



General Purposes Committee
4 September 2013

**Report from Operational Director
Human Resources**

Wards affected:
ALL

Attendance Policy and Procedure

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides details of the proposed new Attendance Policy and Procedure which will replace the current Attendance Management Policy and Procedure.

2.0 Summary

2.1 The General Purposes Committee is asked to:

- a. agree the draft Attendance Policy and Procedure with effect from 5 September 2013.
- b. authorise the Operational Director, Human Resources (or Deputy), in consultation with the Director of Governance and Corporate Services (or Deputy) and then consultation with the relevant trade unions, to make such other changes as may be necessary from time to time to the Attendance Policy and Procedure to ensure it remains relevant and 'fit for purpose'.

3.0 Detail

3.1 The Council regularly reviews its HR policy framework to align its policies and procedures to the organisational objectives, incorporate legislative changes and to reflect current modern HR practice.

Brent's Attendance Policy and Procedure has been reviewed in light of improvements identified in the application of the current policy and procedure and the recent implementation of the new attendance Management System for recording absences. Brent's approach is to treat all employees fairly and consistently, creating a working environment where attendance is the norm whilst ensuring the health, safety and well being of its employees.

Employees are positively encouraged and supported to attend work. In this way sickness absence is successfully managed to the benefit of staff and customers.

- 3.2 Attendance and absence procedures help employees to understand what standards are expected of them whilst helping managers when dealing with these issues to do so in a fair and consistent way. The attendance policy is designed to deal with sickness absence on a case by case basis and to manage the absence according to the particular circumstances. The overarching aim is to help employees who are ill to return to work. However, there is also provision in the policy and procedure for taking formal action as required.

The key points to note in the new policy and procedure are:

- the policy and Procedure has been simplified to provide greater flexibility when managing attendance both for employees and the Council.
- the policy and procedure have been reviewed and modified to ensure that all employees are treated fairly and consistently and that high standards of performance are maintained.
- incorporates the Council's Managing Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy.
- the triggers have been modified slightly to allow for a more proactive approach both in supporting staff who may have health issues and managing sickness levels. Current triggers for short term sickness are four occasions in a three month rolling period or three or more occasions totalling nine working days in a twelve month rolling period. In the new policy the proposed triggers are three occasions in a rolling three month period or two or more occasions amounting to nine working days in a rolling twelve month period. For long term sickness the four week trigger has been changed to three weeks. The triggers are a guide and any sickness absence giving cause for concern should be managed within the parameters of the Policy and Procedure.

- 3.3 The policy and procedure is underpinned by a strong focus on delivery of the highest level of service.

4.0 Implementation date

- 4.1 It is recommended that the policy becomes live on 3rd September 2013. A communications plan has been developed to support roll out of the policy and guidance for managers to support implementation of the new arrangements. Human Resources advisers will be fully briefed on the operation of the new policy and procedure to support managers going forward.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no specific financial implications.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 The policy is underpinned by the employment legislation including Employment Rights Act 1996, Employee Relations Act 1999, Employment Act 2002, Access to Medical Records Act 1998, Data Protection Act 1998, Equality Act 2010 and health and safety legislation.

6.2 The policy adheres to ACAS basic principles of fairness and guidance on absence and attendance management at work.

6.3 The policy is non-contractual and may, subject to applicable legislation, be amended or withdrawn by Brent at any time.

7.0 Diversity Implications

7.1 The policy and procedure is applicable to all staff and provides a consistent approach to managing attendance at work and to treat employees where health prevents them from attending work in a fair and consistent manner. Action taken to manage attendance will be in accordance with the Council's equality duties. Application of the policy will be continually monitored to ensure it does not impact unfairly on employees and to ensure compliance.

7.2 An Equality Analysis has been undertaken.

8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications

8.1 Brent is moving towards a flexible workforce and this policy and procedure will assist in the organisation meeting its objectives through offering a framework to help employees and managers manage attendance and meet or exceed the high standards of performance required. There are no other implications in addition to those otherwise set out in the report. Trade Unions have been consulted on this policy.

Background Papers

Draft Attendance Policy and Procedure is appended to this report.

Contact Officer

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