

East Herts Council Report

Local Joint Panel

Date of meeting: Tuesday 20 May 2025

Report by: Emily Cordwell, HR Officer

Report title: Policy Updates 2025

Ward(s) affected: (All Wards);

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Local Joint Panel

- a)** To approve the revised Sickness Absence Management Policy (Appendix 1),
- b)** To approve the revised Grievance Policy (Appendix 2),
- c)** To approve the revised Expenses Policy (Appendix 3),
- d)** To approve the revised Appeals Policy (Appendix 4)

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1. The proposals are set out in the recommendations above. Four HR policies have been updated in line with legislation and best practice, ensuring consistency with layout and language.

1.2. The appeals process is currently incorporated at the end of all policies, with exception to the redundancy policy. We are proposing to reinstate the appeals policy as the appeals process is largely the same for all.

2.0 Background

2.1 The HR Policies have not been updated since 2021, the full suite of HR policies needs to be updated to incorporate best practice. HR have updated the first tranche of policies and consulted with unison to ensure they are fit for purpose and user friendly.

2.2 HR have included an executive summary at the beginning of each policy, along with a paragraph outlining 'when to use this policy' to provide greater clarity for staff regarding the content of each.

3.0 Summary of changes to policies

3.1 Sickness Absence Management Policy

- Clearer language distinguishing between employee/manager
- Discounting recovery period from triggers. (e.g. 4-week sickness absence recovery following a planned operation)
- Colour coded for sickness absence stages- easier to distinguish and find the relevant forms/flow charts
- Updated flow charts and stress risk assessment
- Section added on medical/dental appointments.

3.2 Grievance Policy

- Greater clarity on when to use the informal vs formal process
- More information on grievance investigations
- New section on dealing with collective grievances
- Updated flowchart
- Appeals process moved into Appeals Policy

3.3 Appeals Policy

- Incorporated the appeals process back in to one policy
- Updated flowchart

3.4 Expenses Policy

- Subsistence rates have been updated.

Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

The policies have been updated in line with equalities legislation. An Equality impact assessment has been carried out for all.

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

HR to maintain policy review.

Human Rights

No

Legal

The policies have been updated in line with employment legislation.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 The updated policies are attached as appendices 1 – 4.

Contact Member

Executive Member for Corporate Services

joseph.dumont@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer

Elaine Starling

Strategic HR Lead

elaine.starling@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author

Emily Cordwell, Human Resources Officer

emily.cordwell@eastherts.gov.uk