

Subject: Human Resources Policies

Status: For Publication

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Policy

Date: 21st September 2010

Report of: Head of People & Policy

Portfolio

Holder: Finance and Resources

Key Decision: No

Forward Plan General Exception Special Urgency

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 Inform Members in relation to the consultation which has been taking place in relation to the modernisation of Human Resources Policies.

1.2 Consult with Members in relation to the Grievance and Redundancy Policies.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report impact directly on the following corporate priorities:-

- Providing value for money services

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 All the issues raised and the recommendations in this report involve risk considerations as set out below:

The policies need modernization in light of legislation, failure to revise the policies could lead to an inconsistency, a delay in resolving issues and litigation.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

CONTEXT

4.1 The Council renegotiates policies and local agreements utilizing the process of collective bargaining. This is a process where employers and the Trade Union reach agreement regarding the rights and duties of people at work. Collective bargaining aims to reach a collective agreement which sets out issues such as pay, working hours, and training. A period of consultation has been ongoing to modernise some of the Council's broader employment policies in light of changes in legislation, learning and in light of the application of those policies. The Head of People and Policy under delegated authority has renegotiated a revised Disciplinary and Absence Management Procedures. In addition, the Trade Union have also agreed to revisions of the grievance and redundancy policies which are subject to Full Council approval.

4.2 Grievance Policy – Appendix A

The Council's Grievance Policy should allow for the speedy resolution of concerns and complaints of employees. In addition, it is necessary for the Policy to clearly explain how issues of concern to employees will be dealt with by the employer. Due to the positive employee relations at Rossendale Borough Council, the Grievance Policy is rarely used as most issues are resolved at a managerial level. However, there have been issues where the existing Policy does not provide for the speedy resolution of matters due to the number of levels within the procedure. In addition, there have been situations where the procedure has been used as a mechanism for delaying decision making. The Trade Union have considered the representations of the Council and a new policy has been negotiated. The revised Policy explicitly explains those areas where the Policy can be applied, is more comprehensive and has reduced the number of levels of appeal, the final level being the Executive Director.

4.3 Redundancy Policy – Appendix B

The Council has previously had a number of policies and national agreements which deal with redundancy matters. The proposed Redundancy Policy will replace all other compulsory, voluntary, redeployment and redundancy procedures and provide a clear and consistent Policy for dealing with reductions in the workforce. The Policy also confirms the Council's position in relation to discretionary redundancy, added years with regards to the application the pension regulations. Further, it confirms the position of those employees who are redeployed and reduces the level of protection awarded to employees and creates a different mechanism for dealing with redundancy situations.

COMMENTS FROM STATUTORY OFFICERS:

5. SECTION 151 OFFICER

- 5.1 With regard to the Grievance Policy there are no material financial implications.
- 5.2 With regard to the Redundancy Policy, positive financial implication do arise from:
- No added years available under pension arrangements
 - No enhanced redundancy under the discretionary redundancy provisions
 - Reducing the level of protection from 4 years to 1 year automatic with possibly 2 years providing there is a business need.
- 5.3 However, adverse implications arise from the automatic 4 weeks additional basic redundancy payment for anyone in a compulsory redundancy situation on top of the statutory arrangement.

6. MONITORING OFFICER

- 6.1 Any legal implications are commented upon in the body of the report.

7. HEAD OF PEOPLE AND POLICY (ON BEHALF OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE)

- 7.1 Human Resources implications are included within the report

8. CONCLUSION

The revised Policies have been developed in light of extensive consultation at a local and regional level with the Trade Union and represent a package of Policies to be agreed.

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 Members are asked to note the consultation which has been taking place in relation to the modernization of the Human Resources Policies and Procedures.
- 9.2 Members are asked to recommend the adoption of the Grievance and Redundancy Policies to Full Council.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

- 10.1 Management Team, Portfolio Holder, Leader. Trade Union

11. COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- Is a Community Impact Assessment required Yes
- Is a Community Impact Assessment attached Yes

12. BIODIVERSITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment required No

Is a Biodiversity Impact Assessment attached No

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No background papers