

Report for: General Purposes Committee, 3rd October 2023

Item number:

Title: HR Policies – New and Revised policies

Report authorised by: Dan Paul, Chief People Officer

Lead Officer: Tanya Patchett, Head of Employee Relations, Business Partnering and Reward

Ward(s) affected: None

**Report for Key/ Non-key
Non-Key Decision:**

1 Describe the issue under consideration

The report outlines the content of three HR policies:

- The Job Evaluation Policy is new and is being introduced for the first time.
- The Probation Policy policy is a revision of the existing policy
- The Elections staffing policy is a revision of the current policy.

The report also includes:

- Proposed changes to the recruitment policy in relation to internal recruitment
- Proposed changes to notice periods
- Annual pay policy statement 2024-2025

2 Cabinet Member Introduction

Not applicable.

3 Recommendations

That Committee consider and approve each of the attached policies, and delegates authority to the Chief People Officer to make such amendments as considered minor.

4 Reason for decision

The policies are brought to committee in line with the HR policy review schedule previously agreed with members. They have undergone extensive consultation with the trades unions, staff equality networks and with managers internally. The final versions attached at Appendices A-F include changes as a result of the consultations.

5 Alternative Options Considered

Not applicable.

6 Background information

- 6.1 The probation policy has been updated to include hybrid working, disability and long-term condition declarations. Probation notice periods have been updated to be 1 week until the employee has completed their probation period at which point, the relevant notice period for their grade would apply. The updated policy covers the probation review meetings including the formal review meeting, probation extensions and what happens at the end of the probation period. The policy also expands further on the Appeal process for dismissals during probation.
- 6.2 The job evaluation policy is a newly introduced policy to standardise the job evaluation and job matching process. The policy provides detailed information on writing the job description, the stages of the process, pay protection and job evaluation outcomes.
- 6.3 The Elections policy is current, the amendments made clarify the maximum paid time off as 2 days per election. The provisions around start and finish times for those undertaking roles at night have been removed as they were over complicated and unnecessary.
- 6.4 There is a proposal to amend the wording in the recruitment policy to enable the decision to be made to advertise a post internally only or convert an agency worker to a permanent employee in the event this is felt to be beneficial.
- 6.5 It is proposed that changes are made to notice periods with effect from January 2024 where notice periods for employees paid up to and including PO4 are a minimum period of 6 weeks. Notice periods for employees paid PO5 and above will have a minimum notice period of 3 calendar months. For those on TUPE terms and conditions and not on Council pay scales, those with pay equal to or exceeding SCP 39 will have a notice period of 3 months. Those paid below that figure will have a notice period of 6 weeks.
- 6.6 The Council is required to publish an annual pay policy statement under Section 38(1) of the Localism Act. The statement is included at Appendix G of this report.

7 Statutory Officers' comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Legal and Governance.

7.1 Finance

There is a financial implication in respect of extended notice periods as there will be additional cost in the event the decision is taken to issue an employee notice or in the event we pay in lieu of notice.

With the introduction of 1 week notice in the probation period, this would result in cost reduction in the event we are ending employment in probationary period as currently, the notice period would be in line with the position.

7.2 Head of Legal and Governance

The remit of the General Purposes Committee covers the approval of new and revised HR policies

8 Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Job Evaluation Policy

Appendix B – Probation Policy

Appendix C- Elections Staff Policy

Appendix D – Changes to recruitment wording report

Appendix E- Changes to notice periods report

Appendix F- Annual pay policy statement

9 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Not applicable.

REPORT END