

East Herts Council Report

Local Joint Panel

Date of meeting: 21 May 2024

Report by: HR and Organisational Development Service Manager

Report title: Flexible Working Policy

Ward(s) affected: None

Summary

This report addresses the legalisation passed in April 2024, which changes flexible working rights for employees and ensures the Council's policy aligns with the amendments explained in the background section below.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Local Joint Panel:

- a) To approve the updated Flexible Working Policy

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 The proposals are set out in the recommendations below.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 From 6 April 2024, the Flexible Working Regulation removed the requirement for employees to have at least 26 weeks of continuous service to make a flexible working application. This is now a 'day one' right, and employees can make two statutory flexible working requests every 12 months. They have also reduced the time limit for employees to deal with statutory requests from three to two months and removed the need for employees to explain the effect of the proposed changes.

3.0 Reason(s)

- 3.1 Given the significant changes above, we have reviewed our flexible working scheme to ensure it reflects the new

requirements. We aim to train managers to handle flexible working requests and plan communications to staff to reflect the changes.

3.2 We have updated the recruitment request form to capture the justification for the proposed hours before going out for recruitment. This can, therefore, be referred to if an application differs from the hours.

3.3 The current flexible working application process (via intranet) will be reviewed to remove questions relating to the impact of the new working pattern and the effect on the service and colleagues.

3.4 The policy has been approved by the Leadership Team and Unison.

4.0 Options

4.1 N/A

5.0 Risks

None

6.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

Yes – as set out in the report

Human Rights

No

Legal

No

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 The updated policy can be found in Appendix 1.

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