

Employee benefits

Vodafone

We've partnered with Vodafone to bring an exclusive offer to employees and up to five family members or friends. You need a SIC email address and you need to be a new Vodafone customer or be ready to upgrade. Find out more at: www.vodafone.co.uk/vodafone-advantage/index.htm

Leisure Card

Council employees can join Shetland Recreational Trust's Corporate Leisure Scheme offering a saving of 35% across a range of subscription choices. You can pay by monthly direct debit or an annual fee. Get more information at any SRT facility or at www.srt.org.uk.

Childcare Vouchers

These allow parents to take part of their salary, exempt from tax and NICs, to put towards the cost of registered childcare. The Council offers a childcare voucher scheme through Employers For Childcare Vouchers. You can register at www.efcvouchers.com, click on "Sign Up" and enter the unique employee code z9jac, or find out more at www.employersforchildcare.org. For queries email louise.ratter@shetland.gov.uk, or call Louise on 01595 744034

Pension Scheme

When you're issued with a contract of employment with the Council, you are automatically enrolled in the Local Government Pension Scheme. The scheme changed from April 2015.

What changed?

- Pension built up after 1st April 2015 is based on career average
- Normal pension age from that date = state pension age (minimum of 65)
- Pension builds up at 1/49th of pensionable pay
- There's a 50/50 option – pay 'half for half' benefits

What stayed the same?

- You can still retire from age 60 without employer consent
- You can still swap annual pension for a tax free lump sum
- Pensions remain for spouse/eligible partners/children

- The 'rule of 85'/Certificate of Protection remain
- Ill health/flexible/redundancy retirement retained
- Remember, your employer contributes around twice what you pay

What's protected?

- Pension built up to April 2015 worked out on your final pay when you leave
- The normal pension age for benefits built up to April 2015 = age 65
- Protection for those nearing retirement – no less than final salary benefits would have been

If you've any pension questions, email pensions-financeservices@shetland.gov.uk, or phone 01595 744644

(Teachers are members of the Scottish Teachers' Pension Scheme administered by the Scottish Public Pensions Agency.)

Ford Advantage Programme

Via Jim's Garage, Lerwick, exclusive offers when purchasing a new Ford car (excludes commercial vehicles). Find out more at www.ford.co.uk/Hidden/FordAdvantage/Programme

Leave Entitlement

Generous entitlement for annual leave and public holidays (pro rata for part-time employees). Annual leave increases by five days (pro rata) in the year following five years' continuous service.

TimeforTalking

Council employees can access an independent support service, provided by TimeforTalking. The service includes a confidential helpline (24 hours a day, 7 days a week), self referral to telephone counselling, and an online chat option.

Call free on 0800 970 3980 or visit the site at www.timefortalking.co.uk. Here you will find information to help in times of worry, stress or emotional difficulty. If you'd like to have an online discussion with one of the counselling team (between 8.30am – 6.00pm), go to the Members' area, click on the Shetland Islands Council logo and use the password Campion15.

This new service complements the support already available to council employees through Wendy Borrill, Staff Welfare Officer, based at 8 North Ness, Lerwick. Contact Wendy on 01595 744580, or email her at staff.welfare.officer@shetland.gov.uk to find out more.

Work Life Balance and Family Friendly Policies

We have various policies in place to support employees in their work life balance and family commitments, for example:

- Family Leave guidelines (including Maternity, Shared Parental, Adoption and Ordinary Parental Leave)
- Flexi time, depending on the needs of the service

- Flexible Working Options, depending on the needs of the service
- Job Share
- Remote Working
- Special Leave
- Annual Leave and Public Holiday policy

For queries on any of these policies email Human.Resources@shetland.gov.uk or phone 01595 744032

Mediation

Conflicts can occur in work settings and the Council supports the use of workplace mediation as an informal approach to resolving these. Mediators used by the Council have been trained to an accredited standard to undertake impartial and independent mediation. It is a voluntary process, and offers a safe and confidential space for two or more parties in a dispute to talk about their situation, exchange concerns and come up with ideas and find their own answers. Mediation is generally requested through a line manager in consultation with an HR Adviser.