ii) both posts in question are on the same grade, or the job share arrangement would not otherwise result in one of the job share applicants receiving direct promotion (e.g. where the job to be shared is at a lower grade than that currently occupied by one of the proposed sharers).

9. PROCEDURE WHEN A JOB SHARER LEAVES

Where part of a job shared post becomes vacant, the remaining job sharer will initially be offered the post on a full time basis. If the job sharer does not wish to work full time, another partner will be sought through advertising in accordance with normal recruitment and selection procedures.

If no suitable job sharing partner can be found after all reasonable attempts (normally, a maximum of two rounds of advertising) the job will be reviewed and may have to be advertised on a full time basis. The remaining job sharer will then either:-

- i) Be required to work on a full time basis in that post; or
- ii) be redeployed to a suitable alternative job share, part-time or full time vacant post (if such exists) elsewhere in the Authority within existing procedures; the Authority's arrangements for salary protection in such circumstances will apply.
- iii) If the employee is unable to undertake the role on a full time basis as per point (i) and all redeployment options have been exhausted as per point (ii), then their contract of employment will come to an end.

It is important that these provisions are brought to the attention of all job share applicants prior to any appointments or commitments being made. The employee's contract of employment should therefore state "Appointment to this post is initially on a job share basis, and is strictly in accordance with the Authority's Job Sharing Scheme, paragraph 9".

10. REVIEW OF JOB SHARE ARRANGEMENTS

Job sharers should be aware that such arrangements may have to be reviewed in order to ensure that the service does not suffer, or where there is a reorganisation of the Authority's work. Where there is a proven need to revert the post back to a full time position, one or both job sharer/s may be redeployed to a suitable alternative position within existing procedures if they cannot undertake the role on a full time basis. The job sharers may be required to work in full time posts, or distinct part-time posts if no other opportunities exist. In accordance with paragraph 9 if all redeployment options have been exhausted the matter will be referred to a hearing where a possible outcome may be dismissal.

These courses of action will only be taken in extreme circumstances where no other alternative exists. This provision needs to be brought to the attention of all job share applicants prior to any appointments or commitments being made, both explicitly and through the issue of this document to all potential job share applicants requesting information about the Scheme.

11. GENERAL INFORMATION

Job sharers of posts which currently attract an Essential User car allowance will receive the lump sum payments on a pro-rata basis. Mileage claims for both essential and casual users will be processed individually in accordance with existing arrangements for full-time staff.

If there is any doubt about the interpretation of a particular statutory requirement or condition of service as it applies to job sharers, the principle of "pro rata" entitlements of a full time employee in an identical position should be applied. Assistance is available from the Personnel Section.

12. RIGHT OF APPEAL

If an employee is dissatisfied with any matter under this scheme, they may pursue this through the Authority's Grievance Procedure.