

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by Strategic Lead – People and Technology****Corporate Services Committee: 19th February 2019**

Subject: Secondment Policy**1. Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline provisions of the new secondment policy for Local Government employees and seek approval of same.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the secondment policy attached as appendix 1.

3. Background

- 3.1 Historically there has been no formal secondment policy available to local government employees. However, secondments have been progressed informally through the relevant line management structures. The attached secondment policy has been developed to provide a clear, robust and consistent approach to secondments within West Dunbartonshire Council, to enable employees to request secondments and ensure managers are aware of the process to follow when dealing with same.
- 3.2 Following a period of research and consideration of good practice the policy was developed in accordance with the Council's Policy Framework and subsequently agreed by the relevant trade unions.
- 3.3 This policy does not apply to teachers and other associated professionals covered by SNCT terms and conditions, as a separate LNCT agreement for Secondments in those professional areas exists – reference LNCT agreement No 12.

4. Main Issues

- 4.1 The term secondment relates to the temporary placement of an employee in a different part of the council or to an external organisation for a specific purpose and period of time, to the mutual benefit of all parties. In line with the needs of the service a secondment will normally last for a minimum period of six months and a maximum period of 2 years.
- 4.2 It is recognised that secondments are a valuable way of providing employees with development opportunities, enhancing skills and knowledge and also

bring benefits to the substantive organisation, including skills retention and development.

4.3 All secondments should be supported by a secondment agreement which is a document that stipulates the legal considerations associated with same, namely:

- Purpose and location of the secondment;
- Hours and work pattern;
- Leave;
- Pay and allowances;
- Appraisal/performance arrangements;
- Travel and subsistence;
- Hours and leave;
- Health and safety, injury and indemnity arrangements;
- Equipment and property arrangements including intellectual property rights;
- Disciplinary and grievance; and
- Termination arrangements. If there are any non-pensionable allowances associated with the secondment, this must also be made clear within the agreement.

4.4 Through discussions with relevant stakeholders, it was acknowledged that there was a need for an agreed secondment policy to support a consistent approach across the Council. An agreed approach ensures that secondment agreements comply with all the relevant legal requirements and that those undertaking secondments are clear about the associated considerations.

4.5 An agreed policy also ensures that managers are aware of all the factors to be considered before approving a secondment and their obligations during the terms of the secondment. This would include keeping in touch and ensuring that seconded employees are informed of changes and developments in the workplace.

4.6 The attached policy outlines the key principles of secondments within West Dunbartonshire Council and the arrangements in place to support them. It defines what a secondment is and outlines the principles and process to be followed when considering applications for employees and managers, including the appropriate appeals process.

5. People Implications

5.1 It is recognised that employees are the Council's greatest asset and the right recruitment and selection processes are vital to ensure the Council has the right workforce with the right skills in post.

- 5.2 Secondments assist in retaining and developing valuable skills and experience and may also facilitate temporary development opportunities for other existing employee.
- 5.3 The Council will ensure that an evaluation of learning is undertaken following the completion of secondments to ensure that newly developed knowledge or skills can be identified and used to the benefit of the organisation.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

- 6.1 There are no financial implications associated with this report.
- 6.2 Adherence to the attached policy is intended to mitigate against any unintended costs associated with the approval of a secondment e.g. VAT. The policy clarifies all contractual entitlements, during and on return from secondment and clearly details the management considerations that must be considered.

7. Risk Analysis

- 7.1 Recruitment is a critical activity to ensure the Council has the right workforce in place to enable the Council to fulfil its obligations to service users and respond effectively to local and national initiatives.
- 7.2 A clear and transparent process for managing and making applications for secondment will assist in the retention of employees and the increase of skills and knowledge within the Council.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

- 8.1 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.

9. Consultation

- 9.1 In line with the policy development framework, a range of key stakeholders were consulted during the development exercise, including: HR, Legal, line managers and Trades Unions.
- 9.2 The need to ensure an effective framework for secondments was recognised by all parties. The final draft of 'The Secondment Policy' was discussed and agreed at the Convenors meeting on 28th October 2019.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 The policy contributes to Council's strategic priorities by placing employees in different work situations. Secondment offers the opportunity for individuals to develop new skills or enhance existing skills, enabling the Council to develop and retain experienced, skilled and valued employees.

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Date: 9th January 2020

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Appendices: Appendix 1 – Secondment Policy

Background Papers: N/A

Wards Affected: All