

Employment and Appeals Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Employment and Appeals Committee meeting of Wyre Borough Council held on Monday, 21 February 2022 at the Committee Room 2, Civic Centre, Poulton-le-Fylde.

Employment and Appeals Committee members present:

Councillors A Turner, Baxter, Webster (joined during item 4), Lady D Atkins, P Ellison (joined during item 4b), Holden (joined during item 4) and Swales

Apologies for absence:

Councillor A Vincent

Failed to attend or tender their apologies for absence:

Councillors Armstrong and Fairbanks

Officers present:

Jane Collier, Human Resources Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer
Olivia Cordingley, Human Resources Advisor
Marianne Unwin, Democratic Services Officer

No members of the public or press attended the meeting.

13 Housekeeping message from the Chair

Before the formal proceedings, the Chair, Councillor Ann Turner, reminded members of the council's procedure regarding the recording of meetings.

14 Declarations of interest

None.

15 Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1 November 2021 were confirmed as a correct record.

16 Policy Review

The Human Resources Manager and Deputy Monitoring Officer, Jane Collier, submitted a report presenting six of the council's Human Resources policies

and working arrangements that had been reviewed.

Jane Collier introduced the report and provided members with a brief overview of the policies.

(a) Promoting Attendance & Managing Sickness Absence

Jane Collier explained that section two of the policy had been revised to reflect government guidance on Covid-19 and self-isolation. She added that this amendment might be subject to change and brought back to the committee due to further amendments to guidance.

She also explained that there had been changes made to the setting of targets and review periods at Stage 2 formal absence meetings. Following a question put by a member of the committee, Jane Collier explained that the revised policy intended for absence thresholds to be reset for a 12 month period.

The Chair summarised that this amendment allowed for employees to start again before progressing to Stage 3 and potential dismissal, therefore, was to the benefit of the employees.

(b) Hybrid Working Policy

Jane Collier introduced the new Hybrid Working Policy and explained that it replaced the previous Agile Working Policy. She highlighted that the policy had been drafted in line with the rollout of the council's Hybrid Working Programme.

She explained that the policy was well received by employees; however, some managers had accommodated further conversations with employees.

A member questioned the review period of the policy. Jane Collier assured the committee that the policy would be flexible to the operational needs of the council.

Some members discussed the emotional and mental health benefits from working in the office environment and the innovation and collaboration that can result from working closely as a team.

In response to a question from members, Jane Collier explained that at present no departments were working 100 per cent home-based.

(c) Employer Discretions Policy

Jane Collier explained to the committee that there had been no legislation change that merited amendments to the Discretionary Policy.

(d) Pay and TOIL Policy

Jane Collier introduced the relevant extract of the Pay and Toil Policy and explained that this had been updated to include a TOIL accrual limit of 37 hours (pro-rata). If employees wished to accrue more than 37 hours, this would require Director approval.

(e) Flexible Working Policy

Jane Collier explained the Flexible Working Policy was updated with the inclusion of a reference to the new Hybrid Working Styles.

Members asked questions and received answers regarding Flexitime.

(f) Fostering Policy

Jane Collier clarified that the Fostering Policy had slight amendments made.

Following a question, it was explained that at present, there were no employees who used this policy, nevertheless, the policy remained in place as the council was committed to supporting employees who become foster parents.

17 Decision taken

Following discussion, the committee **approved** all of the following Human Resources policies and arrangements:

- Promoting Attendance and Managing Sickness Absence
- Hybrid Working Policy
- Employer Discretions Policy
- Pay and TOIL Policy Extract
- Flexible Working
- Fostering Policy

The meeting started at 6.00 pm and finished at 6.20 pm.

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