

# Policy and Sustainability Committee

10.00am, Tuesday 22 August 2023

## Redeployment Update

Item Number

Executive/routine

Executive

Wards

Council Commitments

### 1. Recommendations

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The Policy and Sustainability Committee is asked to:

- 1.1 Note the contents of this report.
- 1.2 Approve the extension of the enhanced voluntary redundancy package to colleagues who have been on the redeployment register for over 3 years (9 colleagues) as outlined in the financial implications section of the report.

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## 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 As part of the Council's 2023/24 budget approved in February 2023, it was agreed that a £0.6M saving should be achieved from the Council's spend on redeployment. Subsequently, the motion below was approved at Policy and Sustainability Committee on 21 March 2023:

*“the advice circulated by Head of Democracy, Governance and Resilience on 03/03/2023, stating that a budget proposal does not change the council's Managing Change Policy nor the commitment to no compulsory redundancies; and further notes: That employees with redeployment status are often doing useful work within the council; and that there is an expectation they should be receiving support towards finding a new role. Therefore, asks for a report to this Committee in two cycles providing information about the current redeployment arrangements and how they could be made more effective in transitioning employees into appropriate permanent roles”.*

- 2.2 This report sets out current redeployment arrangements, the application of the Managing Change Policy and measures to ensure that this is being applied effectively.

## 3. Background

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- 3.1 Sometimes, as a result of an organisational review, our people may become displaced. If this happens, we're committed to giving individuals as much support, advice, and help as we can. This may be to help find a new post with us through redeployment or explore other options they may be considering.
- 3.2 The City of Edinburgh Council's Managing Change Policy sets out the principles and the process for how we approach change and this includes the process in relation to Redeployment. Redeployment is the process our people go through when we help them to try and find another job in the Council that matches their skills, knowledge, experience and qualifications.

## 4 Main Report

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### 4.1 Managing Change Policy and Redeployment Process

- 4.2 Detailed below are the key aspects of the Council's current Redeployment process:

- Individuals initially have access to an enhanced voluntary redundancy package. Should they not wish to take this then they will move on to the Redeployment Register.
- The Redeployment Register is managed by Human Resources, in liaison with Line Managers to ensure that individuals have access to all available support and vacancies, whilst ensuring that they remain linked to their original Service Line Manager for continual day to day support and guidance.
- Individuals are required to complete a personal profile to support job searches.

- All individuals have access to Working Transitions, who provide interview and career coaching, help and preparation with applications and CVs, as well as interview skills and techniques.
- Individuals are required to keep a weekly record of proactive engagement with opportunities that arise for consideration and discuss these with their line manager at monthly reviews. This should include development of an action plan, identifying any additional training or support that might help the employee secure an alternative role.
- Individuals are placed on the priority list for all permanent vacancies for one week before general advertising internally and externally.
- Once they've applied and had a successful trial period (normally 4 weeks which can be extended to 8 weeks), individuals will be confirmed in their new post. The terms and conditions of the new post, including pay, will then apply, and any previous terms will cease at the end of the trial. If the new post is at a lower grade or it attracts fewer working time payments, the individuals pay will change in line with the Council's pay transition arrangements.
- Our aim is to help find a new permanent post and whilst we help search, we will seek to identify temporary or secondment opportunities or meaningful work.

#### 4.3 Current Register

4.3.1 There are currently 14 colleagues on the Council's Redeployment Register.

Directorate	Number of Years on Redeployment Register							Total
	<1	1+	2+	3+	4+	6+	7-8	
Children, Education and Justice Services	2			1		2	1	6
Corporate Services		1	1		1		1	4
Health and Social Care						1		1
Place	1			1	1			3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>

- 4.4 To ensure those on the redeployment register are being supported and managed effectively to transition to permanent roles within the Council, a comprehensive review of those impacted has been carried out. All colleagues on the register have been asked to contribute and we thank those that have put forward suggestions and areas for improvement.
- 4.5 Going forwards both HR and Line Managers will ensure that the key principles below will be applied in relation to redeployment. This will ensure adherence to current Policy and process and reinforce focus in supporting colleagues on the register:
- 4.6 All redeployees be funded against their Directorate budget until such time as they are no longer on the redeployment register. This will ensure that there is ongoing focus and support to individuals and ensure that there is no spend against a central unfunded code.
- 4.7 The Managing Change Policy will be fully implemented for all redeployees.
- 4.8 Suitable alternative employment will be made available to individuals. A post is considered suitable when comparable to the employee's previous role and

takes account of factors such as skills and experience, competencies, status and basic pay. The nature of the work itself doesn't need to be the same for a role to be a suitable alternative. A range of transferable skills need to be considered in deciding whether a role is suitable. A role would normally be considered suitable if the employee meets the essential requirements in the person specification or could be expected to do so with support and training during the trial period. If the new post is at a lower grade or it attracts fewer working time payments, the individuals pay will change in line with the Council's pay transition arrangements – it is anticipated that suitable employment will be no less than 1 grade below. There's no automatic right to be redeployed into a promoted post (that is, one at a higher grade than their previous role). Where someone is interested in a post at a higher grade, they are required to apply the same as any other candidate (in line with the Council's normal recruitment process).

- 4.9 Employees will be provided with work appropriate to their existing grade while they're seeking redeployment. This might involve working at other locations or carrying out different types of work within the scope of their general capabilities, skills and experience. Displaced employees could be placed into temporary roles during their redeployment search. Examples of this could include project work, or secondments into other areas of the organisation. Line Managers need to continually review any secondment or temporary meaningful work, taking cognisance of time periods and impact on statutory contractual arrangements.
- 4.10 Current arrangements where colleagues have been undertaking secondment, temporary or meaningful work for prolonged periods is now under comprehensive review to ensure that all principles and the managing change policy are being applied.
- 4.11 Recruiting managers will be reminded to be open to engaging redeployees on trial periods for vacant roles in their teams, providing the relevant training and support. This will assist our efforts in having as few colleagues as possible seeking redeployment within the Council.
- 4.12 In addition to the above, the Council's Managing Change Policy states that "should an employee unreasonably decline suitable redeployment opportunities (or contribute to the breakdown of a trial period) on two occasions, a decision may be taken not to continue with the process and the outcome may be dismissal. The Council reserves the right not to make a redundancy payment in these circumstances".
- 4.13 As part of the review of the 14 individuals, some have advised that they would now like to be re-considered for voluntary redundancy and asked for a review of the enhanced voluntary redundancy payment to be applied. It is proposed that discussions take place with individuals on a case by case basis in this regards, in respect of managing long term cases, and only be re-considered for those who have been on the Register for longer than 3 years as a one-off arrangement – giving a maximum of 14 days to accept, as per current voluntary redundancy arrangements.
- 4.14 Should a colleague find a role external to the Council, they can still opt to take a reduced voluntary redundancy option.

4.15 Through review of this process it is essential that as part of the regular engagement and monitoring process that Managers also be provided with support in ensuring the application of the correct policies as part of staff management and engagement, with the Managing Change Policy being applied where relevant. Prior to any employee being placed on the redeployment register there are a number of processes that require to be followed as part of the Managing Change Policy. This includes setting out a rationale for change being developed, followed by the exploration and design of options, employee consultation, consideration of alternative arrangements and voluntary redundancy review. It is only after all these steps would an employee potentially be placed on the redeployment register. This is outlined in more detail in the Managing Change Policy.

## **5 Next Steps**

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- 5.1 Ongoing engagement with Line Managers and employees to ensure adherence and compliance with the Managing Change Policy and Redeployment Process.
- 5.2 An update will be provided in the Policy and Sustainability Business Bulletin in September 2023. Going forwards an overview of the redeployment register will be contained in the Workforce Dashboard which is submitted to the Finance and Resources Committee on a quarterly basis.

## **6 Financial Impact**

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- 6.1 The unfunded cost of redeployment is currently £712,695 this has now been aligned to individual Departments, ceasing the central redeployment budget pressure.
- 6.2 There are 9 individuals who may wish to apply for the enhanced voluntary redundancy payment if agreed. The enhanced payment allows for the number of weeks pay x 2.5 rather than number of weeks pay x 1.5 (for those without access to pension). For those with access to pension this will be number of weeks pay x 1.5 rather than no multiplier. Individual calculations will require to be undertaken to determine financial impact. All currently still have access to the non-enhanced voluntary redundancy payment.

6.3 The additional financial impact of the proposed extension to the enhanced voluntary redundancy payment is detailed below:

	Enhanced Voluntary Redundancy	Non-Enhanced Voluntary Redundancy*	<b>Difference</b>	Current Annual Salary Costs
14 Individuals	£522,764	£333,695	<b>£189,069</b>	£712,695
9 Individuals (on the register for over 3 Years)	£387,790	£252,710	<b>£135,080</b>	£444,814

\* Currently available to all individuals as per Managing Change Policy.

6.4 It is proposed to set the saving of £0.6m against the central funding currently provided to meet the costs of staff on redeployment. Ceasing the central pot means these costs will now be transferred to services. This will result in services having to manage the majority of costs of staff on redeployment within their existing budgets. This is complemented by the actions described above including one-off enhancements to voluntary redundancy payments for relevant individuals. Delivery of the budget saving will therefore be managed in the context of services' overall employee budgets and established structures whilst still securing the level of saving approved by members. The position will continue to be monitored at Directorate level with reporting through existing quarterly revenue budget monitoring arrangements.

6.5 Any additional payments arising from this one-off change in policy can be met from the Council's existing workforce restructuring earmarked reserve.

## **7 Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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7.1 Communications have been ongoing with colleagues on the register.

7.2 Engagement will ensure Trade Union involvement with any colleague communications.

## **8 Background reading/external references**

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8.1 Not applicable.

## **9 Appendices**

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None