

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 7 MARCH 2013

REVIEW OF THE FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Employment Committee with an update on the review of the implementation of the Flexible Working policy.

Background

2. As part of the review of terms and conditions in 2011/12, the Council introduced a new Flexible Working Policy in May 2012. The Policy replaced the contractual “Flexi-Time” scheme, with the aim of encouraging greater flexibility in line with the needs of the individual and the organisation.
3. In many services, managers and staff have embraced the new Policy and implemented innovative and modern ways of working. However, in some areas of the organisation, feedback from staff and the trade unions suggests that the removal of the flexi-scheme has actually reduced the opportunity to work flexibly.
4. Equally, in the 2012 staff survey, only 60% of staff responded positively and said that they were satisfied with the opportunities for flexible working. This result was 13.2% down on the 2010 survey. The new Flexible Working Policy was intended to provide greater opportunities for staff to manage their work life balance and work flexibly.
5. It is recognised that there are a number of benefits to the Council and individuals in promoting flexible working, including an increased work-life balance, improved morale and reduced absence. Importantly, a key benefit will also be the freeing up of spaces in the County Hall car park. The difficulties in parking has become a key issue for staff, and is regularly cited as being a stressful element of working for the Council.

Review - Outcomes

6. The review will establish how widespread flexible working opportunities are across the Council, why some staff feel they have less flexibility in their job than they are used to and establish what cultural and contractual changes are required in order for managers and staff to embrace new ways of working. The review will also address operational and technological constraints.

7. The review will involve a range of activities and mechanisms for feedback, including focus groups, workshops and surveys with staff, managers, trade unions and Workers Groups. The review will be completed by the end of April, and recommendations for implementation will be communicated to the People Strategy Board and Employment Committee in May 2013

Recommendation

8. The Employment Committee is asked to note the proposed review of the flexible working across the Council.

Background Papers

Report "Flexible Working Policy", Employment Committee, 28 February 2012

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedures

9. None.

Officers to contact

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Equal Opportunities Implications

10. An equality impact assessment was undertaken on the Flexible Working Policy with no adverse impact identified.