

<b>EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE</b>	AGENDA ITEM No. 5
<b>22 JULY 2015</b>	<b>PUBLIC REPORT</b>

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## CHANGES TO EMPLOYEE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S	
<b>FROM</b> : Assistant Director Human Resources & Development	<b>Deadline date</b> : N.A.
<p>It is recommended that Employment Committee approves the following employment policy and procedures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Loyalty Award Scheme (Appendix 1)</li> <li>2. Travel &amp; Subsistence Policy (Appendix 2)</li> <li>3. Substance Misuse &amp; Alcohol Policy (Appendix 3)</li> <li>4. Domestic Abuse Policy (Appendix 4)</li> <li>5. Maternity Scheme (Appendix 5)</li> <li>6. Maternity Scheme Teachers (Appendix 6); and</li> <li>7. Adoption Scheme (Appendix 7)</li> </ol>	

### 1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to the Employment Committee following a review of a number of HR policies in the light of legislative and policy changes.

### 2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to ensure that the Council maintains up to date and legal employment policies.
- 2.2 This report is for the Committee to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 2.3.1.2 'to determine employee procedures, including dismissal procedures' and 2.3.1.4 'to determine local terms and conditions of employment for employees'.

### 3. TIMESCALE

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If Yes, date for relevant Cabinet Meeting	<b>N/A</b>
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### 4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 Like most employers, Peterborough City Council has a number of HR policies. These exist to ensure that employees and managers are aware of their rights and responsibilities and to ensure that the City Council acts lawfully and also offers attractive terms and conditions of employment to existing and potential employees. These policies are kept under review and are updated in line with legislative changes and best practice.

Accordingly, a number of policies have now been reviewed on this basis and are submitted to this Committee for approval.

#### **4.2 Loyalty Award Scheme – (Appendix 1)**

This is awarded to those employees who have completed 25 years' service with the City Council (or any employer from whom they have transferred under TUPE or Statutory Transfer). Under the previous scheme, the council was able to purchase gifts for employees using cheques. However, changes to accounting processes mean that the council are no longer able to purchase gifts in this way. Therefore, it was necessary to find a method of rewarding employees that was simple to administer and complied with Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC) regulations. The award is a 'gift' of £160 (net of tax and National Insurance) that the employee has full discretion over how they spend it.

#### **4.3 Travel & Subsistence Policy – (Appendix 2)**

This policy was approved by this Committee at its meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2014. However, at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2015, the Council, as part of its budget proposals, approved both the removal of the key user car allowance and also increased car parking charges for staff. This policy has therefore been updated to reflect these changes.

#### **4.4 Substance Misuse & Alcohol Policy – (Appendix 3)**

This is a new policy which details the council's expectations in respect of alcohol and substance misuse in the workplace. Many employers have these in place and in the ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) guidance "Health, Work & Well Being" (March 2012) it is suggested that it is good practice to have such a policy. In addition to the policy a set of guidance documents for managers and staff have been produced which set out clearly the procedures that will be followed if misuse is suspected and also the support that the council will provide where applicable.

#### **4.5 Domestic Abuse Policy – (Appendix 4)**

This is a new policy which sets out the council's position on Domestic Abuse. In addition to the policy a manager's guidance document has been produced which outlines how managers should deal with any allegations of abuse that are reported to them. The policy is in place to make very clear that the council is committed to dealing with violence and abuse and to safeguarding the health and well-being of its employees.

### **Maternity and Adoption Policies**

#### **4.6 Maternity Scheme – (Appendix 5)**

This document has been amended to ensure that it is compliant with changes to legislation contained within the Children and Families Act 2014 which includes the Shared Parental Leave regulations 2014. It also clarifies the position regarding election duties for employees on maternity leave.

#### **4.7 Maternity Scheme for Teachers – (Appendix 6)**

This outlines the maternity scheme for teachers in line with national terms and conditions. This applies to the centrally employed teachers in the council only. Schools have their own policies as adopted by their respective Governing bodies.

#### **4.8 Adoption Scheme – (Appendix 7)**

Previously this was contained within the Worklife Balance Policy. However, it was decided that it would be more appropriate to produce a specific policy for adoptive parents that detailed the changes in the law regarding adoptive parent's rights. The policy outlines the statutory arrangements for adoption leave and pay which would apply to all employees.

## **5. CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 The joint trade unions were consulted at meetings on 18 December 2014, 12 March 2015 and 10 June 2015.

## **6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES**

- 6.1 Implementation of these policies will ensure that the council is compliant with employment legislation and taking full account of business need and best practice.

## **7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 To ensure that the council operates within legislation including the Children and Families Act 2014.

- 7.2 To move forward with improved HR policies

## **8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 8.1 The policies incorporate statutory requirements or best practice advice and therefore the council is obliged to have these in place.

## **9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Children and Families Act 2014  
HMRC Section 323 ITEPA 2003  
ACAS Health, Work & Well Being (March 2012)

## **10. APPENDICES**

Loyalty Award Scheme (Appendix 1)  
Travel & Subsistence Policy (Appendix 2)  
Substance Misuse & Alcohol Policy (Appendix 3)  
Domestic Abuse policy (Appendix 4)  
Maternity Scheme (Appendix 5)  
Maternity Scheme Teachers (Appendix 6)  
Adoption Scheme (Appendix 7)

