

BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report of: Phil Adams, Executive Manager People and Public Protection
Portfolio Holder & Executive Member strategy, governance & transformation , Councillor Sam Chapman-Allen

To: Overview & scrutiny board, 19th April 2018
Breckland District Council, 17th May 2018

Author: Susie Richardson, HR Manager

Subject: Additions to the HR Policy Handbook;
- Career break

Purpose: This report presents a new policy to the HR Policy Handbook.

Recommendation(s):

- 1) That the following policy is approved;
 - a) Career break

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In January 2017, Full Council approved the Employee Handbook which contains a number of employee policies. In line with what was agreed at that meeting, two additional policies have been developed and this report seeks the approval of those additional policies.
- 1.3 Each policy outlines legal principles only and any specific details will fall within procedures. This is to enable longevity of the policies are sustainable for a longer period of time, therefore reducing the review periods and mitigate the risk of non-compliance. Where changes to legislation or constitution arise, the policies will be amended accordingly.
- 1.4 As new policies are adopted, all staff will be communicated with to raise awareness of its existence.

1.5 The new policy and a key summary of each are below:

Policy	Key summary
<p>Career break <i>Appendix 1 – Policy 3 - Special Leave, page 2</i></p>	<p>The development of a Career Break Policy/Procedure has stemmed from a request from a long serving staff member to take a Career Break. There is no scheme currently available hence the preparation of this new policy.</p> <p>Following this policy being taken to the overview and scrutiny board in march 2018 we have reviewed the eligibility for a career break and have amended as such.</p> <p>Previously an employee had to be employed for 26 weeks prior to requesting a career break but we have extended this to 1 years employment (inclusive of probation). This is a joint procedure with South Holland and both councils have amended the eligibility criteria. All other aspects of the policy remain and any agreement is at the request of the Senior Manager to agree and sign off.</p> <p>Career breaks are unpaid and may be requested by any employee so long as they meet the length of service required.</p> <p>A benchmarking exercise has been carried out with neighbouring authorities. Out of the 6 surveyed, 5 of those have had Career break schemes in place between 6 and 10 years and on average have 2 requests per year.</p> <p>It is anticipated that the Career Break policy would enhance the benefits for current and prospective employees and enable an effective retention tool.</p>

2.0 **OPTIONS**

2.1 Do Nothing

2.2 Approve the new policy as part of the HR Policy Handbook for Breckland Council

3.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)**

3.1 To mitigate risk and ensure appropriate policies are in place to deal with employee related issues in a fair and consistent manner.

4.0 **EXPECTED BENEFITS**

4.1 To mitigate risk in the application of policies.

4.2 To provide transparent, consistent and fair policies across the Council.

4.3 To actively support culture and change in a positive way

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 **Carbon Footprint/Environmental Issues**

5.1.1 None

5.2 **Constitution & Legal**

5.2.1 Amendments to relevant policies will be made as and where dictated by any change to constitutional or legal requirements.

5.2.3 The Policy Handbook is designed with the intention to reduce the risk of litigation against the Council

5.3 **Contracts**

5.3.1 None

5.4 **Corporate Priorities**

5.4.1 The policy proposals are made with the intention of supporting the Councils' corporate priority of providing the right services, at the right time, in the right way by ensuring the recruitment of high calibre individuals are in place to help deliver the corporate vision.

5.5 **Crime and Disorder**

5.5.1 None

5.6 **Equality and Diversity/Human Rights**

5.6.1 The proposed policies are designed in compliance with Equality and Diversity as per the Equality Act 2010.

5.7 **Financial**

5.7.1. None

5.8 **Health and Well-being**

5.8.1 None

5.9 **Reputation**

5.9.1 None

5.10 **Risk Management**

5.10.1 These proposals are made (in part) with the intention of reducing the risk of litigation against the Council. These proposals are made with the intention of supporting the Councils strategic position by enabling effective policy management appropriately within the bounds of the law.

5.11 **Staffing**

5.11.1 These proposals are made in order to ensure the best possible infrastructure is in place to recruit, select, retain and performance manage employees across the Council.

5.11.2 These proposals are made to ensure both staff and management are clear on relevant legislation, best practice and risk mitigation.

5.12 **Stakeholders / Consultation / Timescales**

5.12.1 Consultation has taken place with Unison

5.13 **Transformation Programme**

5.13.1 These proposals are made to support the Councils Transformation programme

6.0 **WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

6.1 It is the opinion of the Report Author that there are no areas within the community which will be affected by the recommendation

7.0 ACRONYMS

7.1 None used

Background papers:- None

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Key Decision: No

Exempt Decision: No

This report refers to a Mandatory Service

Appendices attached to this report:

Appendix 1 Policy 12-special leave