

HR POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

19th July 2022

Report of the Human Resources Business Partner

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To enable the Committee to consider and approve the introduction of a new Employee Volunteering Policy

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the new draft Employee Volunteering Employment Policy appended to this report is considered by the committee and approved, following consideration of the comments made at the Joint Consultative meeting prior.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 From time to time the Council will create new Human Resources policies and procedures.
- 1.2 A new Employee Volunteering Policy has been developed in conjunction with the Staff Wellbeing and Inclusion Working Group following research and feedback from employees confirming the benefits of volunteering to our local community and employees.
- 1.3 The policy is due to be considered at the Joint Consultative Committee prior to referral to this committee. Any comments from this meeting will be appended to this report for consideration and any agreement regarding amendments will be communicated.

2.0 Employee Volunteering Policy

- 2.1 The introduction of an Employee Volunteering Policy is being proposed following feedback from the Staff Wellbeing and Inclusion Working Group. There are a range of benefits to be realised by promoting employee volunteering such as employee development, increased personal resilience and wellbeing, and building stronger relationships with our local community. The policy has great potential to contribute towards delivering the priorities of the Corporate Plan:
 - A sustainable district
 - An inclusive and prosperous local economy
 - Happy and healthy communities
 - A co-operative, kind and responsible council

Research from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) has found that there are recognisable benefits to employers, employees and local communities by supporting a volunteering policy. Benefits to the employer include employee development, such as improved communication skills and increased understanding of

the local community. Staff morale is improved, along with an improved reputation for the employer by demonstrating commitment to making a difference to society.

Benefits to employees include wellbeing arising from building connections with the local community, and giving back to society while working on issues they feel passionate about. Further benefits include the development of skills such as communication, team working, creativity, as well as the development of increased confidence and resilience.

2.2 The Policy covers areas such as:

- Ensuring that employees volunteer locally or in a Lancaster City Council department;
- Time off during normal working time – at a rate of two paid days per year (1 April to 31 March), with a requirement that employees match the paid time off with their own time;
- Clarification of responsibilities for health and safety, safeguarding and expenses.

Where whole teams wish to volunteer together as a team building event, the policy does not apply. Managers are granted the discretion to organise events such as this without reference to the policy.

2.3 To support the promotion of the policy, local volunteering organisations will be invited to talk to employees, a Sharepoint page will be created to promote volunteering, and an ongoing promotional campaign will be implemented.

3.0 Options

The options available to the Committee in respect of the Policy are to approve the appended document as drafted, to approve the document with amendments, or not to approve the document.

However, if substantial changes in respect of any Policy are proposed at the Personnel Committee meeting, it may be appropriate for consideration of that Policy to be deferred to a future meeting to enable Officers to consider the proposed amendment in more detail and to consult further with the trade unions.

4. Conclusion

Members are asked to consider and accept the Officer recommendations set out above in respect of the draft policy appended to this report.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):</p>

<p>Please see associated Equality Impact Assessment in respect of the proposed policy. There is no notable impact.</p>

<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

<p>There are no legal implications. The volunteering organisation will be responsible for health and safety, training, insurance, DBS checks, etc.</p>

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no notable financial implications to the implementation of the policy. Two days will be available per employee (pro-rata) per leave year (1 April to 31 March) to volunteer on paid work time.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces:

Managers will be required to ensure that applications for volunteering leave are considered alongside the ongoing requirement to deliver services. Two days per leave year will need to be covered for service delivery. The final decision is given to managers.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

New Policy Appended

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