

**PEOPLE AND
ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

6.00 P.M.

10TH OCTOBER 2024

PRESENT:- Councillors Prof Chris Harris (Chair), Jason Wood (Vice-Chair), Mandy Bannon, Paul Hart, Caroline Jackson, Margaret Pattison and Paul Stubbins

Officers in attendance:

Alex Kinch	Chief Officer - People and Policy
Laura Collins	HR Policy and Strategy Lead
Chelsie Gladstone	Senior Corporate Health and Safety Manager
Catherine Joyce	Senior HR Business Partner
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer

11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Jason Wood declared his interest as an employee and member of UNISON and as a member of Unite the union, these interests being publicly declared. He also declared that his wife is a member of UNISON, Unite the union and GMB.

Councillor Margaret Pattison declared her interest as a member of UNISON. She also declared an interest as a relative is a health and safety consultant to the Council.

12 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2024 were approved and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

13 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

At this point the Chair expressed his thanks to Councillor Paul Newton for his work and contributions whilst a member of the Committee and welcomed Councillor Paul Stubbins, as a new Member, to the meeting.

14 HR POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

The HR Policy and Strategy Lead submitted a report that enabled the Committee to consider and approve the introduction of revised HR Policies which fall into the category of Standby, Callout and Overtime, Social Media and Mobile Phones and Smoking and Substance Misuse.

Comments and amendments following the meeting of JCC on 30th September 2024 were set out in the report.

The policy tracker, appended to the report, advised of further information on the changes to be reviewed. For these policies these were:

HR Policy Amendments Tracker

Policy Section Number (new number)	Existing/ New Section	Section Heading	Amendment/addition Notes
Standby, Callout and Overtime			
N/A	N/A	Branding	Policy re branded to new format.
N/A	N/A	Generic Layout	Layout follows new format. Scope, Purpose, Roles & Responsibilities followed by the substantive provisions.
5.5 and 5.6	Existing	Home based callout	There has been some simplification to the system of home-based callout payments. Firstly, in relation to how "shift" is defined, so it is clear which day the callout falls on (and therefore what pay a colleague is entitled to), but also to the minimum callout payment. Previously either 30+minutes work or 3 individual calls would trigger a minimum callout payment of 2 hours. This has been simplified so that work exceeding 30 minutes will incur the 2-hour minimum, and work below 30 minutes or above 2 hours will be paid according to the actual time spent.
6	New	Overtime	Including Overtime as part of the existing standby and callout policy as another related process/policy concerning additional payments to colleagues for additional work performed. We feel it sits more sensibly here than with flexi time (as flexi time is distinct from overtime).
6.3	New	Overtime	Due to recent casework, an emphasis on ensuring that overtime is first approved by a line manager and is not worked before authorisation is granted.
<i>Future proposed change</i>			From April 2025 when the new budget is set for the financial year, the proposal is that these figures are linked to the real living wage as follows: Weekly Rate 50% of 1 week's pay at real living wage* Day Rate 2.7 x real living wage hourly rate *updated 1 st April each year and can be found at https://www.livingwage.org.uk The proposal is essentially to link the standby rates to the real living wage (currently £12 per hour) so that they will automatically increase year on year. Based on the current rate of pay, this would equate to £222 per week (currently £160) and £32.40 per day (currently £22.86). From the limited information received from other Local Authorities around what they offer, this is in line with their current payments.
Social Media and Mobile Phones			
N/A	N/A	Branding	Policy re branded to new format.
N/A	N/A	Generic Layout	Layout follows new format. Scope, Purpose, Roles & Responsibilities followed by the substantive provisions.
N/A	N/A	N/A	Consolidation of existing social media and mobile phone policy – to cover all communication in one HR policy
N/A	Deleted clause		We have removed the expectation that employees delete the contact details of business contacts made during

	6.1.3 of existing Social Media Policy		employment from personal social networking accounts. It is not only unlike they would have their contact details stored on social media as it is not a means of communicating via their contact details, but if colleagues have a friendship outside of work with business contacts and both parties are comfortable with that, we respect the right for them to communicate after termination.
N/A	7		We have removed the monitoring part of the policy as this is covered in the relevant IT policies which cover monitoring. This ensures that monitoring is updated consistently, and we are not duplicating information across policies owned by different teams.
5.5	New	Social media expectations	New inclusion following JCC feedback: Colleagues are encouraged to report any misuse of social media to their line manager, especially where anything on social media has been posted about them. If colleagues are suffering any form of abuse on social media, it is important that this is reported to the relevant authorities, but where there is any connection with the workplace, colleagues are encouraged to share this so that LCC can support them.
7	New	Breaches	The policy has a new heading "breaches" to ensure that colleagues are made aware that breaches of the policy could be dealt with as a disciplinary matter. There is however a continued focus on de-escalation and ensuring that minor issues are dealt with informally, which the policy captures.
	Deleted clause 3 of existing mobile phone policy	Paying for personal calls	The mobile policy was very outdated, referring to tariffs and personal use of company mobile phones. We have removed a lot of these references, and only where company mobiles are used to incur premium charges will there be any attempt at recouping these costs from colleagues.
Smoking and Substance Misuse			
N/A	N/A	Branding	Policy introduced with branding to match new format.
N/A	N/A	Generic Layout	Layout follows new format. Scope, Purpose, Roles & Responsibilities followed by the entitlements and procedure to be followed.
5.5 and 5.6	New	Searches	<p>Inclusion of right to search as follows:</p> <p>5.5 We reserve the right to conduct searches for alcohol or drugs on our premises, including, but not limited to, searches of lockers, filing cabinets and desks, bags, clothing and packages. This would only be in circumstances where there was a strong suspicion (likely prompted by a report that a colleague has been seen with drugs or alcohol on work premises, and/or that alcohol or substance misuse is affecting the employee's ability to work or putting other colleagues or the public at risk of harm). Anything found as a result of a search will be confiscated and action may be taken under the Disciplinary Policy, if you are an employee of LCC. Any refusal to comply with a search may also be considered under the Disciplinary Policy.</p> <p>5.6 If an employee agrees to the search, they will always be informed of the reason for the search</p>

			<p>and LCC will ensure that the employee's privacy is prioritised i.e. this will take place in a private room, with a witness present. If a physical search is necessary, this will be performed by a member of the same biological sex. If it is considered that a physical search is necessary, a line manager will first consider if this is appropriate for LCC to handle, or if it is more appropriate to contact the police. It will always be necessary to contact the police if the search would require the removal of any clothing (other than a jacket). If the search involves the employee's personal property, the employee will be asked to remove/empty the contents to ensure that LCC has limited handling of any personal property. A log will be kept of the search, and the log itself will also be confidential. Employees are reminded that they are always free to refuse consent to a search, but in circumstances where there is a strong suspicion that an employee has drugs or alcohol in their possession, LCC may take this into account during any subsequent disciplinary procedure.</p>
Previous 6.1	Support available to employees		<p>We are proposing to withdraw the right to 2 hours paid leave to attend a smoking cessation consultation with Lancaster Smoking Cessation Service. This group no longer operates and there is no evidence that this type of leave has ever been applied for or utilised. We do not offer any paid leave for routine appointments and recommend removing this as inconsistent (despite it being well intentioned, it feels outdated).</p>
New Support Services			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Well Community: https://www.thewellcommunities.co.uk/ • Red Rose Recovery (Lancaster): https://redroserecovery.org.uk/events/connect-lancaster/ • Inspire / Change Grow Live: https://www.changegrowlive.org/service-search-results?postal_code=LA1%204UL&distance=10&service_type%5B9%5D=9 • Smokefree Lancashire: https://www.nhs.uk/services/service-directory/smokefree-lancashire/N11032105?gsdServiceId=1837

It was moved by Councillor Professor Chris Harris and seconded by Councillor Caroline Jackson and unanimously resolved as follows.

Resolved: -

That the introduction of revised HR Policies which fall into the category of Standby, Callout and Overtime, Social Media and Mobile Phones and Smoking and Substance Misuse, appended to the report, be approved, subject to the following amendments:

Standby, Callout and Overtime Policy

That the Standby payments, to be linked to the real living wage, be updated from 1st April 2025 and on 1st April each year.

Social Media and Mobile Phone Policy

Amend paragraph 4.2 to include the wording “Any use of Council mobile phones which has an impact on productivity may be dealt with as a breach of this policy.”

Smoking and Substance Misuse Policy

Substance Misuse

To include the following:

encourage you to report to that person’s line manager.

Where a Manager wishes to undertake a search to do a sense check and alert a Chief Officer and HR. HR to keep a register and a reporting mechanism.

This is to safeguard against a zealous Manager and alerts a Chief Officer to an issue, or a problem.

15 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

The Senior Corporate Health and Safety Manager submitted a report that enabled the Committee to consider and approve a range of amendments and additions to existing policies and procedures. These were:

- SG16 COSHH Policy
- SG17 Manual Handling Policy
- SG18 Noise and Vibration Policy
- SG33 Personal Protective Equipment Policy
- SG37 Working at Height Policy

Questions and comments following the meeting of JCC on 30th September 2024 were set out in the report. Some minor wording amendments were made within some of the policies.

At this point the Chair expressed his thanks to Officers for the work undertaken to date.

It was proposed by Councillor Professor Chris Harris, seconded by Councillor Jason Wood, and unanimously resolved as follows.

Resolved: -

That Health and Safety SG16 COSHH Policy, SG17 Manual Handling Policy, SG18 Noise and Vibration Policy, SG33 Personal Protective Equipment Policy and SG37 Working at Height Policy, appended to the report, be approved, subject to the following amendments:

SG16 – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Policy (COSHH)

Section 8 PPE and RPE, first bullet point amend the wording from “- suppliers can advise the procurement officer” to “- to obtain specialist advice from suppliers.”

Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.00 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Stephen Metcalfe, Democratic Support - email sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk**