

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Chief Officer – People & Technology****Corporate Services Committee: 1 November 2023**

Subject: Review of Organisational Change Policy**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to update committee on the review of the Organisational Change Procedure, the subsequent changes made and to secure approval for the same.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The Committee is asked to approve the revised policy, attached as Appendix 1.

3. Background

- 3.1** West Dunbartonshire Council is committed to supporting its' employees and, in line with the People First Strategy, putting people and good people practice at the heart of the organisation.
- 3.2** Equally Safe at Work (ESAW) is an innovative employer accreditation programme developed by 'Close the Gap', Scotland's national policy and advocacy body working on women's labour market equality to address sex inequality and violence against women. The Council has undertaken work to achieve the Development Tier of the programme.
- 3.3** Typically employment policies are viewed as gender neutral and an assumption is made that men and women will be impacted by it in the same way. If gender is not actively considered when developing/reviewing policies, unintended differential impacts may go unnoticed. A requirement of the accreditation is for a minimum one HR policy to be selected for review to ensure gender sensitivity. The ESAW working group selected the Organisational Change Procedure for this purpose. Criteria outlined within the ESAW framework has informed the review of this policy.
- 3.4** Working group members attended a capacity building 'Applying a Gender Lens' workshop, facilitated by Close the Gap, before undertaking this work. This workshop will be cascaded to Human Resources and other relevant colleagues initially, to enable them to review all HR policies, to ensure gender sensitivity, as part of the ongoing policy review process. This is in line with the criteria required for the Council to retain the ESAW accreditation. In future

consideration will be given to offering this training to services across the Council so the knowledge gained can inform other pieces of work.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1** The purpose of the Organisational Change Procedure is to provide a framework for supporting managers and employees when a change proposal affects structures, roles, role profiles and salary grades within a team or service area.
- 4.2** The Procedure is applicable to Local Government Employees, those on SNCT terms and conditions, Chief Officers and Quasi-Craft workers.
- 4.3** In order to meet the criteria set out by ESAW, the impacts on women should be specified within the policy, along with how the impacts were considered and what actions were taken to minimise any negative impacts.
- 4.4** In relation to 4.3, the Procedure now specifies that some employee groups can be more detrimentally impacted by organisational change than others giving the example that typically women are more likely to have caring responsibilities and use public transport so changes in working hours and locations will have a greater impact of female employees.
- 4.5** The procedure also highlights the Council's commitment to removing occupational segregation and gender stereotypical roles through horizontal career development and vertical career progression.
- 4.6** The Procedure guides a Change Lead to carry out an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) screening to ascertain if different groups could be negatively impacted and a full EIA where appropriate. In terms of action taken to minimise any noted detrimental impacts, the Procedure guides Change Leads to mitigate against any impacts, where possible and to communicate these to the Trade Unions (TUs) as part of the wider consultation so they are better able to support their members. The Procedure has also specified that employees with caring responsibilities should be given a reasonable amount of time to make or amend alternative caring arrangements. This is in recognition that women are more likely to have caring responsibilities than men.
- 4.7** There are a small number of posts within the Council that are female only roles. These roles are in Challenging and Responding to Abuse (CARA), Children Experiencing Domestic Abuse Recovery (CEDAR) and the Women's Safety and Support Service (WSSS) and involve the post holder to work with female victim/survivors of gender based violence. Guidance is provided in the Procedure for Change Leads involving female only posts.
- 4.8** These changes have been approved as meeting the accreditation standard by ESAW as part of the assessment process for the Developmental Tier.

5.0 Next Steps

- 5.1** Highlighting the changes to this Procedure will be achieved through presentation at senior manager meetings, workforce updates, newsfeed articles, Trickle and briefing notes provided for managers to share at team meetings. TU Convenors will be asked to brief their respective branches to enable them to support members.
- 5.2** The Strategic HR team will attend the capacity building Applying a Gender Lens Workshop in the first instance with consideration of how this can be rolled out further across the Council for those involved in policy development and other Council work and activities.
- 5.3** The HR Policy review schedule will be considered to include a gender sensitivity review when any review is undertaken.

6.0 People Implications

- 6.1** The revised procedure continues to provide a framework for supporting Change Leads and employees when a change proposal affecting structures, role profiles and grades of roles within a team or service area is taking place. Further guidance is provided on how change can impact on different groups of employees including a focus on females, how to consider any impacts and where possible minimise any detrimental impact.
- 6.2** The procedure for employees is accessible on the Council's intranet and can also be available on request in other accessible formats.

7.0 Financial and Procurement Implications

- 7.1** There are no financial implications associated with revision of this procedure. Any financial implications associated with Restructures or Organisational Change are reported in the associated papers to the change proposals.

8.0 Risk Analysis

- 8.1** Application of the revised policy and practice will mitigate against potential risks by ensuring the fair and effective support for and management of employees affected by organisational change.

9.0 Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 9.1** An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and identified no negative impact. The policy promotes equality of opportunity across all equality strands and protected characteristics and encourages employees to report any potential unlawful practice which would include any breach of the Equality Act 2010.

10.0 Consultation

- 10.1** The revised Organisational Change Procedure was informed by feedback and developed in conjunction with Human Resources, Trade Unions and the Equally Safe at Work Working Group consisting of cross-service representation.
- 10.2** Agreement of the policy has been provided by Unite, GMB, Unison and EIS on behalf of the Education Trade Unions.

11.0 Strategic Assessment

- 11.1** This procedure directly supports the Council's Strategic Plan, Strategic Priorities and Outcomes 4 Our Council – Inclusive and Adaptable; Service Delivery Plans and People First Strategy ensuring this policy is aligned to the ethos that all employees have equity of support and opportunity.

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Date: 09/10/23

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Organisational Change Procedure

Background Papers:

Wards Affected: None