

Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council

Joint Commissioning Committee

14 January 2016

<p>Proposal for a Joint Stand-by and On-Call Policy and Allowance</p>
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Report of Head of Transformation

Purpose of report

To seek approval to implement a shared Stand-by and On-call policy and associated allowances for Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the shared stand-by and on-call policy and associated allowances (Appendix 1).

2.0 Introduction

The introduction of this policy is with a view to ensuring fairness, consistency and equality across both Councils, providing clarity to staff and managers around stand-by and on-call service provision whilst ensuring that budgetary implications are kept to a minimum.

3.0 Report Details

- 3.1 CDC - The policy in place at CDC was agreed during 2010 following the implementation of Single Status and a new collective agreement was negotiated.
- 3.2 SNC - There is currently no policy at SNC for standby or on-call arrangements, however there is an informal arrangement whereby staff are paid if they are required to undertake such duty; the amount being determined by the national agreement on pay and conditions of service for local government services known as the "Green Book".

- 3.3 At both Councils stand-by and on-call payments are not currently linked to the cost of living payments. The current level of allowance differs from one Council to another, with SNC paying slightly more, as set out in Table 1.

Table 1: comparison of current allowance for stand-by and on-call

	Stand-by	On-Call
Cherwell District Council	£2.18 per hour	£1.33 per hour
South Northants Council	£ 2.34 per hour	N/A

3.4 Definitions of Stand-by and On-call

- 3.5 The current CDC definition for *stand-by* states stand-by arrangements will require the employee to remain contactable, outside of normal working hours, for a stated period (in accordance with an agreed rota).

Eligibility for stand-by requires an employee to be available to attend a site or incident if required and within a reasonable time period and therefore the employee is required to remain fit to attend work.

- 3.6 The current CDC definition for *on-call* states the employee must remain contactable, outside of normal working hours, for a stated period (in accordance with an agreed rota). On-call means that the Council does not require the employee to attend a site or incident as a result of any phone calls or contact. Queries can be dealt with via a telephone or other remote communication.

- 3.7 The new policy offers clarity in the wording of the definitions: -

- 3.8 *Stand-by* arrangements will require the employee to remain contactable, outside of normal working hours, for a stated period (in accordance with an agreed rota). Eligibility for stand-by requires an employee to be available to attend a site or incident if required and within a reasonable time period and therefore the employee is required to remain fit to attend work.

- 3.9 *On-call* arrangements will require the employee to remain contactable, outside of normal working hours, for a stated period (in accordance with an agreed rota). On-call means that the Council does not require the employee to attend a site or incident as a result of any phone calls or contact. Queries can be dealt with via a telephone or other remote communication.

- 3.10 There is currently no standard form to claim stand-by and on-call allowances at either Council. This will also be changed going forward to enable all employees to be able to make appropriate claims.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The report concludes that there is a need for a consistent approach that ensures fairness, equality and clarity for staff at both councils on what allowance can be claimed in the event of being on stand-by or on-call. The policy will also enable managers to understand and be clear on what stand-by and on-call are, and in what circumstances these can be used; and meets the needs of joint working s l.

- 4.2 The levels of allowance are harmonised and increased by 16p per hour for CDC employees on implementation; then continues to be reviewed each year on an annual basis. By implementing this proposal employees who currently support our services at SNC will not financially be disadvantaged.

Table 2: proposed new allowances

Stand-by	On-Call
£ 2.34 per hour	£1.49 per hour

- 4.3 A standard form for processing stand-by, call-out and related overtime payments (Appendix 2) is introduced and implemented to ensure consistency across both Councils.
- 4.4 The payroll system will be updated to clearly identify the difference between stand-by and on-call payments using two different payroll indicators; this will provide clear monitoring and finance information for HR and management.

5.0 Consultation

Unison – SNC	Positive feedback given with a few changes that have all been included in the revised policy.
Unison – CDC	Very limited feedback given, consideration needs to be given when business cases are being proposed as to whether stand-by and on-call is contractual or voluntary and full period meaningful consultation is undertaken.
CDC Staff Consultation Group	Very limited feedback given.
JMT	Very limited feedback given, clarity in the wording of the definitions, changes made and in the revised policy.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To continue with the current policy for CDC and informal arrangements with SNC which would not provide equality of approach for shared teams.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 The financial implications of the changes will be negligible and can be met from the existing budgets.

Comments checked by:

Paul Sutton, Head of Finance and Procurement, 03000 030106
paul.sutton@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Legal Implications

- 7.2 There has been full staff consultation. This policy will bring fairness and equality to staff at both Councils.

Comments checked by:
Nigel Bell, Solicitor, 01295 221687
nigel.bell@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
1	Stand-by and On-Call Policy
2	Stand-by, call-out and related overtime payments form
Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	Angela Chisholm HR Business Partner for Development and Bicester
Contact Information	01295 227984 angela.chisholm@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk