

# **Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council**

## **Joint Commissioning Committee**

**20 July 2017**

<p><b>Harmonisation of Terms and Conditions Policies for Adoption</b></p>
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### **Report of Assistant Director – Commercial Development and Innovation**

This report is public

#### **Purpose of report**

To seek Member approval for the adoption of two policies that can be applied to all employees of Cherwell District and South Northamptonshire Councils:  
Compassionate leave policy and Market supplement policy.

#### **1.0 Recommendations**

The meeting is recommended:

- 1.1 To approve the revised compassionate leave policy (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 To approve the introduction of a market supplement policy (Appendix 2).

#### **2.0 Introduction**

- 2.1 Since 2011, when the two councils agreed to support joint working business cases, we have gradually been reviewing HR policies to harmonise terms and conditions. Following a substantial programme of work, the majority have now been harmonised, however the policy in relation to compassionate leave remains different for each Council.
- 2.2 There is currently no market supplement policy in place at either Council, although there have been several situations where market supplements have been considered and awarded on an ad hoc basis.

#### **3.0 Report Details**

##### **Compassionate Leave Policy**

- 3.1 CDC currently has a policy that allows for three days compassionate leave whereas the SNC policy allows for two weeks. The new shared policy recommends a compromise of five days for both Councils.

- 3.2 Both current policies allow the flexibility and discretion to extend compassionate leave if individual circumstances warrant it and this remain the case in the new policy. A very small number of employees utilise the compassionate leave policy each year and in most cases five days is adequate, however JMT discretion is critical so cases requiring additional support can be assessed in accordance with the individual circumstances.

### **Market Supplement Policy**

- 3.3 The requirement to pay market supplements occurs when the evaluated pay grade for a role is lower than the external market rate for the role, making it difficult to attract candidate for the vacancy. In such circumstances a market supplement is applied to address the disparity.
- 3.4 The current pay and grading structures lack the necessary range and flexibility and in recent years a small number of market supplements have been awarded.
- 3.5 We are currently reviewing our pay and grading structures to modernise them, however in the meantime it is recommended that a market supplement policy is adopted to ensure equity and consistency in circumstances when a supplement is required.

## **4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations**

- 4.1 At present the Councils have different compassionate leave policies. Approval of a shared policy is a further step towards the harmonisation of terms and conditions of employment, reducing the risk of potential challenges in terms of fair and equitable treatment of employees.
- 4.2 At present there is no market supplement policy in place. Approval of this new policy will ensure the fair and equitable treatment of employees and reduce the challenge of attracting and recruiting good quality candidates.

## **5.0 Consultation**

- 5.1 The proposed policies were considered and supported by JMT on 20 February 2017.
- 5.2 Following this, on 30 March 2017, Joint Commissioning Committee gave approval for consultation to take place. The proposed policies were shared as widely as possible via our Trade Union representatives and the Joint Engagement Committee allowing three weeks for feedback from 19 May to 9 June. The feedback received has been taken into consideration in the policies presented herewith for approval.
- 5.3 This report will also be discussed at the Joint Councils Employee Engagement Committee (JCEEC) meeting on 20 July 2017, where it is hoped a recommendation for approval will be given. A verbal update will be given to JCC.

## **6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 6.1 The only alternative option identified is to not present the recommendations made in this report. This option was rejected on the grounds that it would result in the Councils continuing to apply inconsistent policies and practices, which could potentially be unfair and inequitable.

## **7.0 Implications**

### **Financial and Resource Implications**

- 7.1 It is not anticipated that there will be additional costs or savings as a result of implementing a harmonised compassionate leave policy as costs are managed from within existing budgets.
- 7.2 It is anticipated that the cost of awarding market supplements will be managed from within existing budgets, where this is not possible approval for virement between budgets will be sought in line with the Financial Procedure Rules contained within the Constitution.

Comments checked by:

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### **Legal and Equality Considerations**

- 7.3 There are no direct legal or equality implications arising from the compassionate leave policy.
- 7.4 It is important that, if introduced, the market supplement policy is applied consistently and fairly across both councils so as to minimise the risk of successful equal pay claims.

Comments checked by:

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## **8.0 Decision Information**

### **Wards Affected**

All

### **Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework**

None

### **Lead Councillor**

Councillor Barry Wood, Leader, CDC

Councillor Phil Bignell, Deputy Leader, SNC

## Document Information

<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
One	Compassionate Leave Policy
Two	Market Supplement Policy
<b>Background Papers</b>	
None	
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