

# Benefits of Working at Flintshire County Council



2021 - 2024

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Uniquely placed Flintshire is the gateway to Wales – anyone coming to work with us will discover a truly lovely county.

Explore fascinating towns such as Mold with its Street Market and food and drinks festival, Holywell, the home of St Winefrides Well, one of the Seven Wonders of Wales, Flint, with its medieval castle and market and Caerwys, considered to be one of the smallest towns with a Royal Charter.

There are many sites of historical interest such as Grade 1 listing building Gladstone's Library in Hawarden. Britain's finest residential library, it was founded by Minister William Gladstone in 1889. Visit Basingwerk Cistercian Abbey alongside Greenfield Valley Heritage Park, a fascinating mix of mills and reservoirs charting the industrial past.

If it's a beach holiday, a weekend break, a bit of retail therapy or simply a day out with the family, then start discovering Flintshire right here.

<http://www.discoverflintshire.com>

We pride ourselves on continuously improving our services. As an employer, we recognise our most valuable assets are our people. We strive to be an employer of choice by providing a range of benefits that help us secure the engagement of employees and motivating them to deliver to the citizens of Flintshire County.

The improved performance and development of our employees is managed through a performance management process, focusing on developing skills, knowledge, qualifications, and competencies centred on Flintshire's behavioural Competency Framework that support the Council's key objectives. Ultimately we recognise that developed, well-equipped and satisfied employees will provide the best service to the citizens of Flintshire and those who work and live in the County.

## Equal Opportunities

Achieving diversity in the workplace is important to us. It isn't just about complying with the law, it's about recognising and valuing each other's differences and treating each other fairly. We want to recognise everybody's worth regardless of their age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief and ensure equality across all areas. We want to respect others, and be a sensitive and understanding employer. When people can be themselves, they perform better and it helps us to better reflect the community we serve.

Flintshire County Council is proud to be a Disability Confident Registered Employer and to have worked with the Alzheimer's Society in training members of staff to ensure we are a Dementia Friendly workplace.



### Guaranteed Interview Scheme

The Council operates a Guaranteed interview Scheme (GIS). All applicants with a characteristic as defined under the Equality Act 2010 who advise the Council at the time of their application and who meet the essential criteria of the post must be offered an interview. This is in accordance with the Disability Confident Scheme.

### Veteran Guaranteed Interview Scheme

Flintshire County Council has introduced a guaranteed interview scheme for Armed Forces Veterans. The scheme supports the pledges in the Community Covenant. A guaranteed interview will be offered to veterans, provided the following criteria is met:

- The Armed Forces were the veteran's last long-term employer.
- No more than 3 years has elapsed since the veteran left the Armed Forces.
- The Veteran meets the essential criteria for the advertised role.

### Annual Leave and Public Holidays

Flintshire County Council promotes a positive and healthy work life balance and recognises the importance of annual leave in achieving this.

The entitlement for employees on National Joint Council for Local Government (Green Book) and National Joint Council for Local Government - Soulbury Committee (Blue Book) are:

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|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • On Appointment to Council         | 26 days (plus 8 Bank Holidays) |
| • After 5 years Continuous Service  | 30 days (plus 8 Bank Holidays) |
| • After 10 years Continuous Service | 33 days (plus 8 Bank Holidays) |

Part-time employees have annual leave and Bank Holidays calculated on a pro rata basis.

## Purchasing of Additional Annual Leave Scheme

Employees have the opportunity to “buy” up to a maximum of 2 weeks (74 hours or 10 days for full time – this would be pro rata for part time staff) additional annual leave in each leave year.

Additional annual leave is unpaid, the cost of which will be deducted from an employee’s salary. Employment would not be broken during the period of unpaid leave and continuous service will be maintained.

## Local Government Pension Scheme

All employees will be contractually enrolled into a pension scheme on day 1 or when they become eligible, providing there is a contract of employment of at least 3 months. For contracts of less than 3 months, employees can ‘opt-in’ to the scheme.

### 10 benefits for joining the Local Government Pension Scheme

1. Pension contributions are deducted from your pay before tax so you receive tax relief
2. No hidden charges or administration fees
3. Your employer contributes too
4. Option for you to pay extra pension contributions to increase your annual pension or lump sum amount at retirement
5. You can retire between the ages of 55\* and 75
6. Ill health protections at any age
7. Annual pension payable for life when you retire, and it increases in line with cost of living each April
8. Option to create a tax-free lump sum at retirement
9. Death Grant to be paid to your loved ones
10. Survivors’ pensions payable to spouse/partner and any eligible children

\*Please note: the normal minimum pension age will increase from 55 to 57 from 6 April 2028 across most UK pension schemes. The Finance Act provides for protected pension ages for members who meet the entitlement condition. It is not yet known if it is intended to amend the LGPS regulations to introduce a protected pension age.

You can read more about the scheme at <https://mss.clwydpensionfund.org.uk/home/>

## Shared Cost AVC scheme

Flintshire County Council offers LGPS members access to a Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contribution (shared cost AVC) scheme, facilitated by our partners AVC wise.

A standard additional voluntary contribution is a tax efficient way to save for retirement and provides an opportunity for you to supplement your LGPS to build up an additional

retirement fund. They are available and beneficial to you, no matter how close or far you are away from retirement.

Read more at [www.avcwise.co.uk](http://www.avcwise.co.uk)

## Occupational Sick Pay

If you are off ill, we operate an Occupational Sick Pay Scheme, where you may receive full and half pay, depending on your length of service up to a maximum of 26 weeks in addition to your entitlement to Statutory Sick Pay.

We operate a comprehensive Attendance Management Policy, which aims to support and help individuals whilst at work, when on sick leave and returning to work.

## Work Life Balance

To help you balance the demands of work and home, we have a range of flexible working options including:

- Job-Sharing
- Reduced Hours and Part Time Working
- Term-Time Contracts
- Compressed Hours

We have a range of policies including:

- Family Friendly Provisions, including Maternity, Paternity, Adoption & Parental Leave and Shared Parental Leave.
- Flexible Working
- Special Leave of Absence, including time off for emergencies and bereavement
- Agile Working
- Working and Caring

## Credit Union's

You can join the local Credit union, which are a not-for-profit financial cooperative organisation. They provide a variety of competitive financial services including current accounts, savings, mortgages, loans and insurance services.

With payments taken directly from your wages, it can be an easy way to deal with your finances. You can read more about the Credit Union at the following links.

Cambrian Credit Union – <https://www.cambriancu.com/en/>

## eRewards at Flintshire County Council

eRewards is a unique benefits programme for employees of Flintshire County Council, that offers you a fantastic range of savings.

### eRewards Vectis Card and hub

Permanent and temporary fixed term contracted employees (relief and supply workers are not eligible), will be sent instructions to register their account via the Vectis Card app for free on Apple Store or Google Play, when they join the Council. There are thousands of offers and benefits available, which can save you hundreds on your everyday shopping, motoring costs and health and well-being spend.

You can save using online discounts, discounted gift vouchers, cashback and instore discounts via the Vectis App. This includes high street shops, cinemas and restaurant discounts through to money of motoring, insurance, hotels and holidays.

As well as lifestyle savings, you can also get help on covering the cost on even more with your salary sacrifice schemes. Simply forgo a portion of your salary (which becomes exempt from National Insurance and Tax) meaning you are then provided with a great non-cash benefit.

### Cycle to Work – Salary Sacrifice

The cycle to work scheme is a Government approved salary sacrifice initiative allowing you to enter into a hire purchase agreement to obtain a bike and accessories for the purpose of cycling to work. The hire is free of tax and national insurance, which means you can make savings, whilst keeping fit, reducing your carbon footprint and spending less time in your car. The scheme offers you access to hundreds of top brands from over 465 Halfords shops, Cycle Republic Stores and over 860 independent bike shops.

### Health and Wellbeing

Flintshire's Occupational Health Department is committed to promoting a culture where physical health and psychological well-being of staff is respected, protected and improved.

The Occupational Health Department is a nurse led service and our team consists of qualified Specialist Occupational Health Practitioners and experienced Occupational Health Nurses who advise on all matters concerning the effect of the working environment on health and the influence an employee's health has on their ability to fulfil their role. In addition, we arrange specialist services to support employee's physical and mental well-being including access to physiotherapy and counselling services.

## Microsoft Home Use Program

Through our Enterprise Agreement with Microsoft, Council Employees are entitled to purchase Microsoft Office at a low price of £9.95 for home/personal use. Eligible individuals are allowed to purchase a single licence for either Office Professional Plus 2016 or Office for Mac 2016. This licence allows employees to download and install Office onto one machine.

## Vodafone Advantage

Flintshire County Council have partnered with Vodafone to offer employees savings on Vodafone pay monthly bundles.

Find out more at the following link:

<https://advantage.vodafone.co.uk/>

## Fostering Friendly Policy

Flintshire County Council is keen to support employees who are prospective foster carers and also support those already providing care by providing time off where necessary. Employees can be granted up to 5 days additional leave with pay, with increased flexibility to support the process.

## Employee Assistance Programme

With ever increasing pressures at work and at home, there are times when we all need some extra support to balance the demands of everyday life. That's why Flintshire County Council has chosen to provide a free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) for all its employees.

Your EAP is paid for by the Council as a support service for you as an employee, so that its free of charge for you to use. It is provided by an independent provider, is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, and is accessible by phone or online.

The EAP is designed to help you with a wide range of work, family and personal issues. From work-life balance to childcare information, relationships to workplace issues, health and well-being, let your EAP support you on the issues that affect all of us at some point in our lives. Topics include, but are not limited to:

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|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work-life balance</li><li>• Relationships</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Elder care information</li><li>• Life events</li></ul> |
|---|--|

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Childcare information</li><li>• Health and well-being</li><li>• Debt</li><li>• Disability and illness</li><li>• Careers</li><li>• Bereavement and loss</li><li>• Stress</li><li>• Sexual orientation</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Immigration</li><li>• Anxiety and depression</li><li>• Family issues</li><li>• Bullying and harassment</li><li>• Education</li><li>• Consumer rights</li><li>• Workplace pressure</li><li>• Gender identity</li></ul> |
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## Managing Carers Needs

Flintshire County Council recognises that you might have caring responsibilities that have a substantial impact on your life outside of work. Our Managing Carers needs policy provides supports for carers to help balance commitments outside of work.

## Career Breaks

The Council recognises that you may need a period of time off work, to be used for travelling, long-term carer needs, voluntary work or for educational purposes. Please refer to the Councils Career Break policy.

Overall, Flintshire County Council is a great place to work, offering a large range of employee benefits. Further information can be found by contacting Employment Services. Tel: 01352 702060 or [employment.services@flintshire.gov.uk](mailto:employment.services@flintshire.gov.uk)

Good luck with your application!