

Policy and Sustainability Committee

10:00am, Tuesday 10 November 2020

Human Resources Policies - Assurance Statement

Item number	
Executive/routine	Routine
Wards	
Council Commitments	

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 To note that the Council policies detailed in this report have been reviewed and are considered as being current, relevant and fit for purpose.

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Human Resources Policies - Assurance Statement

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 This report confirms the employment or Human Resources (HR) policies, which have been reviewed, consulted on, and approved by relevant committee in the last 12 months.
- 2.2 In addition, this report outlines HR policies that are planned for review in the next 12 months.

3. Background

- 3.1 Council policies are key governance tools. They help realise the Council's vision, values, pledges, and outcomes, and are critical to the Council's operations, ensuring that statutory and regulatory obligations are met in an efficient and accountable manner.
- 3.2 HR policies are reviewed as and when a change to the existing policy deems this necessary, primarily as a result of: changes to legislation or statute; agreement of new national terms and conditions of service or Government Policy; organisational change; or resulting from changes agreed through Trade Union Consultation.
- 3.3 The Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee agreed the approach detailed above, for HR policies, on 5 December 2017.

4. Main report

- 4.1 A critical element of the policy framework is to ensure that our HR policies are fit for purpose, that they support our culture, reflect best practice and meet our legal obligations.
- 4.2 Appendix one confirms the policies together with the detail of the changes, which have been reviewed, consulted on, and approved by relevant committee in the last 12 months, namely; sickness absence, domestic abuse, recruitment and selection, and disciplinary.
- 4.3 Other policies planned for review or part way through review are currently on hold, whilst resources have been diverted to deal with COVID related matters.

4.4 Depending on the emerging nature of COVID, the following will be resumed or scheduled over the next 18-24 month period:

- Maternity, Paternity, Adoption and Shared Parental Leave
- Grievance
- Avoidance of Bullying and Harassment
- Special Leave
- Disciplinary Policy for Teachers
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Employer Discretions

4.5 All Council policies are available through an interactive directory on the Council's website.

5. Next Steps

5.1 Policies will be reviewed over the next 18-24 months as outlined.

6. Financial impact

6.1 There is no direct financial impact arising from this report.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

7.1 Consultation was undertaken, where appropriate, with recognised trades unions as part of the Council's Working Together Protocol and local collective consultation arrangements concerning Human Resource policies.

8. Background reading/external references

8.1 None

9. Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Assured Policies

Appendix 1 – Assured Policies

Title:	Sickness Absence Policy
Approval Date:	1 October 2019
Approval Body:	Policy and Sustainability Committee
Review Date:	The policy will be reviewed as and when a change to the existing policy deems this necessary, primarily as a result of: changes to legislation or statute; agreement of new national terms and conditions of service or Government Policy; organisational change; or resulting from changes agreed through Trade Union Consultation.
Changes:	The policy was updated to include improvements following feedback from key stakeholders and provided additional focus on prevention, support and effective conversations. Absence thresholds replaced triggers, and managers were provided with greater scope to make informed contextual decisions when managing absence. Policy style, tone and language were updated in line with current approach to policy development, making it less complex and more accessible for colleagues. The update also removed the link between absence management and annual pay progression.

Title:	Domestic Abuse Policy
Approval Date:	1 October 2019
Approval Body:	Policy and Sustainability Committee
Review Date:	The policy will be reviewed as and when a change to the existing policy deems this necessary, primarily as a result of: changes to legislation or statute; agreement of new national terms and conditions of service or Government Policy; organisational change; or resulting from changes agreed through Trade Union Consultation.
Changes:	A review of the policy was required by new legislation, the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018, which made coercive and controlling behaviours a criminal offence. The opportunity was taken to refresh and update the policy, with additional focus on providing appropriate support. Policy style, tone and language were also updated in line with current approach to policy development, making it less complex and more accessible for colleagues.

Title:	Recruitment and Selection Policy
Approval Date:	1 October 2019
Approval Body:	Policy and Sustainability Committee
Review Date:	The policy will be reviewed as and when a change to the existing policy deems this necessary, primarily as a result of: changes to legislation or statute; agreement of new national terms and conditions of service or Government Policy; organisational change; or resulting from changes agreed through Trade Union Consultation.

Changes:	The policy was updated to place greater emphasis on diversity and inclusion, the importance of robust pre-employment checking and to ensure our approach to recruitment is fair, objective and inclusive. Policy style, tone and language were also updated in line with current approach to policy development, making it less complex and more accessible for colleagues.
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Title:	Pay Policy
Approval Date:	25 February 2020
Approval Body:	Policy and Sustainability Committee
Review Date:	The policy will be reviewed as and when a change to the existing policy deems this necessary, primarily as a result of: changes to legislation or statute; agreement of new national terms and conditions of service or Government Policy; organisational change; or resulting from changes agreed through Trade Union Consultation.
Changes:	This was a new policy, and superseded aspects of the Corporate Debt Policy, in so far as they relate to under/overpayments to employees. The purpose of the policy is to formalise processes and controls that ensure employees receive the correct pay at the right time. It standardises the processes that will be followed to ensure consistent and robust management of all pay related matters, for both existing and former employees. This includes the resolution of overpayments and underpayments where they occur.

Title:	Disciplinary Policy
Approval Date:	25 June 2020
Approval Body:	Policy and Sustainability Committee
Review Date:	The policy will be reviewed as and when a change to the existing policy deems this necessary, primarily as a result of: changes to legislation or statute; agreement of new national terms and conditions of service or Government Policy; organisational change; or resulting from changes agreed through Trade Union Consultation.
Changes:	While no significant amendments to the existing framework were deemed necessary, there was an opportunity to make procedural improvements to the disciplinary process. Additional emphasis was placed on timely and informal resolution of minor conduct concerns. Where formal processes are required, the importance of prompt and robust investigations was reinforced, and the right to accompaniment in investigations meetings was formalised. The link between formal warnings and annual pay progression was also removed. Policy style, tone and language were also updated in line with current approach to policy development, making it less complex and more accessible for colleagues.