

Title of report	Policy Library Update
Public/confidential	Public
Action	For approval
Summary/purpose of report	For Council to be assured that a review of all Human Resources (HR) people management policies is progressing and to agree the revised timetable and the approval process going forward.
Recommendations	Council is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. approve the proposed approval routes for each of the policies set out in the policy library at appendix 3. 2. approve the planned HR policy review proposals set out in appendices 1 and 2.
Author	Marnie Westwood Interim Head of HR
Responsible Officer	Lynn Murray Interim Director of Finance and Resources Tel: 01382 207250
Link to Strategic Plan	The information in this report links to all Outcomes in the Strategic Plan 2020-2023.
Link to Risk Register	Risk 3: We fail to meet corporate governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations. Risk 5: We fail to provide value to our stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)	An EIA was not developed as the contents of this report relates to approval of policies and procedures. It does not therefore directly affect individuals with a protected characteristic. An EIA will be completed for each policy when they are reviewed.
Documents attached	Appendix 1 – HR People Management Policy Review Timetable

	Appendix 2 – HR People Management Policy Review Timetable – Detailed Appendix 3 – SSSC Policy Library
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An overarching policy library was presented to Council on 14 May 2020. The purpose of that paper was to highlight to Council the policies we have and get agreement of the approval routes. Council gave feedback and we have updated the library at Appendix 3.
- 1.2 The Council highlighted that a number of HR policies were out of date and management were asked to produce an achievable plan to bring them up to date in line with current legislation.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 sets out the proposed HR people management policy review timetable. Appendix 2 sets out the rationale for the timescales and priority given. These documents taken together aim to give the Council assurances that this is being prioritised appropriately. Each policy/procedure has been prioritised by taking into account the date of last review, legislative changes since then, other workstreams (e.g. pay remit), Organisational Development Programme where there are interdependencies, and other drivers such as leadership and employee led initiatives.
- 1.4 This paper gives a clear commitment to Council that HR will review the policies by the timescales set out in Appendix 2, subject to time taken for consultation and approval.

2. EMPLOYMENT LAW

- 2.1 Key recent developments in employment law which would impact directly on HR people management policies have included the following:

Implementation Date	Development	Actioned
01/10/2018	Right to time off work for certain volunteers who carry out duties in the criminal justice system	<i>Special Leave Policy</i>
07/04/2019 05/04/2020	Statutory maternity pay and other family-related statutory pay rates increase	<i>Pay rates increased via Payroll</i>
26/03/2020	Right to carry over statutory annual leave for two years introduced	<i>Q& A for staff amends annual leave policy on an interim basis</i>
06/04/2020	Parental bereavement leave rights take effect	<i>Special Leave Policy</i>

- 2.2 Other employment law changes have occurred which are not directly related to policies, all of which have been actioned:

Implementation Date	Development
01/08/2018	List of prescribed persons to whom workers may make a protected disclosure amended
04/10/2018	Employer childcare voucher schemes close to new entrants

06/04/2019	Increase in minimum contribution level for pensions auto-enrolment takes effect
13/03/2020	Entitlement to statutory sick pay for those who are self-isolating due to coronavirus introduced
25/03/2020	Coronavirus Act
06/04/2020	Extension of the right to a written statement of employment particulars to all workers

2.3 Future employment legislation changes are included below. There are no dates available yet for when these will come into force:

Development
Emergency volunteering leave introduced
Technical amendments to employment law following the UK's exit from the EU take effect
Increase to the length of time required for continuity of employment to be broken
New right for workers to request a more stable contract
New check-off arrangements take effect (TU deduction of subs)
Whistle-blowers protected when applying for jobs in children's social care sector
Public sector exit payments
Extending pregnancy protection from redundancy
Neonatal pay and leave

3. HR PEOPLE MANAGEMENT POLICY TIMETABLE

- 3.1 The revised HR people management policy timetable is listed at Appendix 1 with a more detailed breakdown provided at Appendix 2, including the rationale for each priority level.
- 3.2 There is a suite of over 35 policies/procedures, 14 of which have been reviewed in the past 12/18 months since the HR shared service came into being. A further 15 are currently in progress and due for completion by December 2020, some of which were delayed as a result of the impact of COVID-19 redefining HR priorities, and the remaining six are scheduled to be reviewed in 2021. An overview is provided in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 Although there are 16 policies with their last review taking place over three years ago, only one of these, Career Break, is not compliant with legislation. This policy is now under review and, although it is not compliant, there are no applications for a career break currently.

- 3.4 The policy review timetable takes into account: forthcoming and recently implemented employment legislation; lessons learned from implementing existing policies; feedback from the partnership forum; reviews that would need to be aligned to the pay policy timetable; the level of usage of policies; quick wins; as well as the date of last review. In addition, the timetable must be flexible to support the strategic plan priorities, various strategies and any accreditations such as Healthy Working Lives or Investors in Young People.
- 3.5 It is anticipated that the timetable will give Council assurance that a detailed policy review plan is in place, is effective and being monitored. It also demonstrates that overall, we are legally compliant and with a low-level risk to the SSSC only if policies are not complied with. HR will monitor this.

4. CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL PROCESS

- 4.1 Consultation takes place with the Operational Management Team (OMT), Executive Management Team (EMT) and Partnership Forum for all HR people management policies/procedures. Staff can feed in through HR, OMT and/or Unison.
- 4.2 The Code of Corporate Governance was developed considering relevant guidance and best practise in corporate governance. The RACI chart at pages 25 to 27 is intended to ensure clarity over accountabilities and responsibilities. The approval of HR policies and procedures mostly fall into the Chief Executive's accountability for all operational matters and therefore it is appropriate that approval for these are delegated to her.
- 4.3 The Council has to ensure that the Chief Executive is discharging her accountabilities properly and therefore we are proposing that changes to those policies not retained for the specific approval of the Council are reported to the Council on a quarterly basis for endorsement. This will allow the Council to provide feedback, take assurances on compliance and, if they feel that those decisions are not being made responsibly, take appropriate corrective action.
- 4.4 The Council made the decision to retain the Employment Appeals Sub-Committee and the terms of reference states that Council Members hear and decide on the merits of any appeals made under the SSSC's disciplinary procedures, grievance procedures, dignity at work or any other relevant HR policy or procedure.
- 4.5 We propose that people management policies which include any of the following are reserved for the Council:
- associated additional costs that are not contained within the current budget
 - any proposed fundamental change to terms and conditions of employment
 - where the Council has a clearly defined role to play e.g. disciplinary, grievance etc.

The policy library at Appendix 3 sets approval routes of policies/procedures and this is replicated in Appendix 2. If the Council instructs that a different person/group should approve the policy then that will have an impact on the proposed timescale for completion.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 We can deliver the timetable as outlined in Appendix 1 within current resources.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The priority and legal compliance for each policy/procedure is included in the attached timetables at Appendices 1 and 2.

7. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 7.1 EMT has been consulted and once Council agree the approach and the timetable, we will consult with OMT and the Partnership Forum. The timetable is a working document and will be continuously reviewed and adapted should legislation, best practice or other drivers (such as the Organisational Development programme) determine that a policy/procedure needs reviewed earlier than proposed.

8. IMPACT ON PEOPLE USING SOCIAL SERVICES AND CARERS

- 8.1 There is no direct impact on people using social services or carers as a result of this report.

9. CONCLUSION

- 9.1 The proposals outlined in this report seek to get clarity on SSSC policies approval routes and allow Council to take assurances from the commitment to bring the HR policies and procedures up to date.