



REPORT TO:	Policy Development Panel
DATE:	12 July 2022
SUBJECT:	Review of HR Policies (Batch 2)
PURPOSE:	To seek Policy Development Panel's views on the proposed HR Policies (Batch 2) prior to a report to Council.
PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Jim Astill, Portfolio Holder – Corporate and Communications
REPORT OF:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
REPORT AUTHOR:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	N/a
EXEMPT	No

SUMMARY

HR policies require regular review to ensure they are within the legal framework and reflect best practice.

This report brings forward the second batch of HR policies for review. The Policies have been developed by Public Sector Partnership Services, as the Councils' HR providers; with input from a Readers' Panel consisting of Officers and trade unions. The Readers' Panel have confirmed that operationally the policies are practical to implement. In addition, the policies have the support of trade unions.

The Business Case for the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership identifies the opportunity to align policy in several areas of the Councils and adopting the policies as set out will create that alignment.

The policies will require approval at Council post Policy Development Panel.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That the Panel considers the Policies and provides feedback and comments.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- HR policies need to be regularly updated to ensure they reflect best practice and are within the legal framework. This review has provided the opportunity to seek consistency in HR policy across the Partnership. This recommendation ensures the Panel has the opportunity to input into the final policy set prior to consideration by Council.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- None.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1. SHDC's HR Policies are due for refresh.

1.2. When the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership formed it identified an opportunity to align several areas of Policy across the Partnership. An early opportunity has been identified to align HR Policy at each of the three Partnership Councils as reviews are due at each Council.

1.3. It is important HR Policies are regularly reviewed to ensure they remain appropriate, reflect legislation and best practice and enable the Head of Paid Service to effectively manage the workforce.

2. REPORT

2.1. At present, each Council within the Partnership has slight variations in its HR policies.

2.2. Having a single set of shared HR policies for each Council will ensure consistency in the way the Partnership's workforces are managed. Given many services across the Councils are already working together this is becoming increasingly important. There is also the benefit to Public Sector Partnership Services of a single HR Policy set for each of the three Councils as it means rather than HR Advisors administering three different policy sets, they only need to administer one.

2.3. This report brings forward the second batch of policies for review. Due to the quantity of policies for review, PSPS are reviewing the policies in batches with them coming forward at regular intervals, which means Policy Development Panel will receive further policies during the coming year for review.

2.4. The policies – as presented in the appendices – have been reviewed by an internal Readers' Panel of Officers (from across the Partnership); trade unions and Leadership Team. The policies have their support.

2.5. The policies appended to this report are:

Appendix	Policy Name	Matter	Current Policy	New
APPENDIX A	Managing Sickness Absence	IVF	States number of days for IVF treatment	Covered in Time Off Policy
		Triggers	14 continuous days in a 12 month period	Short terms: three occasions of sickness absence within a rolling 12-month period or seven calendar days within a rolling 12-month period or eight consecutive days (which includes non-working days and weekends). Long Terms: a period of long-term sickness absence that has lasted or is expected to last, four weeks or more. <i>(Policy Page:10. Point 13)</i>
		Return to Work / Absence Review Meetings		More detail included about conducting the return to work and absence review meetings <i>(Policy Page:9-11. Point 12&14)</i>
APPENDIX B	Code of Conduct	Drugs & Alcohol	Limited details about support	More detail included around support under the drug and alcohol section <i>(Policy Page:9-10. Point 3)</i>
		CCTV	Doesn't include a section on CCTV	Includes section on CCTV in Council Workplaces and properties. <i>(Policy Page:11. Point 7)</i>
		Council Tax	Mentions no employee should owe money i.e Council Tax arrears and states this will lead to disciplinary if the dept is subject to Court.	Not included. Best practice suggests any recourse would be between the Council and the resident and not through the employment relationship.
		Gifts	Mentions gifts over £25	More generic statements now and no mention of value as this would frequently require reviewing in line with inflation. <i>(Policy Page: 17. Point 18)</i>
		Equal Opportunities	No Equal Ops section	Section included <i>(Policy Page: 19. Point 21)</i>
		Planning Applications	Not Included	Section Included <i>(Policy Page: 22-23. Point 32)</i>
		Smoking	No 'smoking at work' section	Section Included <i>(Policy Page: 25. Point 40)</i>
APPENDIX C	Probation	Reviews	3 & 6 months	2, 4 & 6 months. CIPD guidance states 'regular performance reviews will keep new recruits on a steady path to progression and enable you to identify areas for improvement and any additional training needs. <i>(Policy Page: 6. Point 3)</i>
		Notice	Employee under probation – required to	Statutory minimum notice is one week. Policy states to refer to

			give 1 months' notice to terminate employment	contract of employment. T&Cs Review to resolve. <i>(Policy Page: 9. Point 9.7)</i>
APPENDIX D	Flexible Working	Eligibility	26 week qualifying period	Propose discretionary Day 1 <i>(Policy Page: 3. Scope)</i>

EXPECTED BENEFITS TO THE PARTNERSHIP

Consistency in HR Policy across the Partnership will provide the benefit of a single approach to workforce management; as well as supporting PSPS in the delivery of the HR service. The former is particularly important as more teams from the three Councils start to work more closely together.

IMPLICATIONS

SOUTH AND EAST LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL'S PARTNERSHIP

As identified in 'Expected benefits to the Partnership'.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

N/a

STAFFING

The Policies will have a direct impact on the management of the workforce. The Policies developed are in line with HR legislation and best practice and are designed to support positive workforce management.

CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Staffing matters are a non-executive function and are therefore a Council decision.

DATA PROTECTION

There are no direct data protection implications arising from the content of the report, but data relating to staff is protected under data protection laws. The Council has suitable technical and organisational measures in place to protect such data

FINANCIAL

None

RISK MANAGEMENT

None

STAKEHOLDER / CONSULTATION / TIMESCALES

Consultation has taken place with the Readers' Panel; Leadership Team and trade unions. All have supported the policies as appended to this report.

REPUTATION

The Council recognises the importance of supporting its workforce and managing the workforce in a positive way. The policies aim to achieve that, thereby enhancing the reputation of the Council as an employer.

CONTRACTS

None

CRIME AND DISORDER

None

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY/ HUMAN RIGHTS/ SAFEGUARDING

The policies comply with all associated legislation and have an Equality Impact Assessment.

HEALTH AND WELL BEING

The policies aim to support a happy and healthy workforce.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

None

ACRONYMS

PSPS – Public Sector Partnership Services

APPENDICES	
Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -	
<i>APPENDIX A</i>	<i>Managing Sickness Absence</i>
<i>APPENDIX B</i>	<i>Code of Conduct</i>
<i>APPENDIX C</i>	<i>Probation</i>
<i>APPENDIX D</i>	<i>Flexible Working</i>

BACKGROUND PAPERS	
Background papers used in the production of this report are listed below: -	
Document title	Where the document can be viewed
N/a	

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY OF THIS REPORT	
Name of body	Date
N/a	

REPORT APPROVAL	
Report author:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
Signed off by:	James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate
Approved for publication:	Councillor Jim Astill, Portfolio Holder – Corporate and Communications

