



Essential Reference Paper "B"

East Herts Council

Restructure Consultations Policy

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The council will from time to time initiate consultations with UNISON and staff for the purposes of creating changes to the structures of the councils departments. In order to efficiently and effectively implement changes it would be necessary to consult affected staff in order to understand their views on the changes and to provide to the staff sufficient information in order that staff can make informed responses.
- 1.2 There are benefits to both the council and the employee which include:
- Improved efficiency and productivity
 - Improved recruitment and retention of employees
 - Increased goodwill, morale and motivation of employees
 - Supports the council's Equality and Diversity policy
 - Supports the councils aspirations for investors in people

2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This policy and guidance applies to all who are considering engaging in a consultation including managers, HR and UNISON

3.0 Business Need

- 3.1 The efficiency, productivity and effectiveness of the organisation can be enhanced through an engaged workforce that contributes positively to restructure consultations which could lead to cost savings and innovative ways of working.

4.0 Definitions

- 4.1 For the purpose of this policy and guidance a consultation can be defined as:

Restructure consultation

This is where a head of service would propose a fundamental change to the way a service or a team of people delivering a service provides that service. This could include a material change to the service such as increasing or decreasing the size scope and nature of a service.

It could include the introduction of an entirely new service. It could include recruitment of new individuals and also redundancies of individuals.

5.0 **The Process for commencing restructure consultation**

- 5.1 The need for a restructure is identified by head of service.
- 5.2 Senior managers or senior affected staff that would be directly affected by the consultation would be able to contribute, including their views in brief, stating whether they would support or not support the consultation. Their comments would be appended to the originating head of service's report.
- 5.4 A draft report is submitted by the head of service to leadership team (LT)
- 5.5 Leadership Team agree that the restructure can proceed or alternatively suggest changes and proceed or confirm that the consultation and restructure should not proceed.
- 5.6 UNISON and HR are asked for their initial input (if LT suggest it should proceed). Full details should be provided to UNISON and HR including timings costings and details of how the restructure will contribute to councils corporate priorities.
- 5.7 UNISON and HRs initial comments are incorporated into the head of services consultation document
- 5.8 The consultation is then initiated with a 30 day consultation period. UNISON is provided with a fully costed estimate of the proposal if for example only a limited amount of information was originally submitted to UNISON.
- 5.9 The current procedure is followed during the 30 day period. UNISON could consult with staff for their views. One to ones are arranged with staff. UNISON can request additional details of the prepared estimates during this period if required.
- 6.0 Five days before the end of the consultation period, UNISON will meet with the head of service to enable a consensus to be formed. It should be able at this meeting for UNISON to be able to be satisfied that the proposal is workable and acceptable. If the proposal is either

unworkable and / or unacceptable the parties should try and reach a compromise.

- 6.1 UNISON provide to the head of service and HR a written statement detailing the branch opinion and if required a conclusion statement which would form part of the final report documentation that the head of service submits to LT.
- 6.2 The head of service presents the outcome of the restructure consultation and their conclusion report to LT. UNISON would have the opportunity to present their view to LT at the same meeting.
- 6.3 Leadership team would review the documentation and comments from management and UNISON (and HR if they have submitted any comments) and formally report back in writing to all parties on their conclusion.
- 6.4 In the event that UNISON disagree with LTs decision UNISON would present their views to the next local joint panel (LJP)
- 6.5 No more than one consultation would be attempted at any one time and an agreed minimum period of time between consultations should elapse in order that UNISON, Managers, HR etc. can properly resource the exercises.
- 6.6 The policy could be reviewed after 6 months by UNISON, Managers and HR to check its efficiency and performance.