



**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE- 12 JUNE 2014**

**FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Committee's approval for the introduction of a revised Flexible Working Policy and Procedure.

**Background**

2. The Council recognises that flexible working is essential to the successful transformation of the Organisation's culture. It can help to increase employee motivation, reduce sickness absence, promote employee wellbeing, and attract and retain a skilled and motivated workforce.
3. The Council's aim is to move away from traditional working practices and to introduce flexible and innovative working arrangements which support the delivery of effective customer-focussed services that meet the needs of the people of Leicestershire. It is also committed to supporting employees to achieve a positive work/life balance that allows greater flexibility around when and how they work their contracted hours.
4. There are currently three documents (the "Flexible Working Policy and Procedure", Managers' Guidance on Changing the Working Arrangements of Employees and Guidance on an Employee's Right to Request Flexible Working) on the Council's intranet which provide advice and guidance to managers and employees in relation to the principles of flexible working and how to request or implement a change in working arrangements.
5. To improve the accessibility of this information, it is proposed to amalgamate the three existing documents into one comprehensive Flexible Working Policy and Procedure. This will ensure that managers and employees can view, in one place, all of the relevant Procedures that must be followed when considering a change to their own or their employees' working arrangements.
6. In addition, on 30 June 2014, the Flexible Working Regulations will be amended to extend the statutory right to request flexible working to all employees after 26 weeks' service. Currently, the right to request this only applies to those with children under the age of 17 (or 18 if the child is disabled) and certain carers. The process for dealing with such requests has also been simplified with employers now expected to consider these requests in a reasonable manner rather than to a prescriptive timetable as is currently the case. The strict business reasons on which a request can be refused will remain.

**Implementation**

7. The proposed Policy, attached as Appendix A, has been agreed by the Trade Unions.
8. If endorsed by the Committee, the Policy will become effective from 30 June 2014 when the new Flexible Working Regulations come into effect. A copy will be published on the Council's intranet for managers and employees to view.
9. Subject to the Committee's approval, and in order to promote the introduction of the revised Policy, an article will be published in Managers' Digest and a news item posted on the front page of the Council's intranet.
10. The Policy's application will be monitored through ongoing discussions with Trade Unions, HR Advisers and managers.

**Recommendation**

11. The Committee is asked to approve the introduction of the revised Flexible Working Policy and Procedure for implementation from 30 June.

**Background Papers**

None.

**Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

None.

**Officer to Contact:**

Lucy Littlefair, Corporate HR Manager  
Tel: 0116 305 6333  
Email: [lucy.littlefair@leics.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.littlefair@leics.gov.uk)

**List of Appendices**

**Appendix** - Flexible Working Policy and Procedure

**Equal Opportunities Implications**

12. An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment has been undertaken in relation to the extension of the statutory right to request flexible working to all employees with 26 weeks' service. The remainder of the Policy consists of information from existing documents which have previously been assessed.