

Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

17 November 2022

Policy Updates

Report of Chief Executive

This report is public

Purpose of report

To seek approval from the Personnel Committee (PC) on proposed changes to existing HR policies.

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended:

1.1 to review and approve the following policies for implementation:

- Time Off for Dependents
- Capability Policy
- Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Organisational Change Policy
- Sickness Absence Policy

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The policies outlined above are the second tranche of policies officers are bringing to Personnel Committee for approval as HR systematically work through and refresh all HR-related policies.

2.2 UNISON are also provided with these documents for review and comment. Any feedback received will be shared at the PC ahead of these policies being approved.

3.0 Report Details

3.1 The approach officers are taking to review all HR policies is to prioritise those needed to reflect changes in legislation and or work practices.

3.2 The Time off for Dependents Policy was approved by Personnel Committee in October 2022. However immediately following its implementation, a situation arose

that prompted the need to review the policy to include up to 5 days paid emergency family leave in extenuating circumstances such as if a dependent has a terminal or life-threatening illness.

- 3.3 The other policies are heavily legislative, so we sought external legal advice to ensure the Council was fulfilling its legal obligations in these areas and that the policies were sound.
- 3.3 The aim of the review was to simplify the content where possible, removing any unnecessary information and ultimately making them more user friendly for managers and employees to understand and follow them.
- 3.4 The table in Appendix 1 gives an overview of all the proposed changes for each policy.

4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 Officers have updated the policies attached to this report to reflect current legislation and good practice but also to make them much more user friendly and attractive for existing and potential employees. For these reasons officers recommend the Committee approves the revised policies.

5.0 Consultation

Unions are being consulted on the policies.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The alternative option would be to continue with the existing policies however officers have rejected this as the policies would not reflect current legislation or the Council's objectives of being an attractive, modern employer.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 In order to mitigate risk it is important that the Council operate with up-to-date policies. The update to these policies are anticipated to be minor and will be managed within existing budgets, as is currently the case.

Comments checked by:

Joanne Kaye, Deputy S151 and Strategic Finance Business Partner,
Joanne.kaye@cherwell-dc.gov.uk, 01295 221545

Legal Implications

- 7.2 This is in accordance with the programme for reviewing policies. There are no legal implications.

Comments checked by:
Shiraz Sheikh, Assistant Director of Law, Governance and Democratic Services and
Monitoring Officer, Shiraz.Sheikh@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Risk Implications

- 7.3 There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report. Any arising risks will be managed by the relevant service operational risk register and escalated to the leadership risk register as and when necessary.

Comments checked by:
Shona Ware, Assistant Director – Customer Focus, 01295 221652
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Equalities and Inclusion Implications

- 7.4 There are no EDI implications arising from this report. Officers have considered EDI implications in suggesting changes to the policies to ensure the council meets its statutory responsibilities under the Equality Act and the commitments in its equalities framework 'Including Everyone'. The policies also allow for some flex so they can be adapted to suit the situation and specific circumstances. Furthermore, the policies are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they remain fit for purpose so any future EDI implications can be captured and mitigated against.

Comments checked by:
Shona Ware, Assistant Director – Customer Focus, 01295 221652
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8.0 Decision Information

Key Decision

Financial Threshold Met: N/A

Community Impact Threshold Met: N/A

Wards Affected

N/A

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

N/A

Document Information

Appendix Number and Title

- Appendix 1 – Overview of changes to each policy
- Appendix 2 – Capability Policy
- Appendix 3 - Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy
- Appendix 4 - Grievance Policy
- Appendix 5 - Organisational Change Policy

- Appendix 6 - Sickness Absence Policy
- Appendix 7 - Time Off for Dependents

Background papers

None

Report Author and contact details

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