

**LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE  
7 FEBRUARY 2024  
4.00 - 4.43 PM**



**Present:**

Councillors Allen, Gillbe and P Thompson  
Ron Bates, Unison  
Angie Rolfe, Unison

**Apologies for absence were received from:**

Councillors Pickering

**11. Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

**12. Minutes from Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2023, were approved as a correct record.

Arising from the minutes:

- It was clarified that encouraging managers to push for more precise answers in exit interviews could only be encouraged and not mandated. It was also noted that in some cases personal reasons could be the only reason for leaving.
- Paul Young confirmed the graph on Grievance, Disciplinary and Capability from the previous meeting had been amended accordingly.

**13. Urgent Items of Business**

There were no urgent items of business.

**14. Employment Committee: Agenda and Related Matters**

**i. Policy Pay Statement**

The Assistant Director: Human Resources & Organisational Development, Paul Young advised the Sub-Committee this should be produced prior to the financial year in which it applies, therefore the pay statement would apply to the upcoming financial year 2024/25.

The Sub-Committee were notified that there were no major alterations to the pay policy.

Once agreed through Employment Committee, the statement will be taken to Full Council.

In discussion the following points were raised:

- The pay statement had previously been produced within the financial year to which it applies. However, by introducing the pay statement at this meeting, it would allow for it to be applied at the start of financial year for which it applied.
- Section 6.1 of the report refers to the expected position as off 1 April 2022, however this would need to be amended to 1 April 2024. (**Action Paul Young**).

## ii. **HR Policy Review**

The Assistant Director: Human Resources & Organisational Development, Paul Young advised the Sub-Committee that the Human Resources team have an established programme in place to review/update existing HR policies/procedures and guidance. As part of this process, policies and procedures have been consolidated, wherever possible, and new policies and procedures created to reflect changes to legislation or best practice.

The process for reviewing the policies had included engagement with; stakeholders, trade unions, the equalities group and DMTs, as well as checks against current legislation/best practice provided by ACAS and the CIPD.

The following amendments have been made to the Disciplinary Procedure:

- Clarification that where allegations are minor no formal investigation would be undertaken and instead the matter would be dealt with by the manager as a discussion.
- Clarification and amendment to the wording relating to the ability to appeal. The proposed wording was intended to simplify the process.
- Section added on the use of CCTV in disciplinary investigations.

The following amendments have been made to the Lone Working Policy:

- Overall revision of the policy to expand on the process for risk assessments and more focus on mental health.
- A greater focus on home working being a type of lone working.
- Moved to new template.
- Equality statement added.

The following amendments have been made to the Performance Improvement/Capability Policy:

- Previously there was an informal stage, formal stage 1, formal stage 2 and formal stage 3 this has now been amended to reduce the number of stages to; Informal, formal stage 1 and formal stage 2.
- The appeal process has been amended to mirror the appeals in disciplinary – ie appeals against Director decision is to another Director.

The following amendments have been made to the Time off for Public Duties Procedure:

- Moved to new template.
- Equality statement added.
- Stipulating that time off for public duties can only apply to holding one position of this type, the current policy does not cover people holding

more than one position which could lead to high levels of additional time off.

- In addition, added that the days allowed are calculated on a pro-rata basis if the person is part time.

The following amendments have been made to the Time off for Dependents & Carers Leave Policy:

- Moved to new template.
- Equality statement added.
- Inclusion of new legislation relating to Carers Leave which is effective from April 2024 both within the policy and to the title of the policy.
- Changes to terminology which are more inclusive.

In discussion on the proposed changes the Sub-Committee queried the use of dismissal without notice in cases of gross misconduct. It was clarified that gross misconduct was only for the most serious of disciplinary issues and what met this threshold was clearly outlined in the report. In cases of serious misconduct there were a range of other possible outcomes to dismissal. The Sub-Committee were also informed that managers had access to relevant information in handling disciplinary cases and support through Human Resources.

The trade unions raised no objections to the changes. Paul Young and Cllr Gillbe both thanked the trade unions for their co-operation in the policy review.

### **iii. Armed Forces Covenant**

The Assistant Director: Human Resources & Organisational Development, Paul Young advised the Sub-Committee on the report seeking endorsement for the or the council to reaffirm its pledge to the Armed Forces community by signing the Armed Forces Covenant Pledge and to commit to attaining the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) Silver Award in 2024.

The reason for recommending the council progress to attaining silver level status, to provide greater support and commitment to Reservists who are employed by the council.

The key consideration highlighted was that in order to attain silver status, the council would be required to award an additional 5-days annual leave to Reservists in its employment. Whilst it would not be a requirement to offer these additional days as paid leave, the report recommended that these are offered as paid days leave so that the valuable contribution that Reservists make to the UK armed forces was recognised and also so that it was recognised that these days are spent undertaken activities required by the MoD as Reservist.

## **15. Matters to be Raised by Trade Unions**

Following a request from the trade unions, Jamie Beardsmore agreed to investigate if it was possible to change the date of the Local Joint Committee, although the dates had been agreed by full Council for the 2024/25 year.

**CHAIRMAN**

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