

## Employment and Appeals Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Employment and Appeals Committee meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Monday, 1 November 2021 at the Council Chamber - Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

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### **Employment and Appeals Committee members present:**

Councillors A Turner, Baxter, P Ellison, Fairbanks and Swales

### **Apologies for absence:**

Councillors Webster, Lady D Atkins, Holden and A Vincent

### **Failed to attend or tender their apologies for absence:**

Councillor Armstrong

### **Officers present:**

Jane Collier, Human Resources Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer

Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services Officer

Marc Whittaker, Senior Human Resources Advisor

Olivia Cordingley, Human Resources Advisor

One member of the public attended the meeting.

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### **6 Election of Chairman**

Councillor A Turner was elected as the Chairman of the Employment and Appeals Committee for the municipal year 2021/2022.

### **7 Election of Vice Chairman**

Councillor Baxter was elected as the Vice Chairman of the Employment and Appeals Committee for the municipal year 2021/2022.

### **8 Declarations of interest**

None.

### **9 Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 12 July 2021 was **approved** as a correct record.

## Policy Review

The Human Resources Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Jane Collier, submitted a report presenting five of the council's existing Human Resources policies and working arrangements that had been reviewed and updated.

Jane Collier introduced the report and provided members with a brief overview of the proposed amendments. She pointed out that the visual design of the policies had been updated.

### (a) **Disclosure and Barring Service Policy**

Jane Collier explained that this policy was updated to provide clarity on the types of DBS checks offered and the complicated flow charts at Appendix 1 had been replaced with information regarding regulated activity at Appendix A. There were links within the policy that provided clearer information than the previous flow charts.

Following questions from members, it was explained that DBS checks are only carried out of those in specific roles that require assessment.

In addition, Jane Collier highlighted to members that DBS had made several changes in the way certificates are processed and issued. Therefore, the DBS Secure Handling & Storage Policy had been withdrawn.

A member of the committee asked whether the council get to see a copy of the DBS certificate. Jane Collier explained that they can see a copy but usually this was not necessary, she reassured members that the council would be notified of any convictions, warnings or reprimands.

### (b) **Employee Training and Development Policy**

Jane Collier introduced this policy and addressed the minor updates in the report.

She highlighted that the policy includes reference to the new e-learning portal known as Learning Pool and that Human Resources are in the process of rolling this out to all staff. She also mentioned that the policy no longer states a specific amount available to staff on courses for books and equipment. She explained that due to internet access and search engines such as Google, courses were conducted differently. Therefore, less requirement for books and other such equipment, however each case was determined on its own merit as in some instances the cost may reasonably exceed £60.

Jane explained to members that the new Learning Pool did not include accredited qualifications, but there was a range of courses that were specific to the role.

(c) **Leave and Work Life Balance Policy**

Jane Collier updated members on the minor amendments made throughout this policy to update new staff responsibilities. She additionally highlighted that pandemic arrangements in sections 3.4 and 10 had been amended to make them more relevant to current practice.

Councillor Paul Ellison entered the meeting during this item.

Members asked questions and received answers regarding the number of staff currently on Extended Authorised Absence (EAA) and the take-up of time off for volunteering activities.

(d) **Redeployment Policy**

Mrs Collier introduced this item and explained the minor amendments in section 4 of the policy. She clarified that staff members would need to provide a good reason if they did not consider a post as a suitable alternative.

Members asked if there were any plans for restructures within the council. She explained that there were no immediate plans for large scale restructuring, however, Heads of Service are tasked to examine whether their departments run most efficiently.

(e) **Chief Officers Disciplinary Policy**

Mrs Collier explained that minor amendments had been made throughout this policy and that the list of Gross Misconduct Offences was updated to bring it in line with statutory policy.

**11 Appeals Panel Training**

The Democratic Services Officer, Marianne Unwin, provided an update of an Appeals Panel virtual training session hosted by North West Employers in the New Year. This would be open to all members of the committee and other councillors. She explained that more details on this session would be sent to members in due course.

**12 Decision taken**

Following discussion, the committee **approved** all of the following reviewed and amended Human Resources policies and procedures:

- Disclosure and Barring Service Policy
- Employee Training and Development Policy
- Leave and Work Life Balance Policy
- Redeployment Policy

- Chief Officers Disciplinary Policy

The meeting started at 6.02 pm and finished at 6.27 pm.

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