

**Agenda Item: 8**

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**Meeting:** General Purposes Committee

**Date:** 2 July 2009

**Subject:** Update on HR Policies for staff employed on Central Bedfordshire Terms and Conditions of Employment

**Report of:** Acting Assistant Director, Human Resources and Organisational Development.

**Summary:** The report is to inform Members of the progress made to date in agreeing HR Policies for Central Bedfordshire staff with the relevant trade unions.

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Contact Officer: Catherine Jones (Head of Strategy & Policy - 01462 611210)

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: n/a

Function of: Council

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**1. that the Committee**

- (a) Endorse the HR policies (for non schools staff) already agreed with the trade unions and**
- (b) Endorse the proposals to apply these policies to all Central Bedfordshire staff (non schools)**
- (c) Endorse the proposed plan to draft and agree remaining HR policies for Central Bedfordshire for non-schools staff**

**Background**

1. An important part of establishing terms and conditions of employment for Central Bedfordshire is the establishment of new HR policies for core staff. This excludes staff who are working within schools.

These policies were required from 1 April 2009 so that they applied to any staff recruited to Central Bedfordshire Council.

2. A decision was taken to focus on the essential policies and subsequently the following policies were drafted using best practice and aiming for clarity and brevity, and have been agreed with Unison and GRM :-
  - Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
  - Grievance Policy and Procedure
  - Capability Policy and Procedure
  - Managing Sickness Absence Policy
3. In addition to the above policies the Probationary Service Review Guidelines were also agreed.
4. However these policies referred to above only cover newly recruited staff and any other staff who have taken up a new post on Central Bedfordshire Terms and Conditions of Employment.

In view of the implications of TUPE and contractual rights of staff, any staff employed by the three legacy councils and who TUPE transferred to Central Bedfordshire remain on their legacy terms and conditions of employment and are also therefore covered by their legacy HR policies.

#### **Proposed future action on the essential policies.**

5. Recognising the need to take account of TUPE we have also discussed with the Trade unions the real benefits of rolling out these new policies to all staff. Since 1 April we now have managers who are managing teams which in many instances comprise of staff from all three legacy authorities. To ensure fairness and equity of treatment and to simplify the situation for managers, it has been proposed that following a period of consultation the above policies will be rolled out to apply to all non schools staff employed by Central Bedfordshire.
6. An update regarding this consultation will be provided to Members at the meeting.

#### **Work plan to cover remaining HR Policies**

7. Appendix A provides details relating to the range of HR policies that have either been revised, or need to be considered in the coming months. We are committed to producing modern policies based on best practice, in order to provide managers with the appropriate tools to manage their teams.
8. Where Member approval is required policies will be brought to this Committee.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

The proposed move to roll out HR policies to all centrally employed Central Bedfordshire staff will contribute to the harmonisation process and developing a new culture for the authority with consistent approaches to dealing with HR matters.

### **Financial:**

None

### **Legal:**

The policies comply with employment legislation and the latest ACAS Code of Practice for Disciplinary and Grievance procedures. Any changes for staff who transferred from legacy authorities will be only made following consultation with the appropriate trade unions.

### **Risk Management:**

None resulting from this report.

### **Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

Trade unions have been consulted on the newly developed HR policies for Central Bedfordshire and will continue to be consulted.

### **Equalities/Human Rights:**

All policies referred to in this report comply with employment and equality legislation and take account of human rights.

### **Community Safety:**

n/a

### **Sustainability:**

n/a

### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – Workplan for drafting and implementing HR Policies for Central Bedfordshire