

# HR Policy and Procedure Revisions

Report of the Human Resources Manager

## Recommended:

1. That the Remuneration Policy attached at Annex 1 to the report be approved.
2. That the Council's Agile Working Policy and Employment Benefits Policy are amended as set out in paragraph 5.4, with the addition of section 5.4 section c) of this report.
3. That the updated Recruitment Policy attached at Annex 2 to the report be approved.

## SUMMARY:

- A new Remuneration Policy, as attached at Annex 1, has been drafted which is recommended to replace the previous Pay – General Policy, Working Practices - General Policy and Honorarium and Recognition Payments Policy, combining all of these former policies into a single Remuneration Policy. This policy is in addition to the Council's Pay Policy Statement and sets out the details of how different aspects of pay and remuneration are managed.
- Following implementation of the changes agreed at General Purposes Committee to the calculation of business mileage on 29 March 2022 feedback was received from employees who are working in an agile way from home and regularly attend sites outside the Borough. This has led to the recommendation of a minor change to the way officers can claim business mileage, with the inclusion of paragraph 5.4 section c) of this report.
- The Recruitment Policy, attached at Annex 2, has been reviewed and updated to reflect current practice following the move to managing recruitment through the MHR i-trent HR system.

## 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council has a suite of HR policies and procedures which are used to manage a wide range of employment matters. These are subject to periodic review and update. This report considers updates to the Council's remuneration policies, how we calculate business mileage and the Recruitment Policy.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 The Council's remuneration policies have not been reviewed for some time. The current policies have been updated and drawn together into a new single Remuneration Policy. This has included updated wording in sections 4, salary on appointment, section 6, pay award and section 10, overtime. The introduction, following audit recommendation, of a new section 8 on career grades and updated section 12 and 13 on how decisions are made around approval of honorarium and recognition payments has also been included. The new policy can be found at Annex 1.
- 2.2 Following the GPC meeting on 29 March 2022 the Employment Benefits Policy and Agile Working Policy were updated to reflect the changes agreed to the recompensing of people for undertaking business mileage within the Borough when working from home. This led to some feedback from a few employees who regularly undertake business mileage to sites outside the Borough and how they could claim for this when working from home. A review of this has led to the recommendation of a change to the policy of the calculation of business mileage and the inclusion of a new bullet point set out in paragraph 5.4, section c) below.
- 2.3 In January 2022 the Council implemented a new recruitment on-line module which is linked to the Council's HR and Payroll System. All recruitment is now processed through the i-trent system which has an onboarding module which means the successful candidate can be smoothly moved across into the HR and Payroll system at the start of their employment. As a result of this and the current higher levels of recruitment activity, we have undertaken a review of our Recruitment Policy. There have been a number of minor updates to the policy to reflect the current ways of working including how we advertise vacancies to maximise the reach of our adverts in the current competitive market. The wording around requirements for references has also been updated. The updated policy can be found at Annex 2.

## **3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities**

- 3.1 HR policies and procedures are an important part of the managers' toolkit, ensuring transparent and equitable practices when dealing with employment matters. It is important these are kept under periodic review and updated accordingly to reflect current working and best practice and legislative changes.
- 3.2 Test Valley Borough Council strives to be a good employer and an employer of choice in the local area. These policies are key to this, our Recruitment Policy supports the recruitment of talented officers and an equitable Remuneration Policy supports the recruitment and retention of good people. The Council aims to offer a competitive total remuneration package, this includes recompensing people in a fair way for any business mileage undertaken in the course of their duties.

## **4 Consultations/Communications**

- 4.1 The proposed new policies were discussed with the Unions at a recent Policy and Procedure Review Group meeting and they supported the updates being put forward to all the policies under review, in accordance with the recommendations in this report.

## **5 Options**

- 5.1 The report recommends the introduction of a new Remuneration Policy which will replace the current Pay - General Policy, Working Practices - General Policy and Honorariums and Recognition Payments Policy. This policy is attached at Annex 1 and sets out how pay and remuneration matters will be managed.
- 5.2 The report proposes updating the Council's Employment Benefits Policy and the Council's Agile Working Policy with regards to business mileage. The suggested minor change is the inclusion of the wording at paragraph 5.4, section c) to the provision for the claiming of business mileage which is set out in sections 5.3 to 5.6 below:
- 5.3 "We will reimburse you at the relevant lease car or business user mileage rate for business mileage undertaken. You will normally be required to deduct your total home to permanent or principal workplace commute mileage from any daily claim made. This is the same for those who work at a Council workplace and those who work in an agile way. When working in an agile way you will normally be required to deduct your home to principal workplace commute from any business mileage claimed when working from your principal workplace, home or an alternative Council premises or other location.
- 5.4 The exception to this is when you undertake site or other visits on days you do not also attend a Council premises.
- a) Where you live in the Borough and are visiting a site in the Borough for work you may claim the full cost of your business mileage.
  - b) If you live outside the Borough and are visiting a site in the Borough for work you may claim any miles undertaken within the Borough boundary, provided this is in line with HMRC guidance on business mileage.
  - c) If you are driving to a site outside the Borough, you may claim the lesser of the miles from home to the location, or your principal workplace to the location, provided this is in line with HMRC guidance on business mileage. When travelling for business all employees are expected to make sensible decisions and use public transport where this would be an efficient and cost effective option.
- 5.5 HMRC will consider your journey to be commuting where it is broadly similar to your normal commute or if you travel in close proximity of your principal workplace. Any time spent commuting, including to/from the Borough boundary is in your own time.

5.6 You are expected to undertake all business mileage in an efficient and economical way being mindful of keeping the cost to the council to a minimum and utilising and planning your time in the most efficient way.”

5.7 The options for Committee’s consideration are:

5.7.1 **Option 1** To adopt the proposed revisions to HR Policies as set out in the recommendations set out at the start of this report.

5.7.2 **Option 2** Not to adopt the recommendation and to continue with the HR policies referred to in their current form.

5.7.3 **Option 3** To adopt the policies in a format other than that recommended.

## **6 Option Appraisal**

6.1 The recommendations are made as a result of professional officers’ review of the existing policies taking into account changes to the needs of employees and the organisation and the development in working practices since the policies were last reviewed. They have been the subject of consultation with the Unions. For these reasons, Option 1 described above is the recommended option in preference to Options 2 or 3.

## **7 Risk Management**

7.1 No risks have been identified in the preparation of this report.

## **8 Resource Implications**

8.1 There are no direct resource implications as a result of the proposed changes to these policies. Any changes to the overall cost of business mileage are expected to be minimal and will be accommodated within service budgets.

## **9 Legal implications**

9.1 There are no legal implications of the recommendations proposed.

## **10 Equality Issues**

10.1 No equality issues have been identified in the preparation of this report.

## **11 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation**

11.1 The changes recommended in this report will enable these HR policies to be updated and ensure they remain compliant with employment legislation and in line with current and best practice.

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

[General Purposes Committee 29 March 2022](#)

Confidentiality

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

No of Annexes:	2	File Ref:	N/A
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Report to:	General Purposes Committee	Date:	17 April 2023