

EMPLOYMENT & APPEALS COMMITTEE

28 October 2014

HR POLICIES

Report of the Director of Resources

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update Employment Committee on the progress to date for developing and updating Human Resources (HR) policies and to outline the programme for the remainder of 2014-15 and for 2015-16.
- 1.2 To highlight pending changes to employment legislation and regulations that will have an impact on current HR policies.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To acknowledge the progress to date in updating and developing HR and the plan for the remainder of this year and 2015-16.

- (a) For development in 2014-15
 - Social Media
 - No Smoking
 - Lone Working
 - Honorarium/Acting up
 - Pay Policy (annual review)
 - Pension Discretions (annual review)

- (b) For development in 2015-16
 - Standby Allowances
 - Subscriptions Policy
 - Leave for Foster Carers
 - Violence at Work
 - Giving Employment References

2.2 To authorise the Head of Human Resources to amend and update the following policies in line with changes to employment legislation/regulation. These are policies and procedures that Members have previously approved and it is requested that these do not need to be submitted again to Members in their entirety.

- (a) Maternity Policy and Umbrella Leave Policy
 - With effect from 1 October 2014, prospective fathers and the partners of mothers 'to be' are able to take unpaid time off to attend two ante-natal appointments.

(b) Adoption Policy

With effect from 5 April 2015, introduction of the right to paid time off to attend up to 5 adoption appointments for those adopting. Surrogate parents will become eligible for adoption leave and pay.

(c) Parental Leave

Effective from 1 December 2014 for babies with an expected week of confinement (or matched/placed for adoption) after 5 April 2015, the introduction of shared parental leave. The arrangements for this currently look quite complex and will include a range of eligibility criteria and methods for taking the shared leave.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Human Resources (HR) team has been reviewing and developing HR policies as part of a policy review programme since 2012 as highlighted in Appendix A. This shows good progress in refreshing policies to ensure they are legally compliant and fit for purpose. They have been developed in conjunction with best practice in the public and private sectors, legal input and consultation with the recognised trade unions. Briefings have been provided to line managers and more detailed training to supplement briefings eg. Managing capability, Sickness and Absence.
- 3.2 In March 2014 the Council's constitution was amended to delegate approval of employment policies to the Employment and Appeals Committee.
- 3.3 For 2014-15 the programme was reduced pending appointments to the new HR structure. The programme for the remainder of this year is shown in para 2.1(a) and the programme for 2015-16 in para 2.1(b). In addition, some amendments will be required to the Disciplinary policy and Recruitment policy to reflect experience of working within these policies.
- 3.4 As highlighted in para 2.2 there are pending changes to employment legislation which will require some update to existing policies – these changes are mandatory to ensure we are legally compliant.
- 3.5 Since April 2014 the Council has been working with EEF as our employment law advisers and to supplement our HR advice – this is considered by the HR team to be an effective partnership with prompt, quality advice provided by their solicitors. The Head of HR meets with our assigned solicitor on a monthly basis to review individual case work (absence, disciplinary, grievance). The Council receives free access to employment law updates and will continue to work with EEF on HR policy review and development.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications from the content of this report.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

RISK	IMPACT	COMMENTS
Time	Low	There are no timing risks attached to the items in this report. Statutory changes become lawful from their effective date.
Viability	Low	No issues identified.
Finance	Low	There are no direct financial implications arising from the report
Profile	Low	No specific issues relevant to the community regarding HR policies.
Equality and Diversity	Low	EIA screening indicates no specific issues arise from this report

Background Papers: None

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A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.