

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Employment and Appeals Committee

DATE: 24th January, 2019

CONTACT OFFICER: Surjit Nagra, People Service Lead

AUTHOR: Michelle Higgs, HR Policy Manager
For all enquiries (01753 875788 ext. 5788)

WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR DECISION**

EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

1. Purpose of Report

This report seeks approval from the Employment and Appeals Committee to the following new, amended and updated HR Policies and Procedures:

- New Managing Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure
- Revised Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure to enhance and update the document to reflect changes to the safeguarding requirements
- Minor amendment to the Secondment Policy

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Committee is requested to approve the new, revised and updated policies and procedures outlined in this report.

3. Supporting Information

3.1 The People Service has a programme of work relating to undertaking reviews of all employment policies and procedures. This programme of work is to ensure the policies and procedures:

- comply with employment legislation and any changes in statutory provisions
- reflect the council's strategic aims
- continue to reflect best practice
- are user friendly for both managers and employees
- work together cohesively
- incorporate any lessons learnt from casework.

3.2 One of the key drivers for any revisions to policies is to reflect any national changes in statutory provisions and of course, to update and incorporate any lessons learnt from casework.

3.3 A summary of the new policies and the revisions and updates to policies is outlined below.

4 Managing Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure

4.1 The Council is committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of all employees. Employee absences have a direct effect on service delivery to the residents of Slough and this represents a significant cost to the Council. This Policy and Procedure aims to maximise employee attendance whilst recognising that there are occasions when employees may be unable to attend work due to their own ill-health.

4.2 This policy has been revised to include the following;

- Data Protection Regulations 2018 clause added
- Disability advice and guidance strengthened to reflect feedback from the Disability Forum
- A new Health and well-being section added to highlight the Council's commitment to protecting the health, safety and well being of our employees
- In respect of triggering the absence procedure, in addition to absence totalling 6 or more days in the previous 6 months, 3 separate instances of absence in a 6 month period has also been added as a trigger
- Authority to manage formal meetings, with the exception of the dismissal stage, under this procedure is delegated to line managers
- Emphasis on the responsibilities of managers and employees in monitoring, reporting and recording sickness absence on Agresso

The revised policy and procedure is appended as Appendix 1.

5. Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure

5.1 As agreed at the Employment Appeals Committee in October we have now reviewed our current Recruitment Policy and Procedure and associated guidance to ensure it meets recent developments relating to safer recruitment practices and safeguarding requirements. We have incorporated a Safer Recruitment Guide – “Recruiting to posts working with children, young adults or adults at risk” in Appendix D to this policy and the National Safeguarding Statutory and Legislative Requirements in Appendix E to this policy. We consulted with the Children's Safeguarding (S11) Strategic Leads Group to ensure Safer Recruitment and Safeguarding requirements for Section 11 are now met.

The amended policy and procedure is appended as Appendix 2.

6. Secondment Policy and Procedure

6.1 A minor amendment has been made to reflect recent learning from casework and to provide more clarity in the application of this policy. The following has been added to Section 11;

“Secondments are temporary in nature and the employee should not expect it to continue past the expiry date outlined in the agreement. However if a decision is

made to recruit to the position on a permanent basis the permanent position should be appointed to following a recruitment and selection process in accordance with the Recruitment and Selection Policy. The seconded employee may apply for the position and will be considered equally with any other applicants”.

7. Consultation

Consultation has taken place with the Trades Unions, SLT including CMT, the Employee Engagement Forum and the Disability Forum. In addition, feedback was sought from SLT and CMT. Members of the Corporate Consultation Forum have been informed and consulted.

8. Implementation Process

The implementation process will include various methods of communication including;

- Newsround
- HRBP's to provide update at Senior Management Team Meetings
- HR Policy update briefings

9. Background Papers

None

10. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Managing Sickness and Absence Policy and Procedure
Appendix 2 – Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure
Appendix 3 – Secondment Policy and Procedure