

Report for: General Purposes Committee - 3 April 2025

Item number: 8

Title: HR Policies

Report authorised by: Dan Paul, Chief People Officer

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

Ward(s) affected: N/A

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

1. Describe the issue under consideration

The report sets out the changes to the Ill Health Retirement and Parental Leave policies to ensure that they are in line with ACAS best practice, any legal/ statutory requirements and the Council's local requirements.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

Not applicable.

3. Recommendations

That Committee consider and approve the changes to the Ill Health Retirement and Parental Leave policies.

4. Reason for Decision

Review of policies is done on a cycle basis however priority has been given this year to reviewing the key policies in most frequent use as part of our improvement to managing employee relations cases and simplifying the policies for all managers and employees. The change to policies is to make the management of people more effective.

5. Alternative Options Considered

Not applicable.

6. Background information

- 6.1 Human Resources (HR) has consulted/ engaged with Trade Unions, Staff Networks and other stakeholders via our policy collaboration process to ensure the Council has fit for purpose and legally compliant policies.
- 6.2 The new Ill Health Retirement and Parental Leave Policies have been drafted in line with ACAS best practice (with reference to Brightmine, formerly known as XpertHR), any legal/ statutory requirements and the Council's local requirements.
- 6.3 The Ill Health Retirement Policy has been updated as follows:
 - 6.3.1 Merging of Purpose and Scope under the heading "Introduction", in line with other policies.
 - 6.3.2 The principles section has been updated in line with other Council policies and a link has been included to the Sickness Absence Policy.
 - 6.3.3 The reference to practice notes has been removed and contents has been amalgamated into the policy.
 - 6.3.4 Definition of Ill Health Retirement and eligibility criteria has been added at sections 3 and 4.
 - 6.3.5 The wording for the stage one appeal has been clarified and a stage two appeal process, which involves a review by the pension fund, has been introduced.
 - 6.3.6 Details regarding confidentiality have been included.
 - 6.3.7 Support options for employees have been incorporated to offer guidance and assistance during periods of ill health.
 - 6.3.8 The process for Ill Health Retirement detailed at Appendix A.
 - 6.3.9 Summary of Ill Health Tiers added, which includes detail on criteria, entitlement and pension information is outlined at Appendix B.
- 6.4 The Parental Leave Policy has been updated as follows:
 - 6.4.1 Revised wording has been introduced concerning Neonatal Pay and Leave, reflecting the changes effective from 6th April.
 - 6.4.2 Added guidance on maintaining effective communication while an employee is on parental leave and ensuring a smooth transition back to work.

7. Contribution to strategic outcomes

The review and amendments to policies are done in order to ensure we are operating within best practice for Human Resources and in supporting the organisation to achieve its' objectives. Policies under review are also done so in order to maximise the efficiency of workforce management.

8. Statutory Officers' comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities

8.1 Chief Finance Officer

The introduction of Neonatal Pay and Leave from 6th April 2025 is not expected to have a significant financial impact and will be managed through existing staffing budgets where applicable. There are no other financial implications arising from this review of the Ill Health Retirement and Parental Leave policies.

8.2 Head of Legal and Governance

The General Purposes Committee Terms of Reference include approval of all human resources policies including pay and grading structures, and changes to employees' terms and conditions of employment and to approve policies on how the Council exercises its functions under the Local Government Pension Scheme and the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

The review of HR policies will ensure that Haringey is meeting its legal and legislative obligations to all employees.

9. Use of Appendices

Appendix A - Ill Health Retirement Policy

Appendix B - Parental Leave Policy

10. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Not applicable.