



REPORT TO:	Full Council
DATE:	27 July 2022
SUBJECT:	Implementation of revised HR Policies
PURPOSE:	To seek Council's approval for revised HR Polices
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 first batch of HR policies for review. The Policies have been developed by Public Sector Partnership Services, as the Council's 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 have been reviewed by Policy Development Panel and the Panel is supportive of the revisions to the policies, with feedback included in the table at 2.5 in this report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- That Council approves the HR policies appended to this report.

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.

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 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 first seven policies for Council's consideration. Due to the quantity of policies for review, PSPS are reviewing the policies in batches with them coming forward at regular intervals, which means Council 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	Current Policy	New	PDP feedback
APPENDIX A	Disciplinary Policy	Last reviewed 2018. Invite to hearing states 5 days	Changed to state 'without unreasonable delay' which is in line with best practice.	Supported with a request for formatting/numbering adjustment. The Policy has been amended to reflect this request.
APPENDIX B	Improving Performance at Work	Currently called Capability. Last reviewed 2018. Employee has 5 days to submit an appeal.	Changed title in line with best practice. Employee has 10 days to submit an appeal.	Supported
APPENDIX C	Grievance Policy	Last reviewed 2018	No substantial changes	Supported
APPENDIX D	Managing Sickness Absence	IVF - States number of days for IVF treatment	Covered in Time Off Policy	Supported
		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.	
		Return to Work / Absence Review Meetings	More detail included about conducting the return to work and absence review meetings	

APPENDIX E	Code of Conduct	Drugs & Alcohol - Limited details about support	More detail included around support under the drug and alcohol section	Supported with a request to reference hands-free under Mobile Use. The Policy has been amended to reflect this request.
		CCTV - Doesn't include a section on CCTV	Includes section on CCTV in Council Workplaces and properties.	
		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.	
		Equal Opportunities - No Equal Ops section	Section included	
		Planning Applications - Not Included	Section Included	
		Smoking - No 'smoking at work' section	Section Included	
		APPENDIX F	Probation	
		Notice - Employee under probation – required to give 1 months' notice to	Statutory minimum notice is one week. Policy states to refer to contract of employment. T&Cs Review to resolve.	

		terminate employment		
APPENDIX G	Flexible Working	Eligibility - 26 week qualifying period	Propose discretionary Day 1	Supported

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

- CCTV – Closed-circuit Television
- CIPD – Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
- HR – Human Resources
- IVF - In vitro fertilisation
- PSPS – Public Sector Partnership Services
- T and C – Terms and Conditions

APPENDICES	
Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report: -	
APPENDIX A	Disciplinary Policy
APPENDIX B	Improving Performance at Work
APPENDIX C	Grievance Policy
APPENDIX D	Managing Sickness Absence
APPENDIX E	Code of Conduct
APPENDIX F	Probation
APPENDIX G	Flexible Working

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
Policy Development Panel (HR Policies - Batch 1)	24 May 2022
Policy Development Panel (HR Policies - Batch 2)	12 July 2022

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