



Policy Report: Employment and Appeals Committee

25 October 2019

Introduction

The Council manages 47 employment policies covering subject matter as diverse as employee discipline and grievances to volunteering and whistleblowing. Furthermore, we currently have around 14 manager and employee guidance notes that will be increased to around 25 over the next few months.

Introducing new policies

We follow a very simple but inclusive policy approval process. For the introduction of policies that represent a significant departure from the norm, we facilitate focus group sessions comprising trade union and management representatives. The purpose of these sessions is to test new ideas with attendees, obtain detailed information about personal and group feelings, perceptions and opinions. After the focus group sessions, the draft policy is presented to the Employment Policy Forum.

The Policy Forum is the opportunity for elected Members, trade union workplace representatives, HR, legal and management representatives to consider a draft policy, suggest/debate changes and once all parties are satisfied with its content, the policy is approved, translated into Welsh and published on the intranet.

The policy review process

Most policies are reviewed every 2 years although if there are legislative/regulatory changes, reviews are done sooner.

Progress over the last Quarter

The following policies have been reviewed:

Management of Attendance (Sickness Absence) – still not released pending further legal advice;

Performance Capability – published

Employee Probationary Policy - published

Employee Leave Policy – published

Violence Against Women/ Domestic Abuse/ Sexual Violence Policy - published

Guidance Note: Autism in the Workplace – published

The following policies were introduced:

Menopause in the Workplace – published

Carer's Policy – translation completed, awaiting publication

Objectives for the next Quarter

The policy focus at the moment is on building a suite of Employee Health and Wellbeing policies and guidance documents to improve employee wellbeing in order to:

- Build and sustain improved employee morale;
- Drive effective recruitment and retention;
- Improve productivity; and
- Reduce the damaging trend of presenteeism.

As well as our health and wellbeing offering, the following policies will be due for review:

- Management of Change;
- Disciplinary;
- Grievance;
- Whistleblowing;
- Secondment; and
- Agile Working.

Highlights

As mentioned, we introduced a Menopause Policy (we are one of only two authorities in Wales to have one) and this was very well received by our trade union partners. Furthermore, the number of queries and compliments we have had from predominantly female employees has been pleasantly surprising, with one comment being, "it has been a lifesaver".

Note that for those who are reluctant to perhaps approach a male manager with any issue in relation to the menopause, we have a dedicated female HR practitioner to support them and to work with their manager to consider reasonable adjustments where required.

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