

Report for: **Staffing and Remuneration Committee**

Item number: **8**

Title: **Review of Haringey HR policies**

Report

authorised by: **Richard Grice – Assistant Director, Transformation and Resources**

Lead Officer: **Julie Amory, HR Policy Development Manager**

Ward(s) affected: **All**

Report for Key/

Non Key Decision: N/A

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 In June 2016, the Committee was given notice of the intention to review the Council's HR policies by clustering similar policies into themes that cover the employment relationship that the Council has with its workforce.

1.2 This report presents three reviewed policies to the Committee that sit within the theme 'Getting and Retaining the Right People'. The Probation Policy was added to the review as it is currently attached to the Induction Policy. The Capability Policy was added to this review as it was felt that there were ties between that Policy and the Probation Policy.

1.3 Although there are four policies that fall within the theme 'Getting and Retaining the Right People' (Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly referred to as CRB) Policy, Induction Policy, Political Restrictions Exemption Procedure and Recruitment Policy) it was agreed with the Trade Unions that two of the reviewed policies would be presented to a later Committee meeting to provide more time to discuss a finalised version of them. The two policies that will go to a future meeting of this Committee are the Probation Policy and the Capability Policy.

1.4 The three policies being presented to the Committee for their consideration and recommended adoption from the Getting and Retaining the Right People theme are the:

- Induction Policy;
- Recruitment and Selection Policy;
- Disclosure and Barring Service Policy.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

2.1 Not applicable.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1. That the Committee approves the Induction Policy, the Recruitment and Selection Policy and the Disclosure and Barring Service Policy attached at Appendix A, B and Appendix C of this report.
- 3.2. That the Committee authorises the Assistant Director Transformation and Resources in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to decide the implementation date for each of the policies.
- 3.3. That the Committee authorises the Assistant Director Transformation and Resources in consultation with the Chair of the Committee to make such amendments to the policies as he considers minor, any such amendments to be reported back to the meeting of the Committee following the making of the amendments.

4. Reason for decision

- 4.1 Having good HR policies and procedures assists in providing the workplace with a structure that supports the Council's Corporate Plan, Workforce Plan and Values, while allowing it to consider and implement changes in employment law, and guidance. Regular review of these documents ensures they remain fit for purpose and compliant with the law.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 The alternative would be to not conduct any reviews and continue with the existing versions. It is, however, accepted that reviewing HR policies is necessary to ensure these address changes in employment legislation and case law and are adapted to meet the Council's new Vision and Values. It is therefore accepted that regular reviews of the HR policies will be conducted.

6. Background information

- 6.1 The Council has various HR policies and procedures that cover its employment relationship with its workforce. Owned by HR these documents are periodically presented to the Committee for its approval prior to implementation. It is good practice to review HR policies regularly to ensure that these meet the Council's vision and values.
- 6.2 The three policies are in the new policy template that aims to make the Council's policies consistent with its peer Local Authorities, increase transparency through merging similar policy issues into one document and streamline information to make it easier for the workforce to understand and access information on the behaviours and standards that the Council expects of its employees.
- 6.3 The additional benefit of the new template is that it has a section that will ensure that equality and inclusion are clearly considered in all revised policies and a new section that defines the roles and responsibilities of staff, managers and other groups/stakeholders where relevant.

Consultation

- 6.4 The three draft policies were presented to the Trade Unions on 20 July 2016 at the Corporate Industrial Relations meeting chaired by HR with consultation closing on Friday, 5 August 2016. The Statutory Officers' Group (SOG) were presented drafts of the policies for their consideration on 23 August at which it was agreed that Assistant Directors would be given until 5 September 2016 to feed into the reviews. Formal consultation also took place with Legal Services, SSC HR, Assistant Directors and the HR Business Partners. Following this process, refinements were made to the policies which are detailed below.
- 6.5 At the initial meeting Trade Unions raised the concern that the new template removed the 'guts' of the policies. To address these concerns the HR Policy Development Manager and the Head of People and Change met with the Joint Branch Secretary to discuss this concern and it was agreed that HR would meet again with the Trade Unions to reconsider the Probation policy and the Capability policy.

7. Review of the Induction Policy (Appendix A)

- 7.1 The existing Induction Policy is combined with the Probation Policy and was last reviewed in January 2005. The proposed version at Appendix A has separated the two processes to meet best practice as suggested by the Chartered Institute for Personal Development, the professional body that governs HR and people development and to be consistent with the Council's peer Local Authorities.
- 7.2 The proposed Induction Policy has created a new checklist that will act as a useful tool for line managers to ensure that all relevant information is given to a new starter on arrival to the Council. The aim of the checklist is to improve the induction process and to ensure all new employees are introduced effectively to the organisation. The checklist covers the minimum information required in an induction programme and allows line managers to add items to the checklist that will deliver a tailored, local induction that covers the essential information for their area.

8 Review of the Disclosure and Barring Service Policy (Appendix B)

- 8.1 The existing Disclosure and Barring Service policy is contained in a policy statement issued in September 2013. The proposed version at Appendix B has been updated to provide the information more clearly and now includes a section on Gender Recognition Certificates, Checks on Members, as well as clarity on what DBS checks are required of Agency Workers, Consultants and Overseas applicants, and information on the Council's obligations related to storage, access, retention and disposal of DBS records.

9 Review of the Recruitment and Selection Policy (Appendix C)

- 9.1 The existing Recruitment and Selection Policy was last reviewed in March 2010. The proposed version at Appendix C has been updated to reflect the Council's current recruitment practices.

9.2 New sections in the policy cover the position relating to the payment of Interview Expenses to bring the Council in alignment with practices operated by its peer Local Authorities, clarity on the DBS process and the waiver system operated by Adults and Children's and the inclusion of information on Politically Restricted Posts.

9.3 To comply with new legislative changes the revised policy now has a section on Former Public Sector Workers.

10 Contribution to strategic outcomes

10. The Council's Corporate Plan sets out an ambitious agenda, and one that will require significant change to deliver. Having clear, robust HR policies and procedures is a key element of how the Council will meet the Corporate Plan objectives by having fair and consistent approaches on how it manages and develops its workforce.

11 Statutory Officers' comments (Chief Finance Officer (including procurement), Assistant Director of Corporate Governance, Equalities Assistant Director of Corporate Governance Comments

Chief Finance Officer Comments

11.1 The Chief Finance Officer has reviewed the report and has no comments to make.

Assistant Director of Corporate Governance

11.2 Legal Services have been involved in the drafting of the Policies. They comply with all relevant legal requirements.

12 Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Induction Policy;

Appendix B - Disclosure and Barring Service Policy;

Appendix C - Recruitment and Selection Policy;

13 Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Not Applicable.