

Title of report: Approval for new and updated HR Policies

Decision maker: Chief Executive

Decision date: November 2023

Report by: HR Improvement Manager

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

Approval of the following new and updated HR policies for Herefordshire Council employees:

- Dignity & Respect at Work Policy
- Recruitment & Selection Policy

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) The Dignity & Respect at Work policy is approved and implemented from 30 November 2023
- b) The Recruitment & Selection policy is approved and implemented from 30 November 2023

Alternative options

- a) The policies are not approved or adopted. This is not recommended as these policies intend to support the development of a skilled and stable workforce while managing the council's resources effectively

Key considerations

Dignity & Respect at Work Policy

1. The Dignity & Respect at Work policy is a new policy that will supersede our Harassment and Bullying guidance. The basic procedures of the Dignity & Respect at Work policy are the same as the guidance document it succeeds, however it promotes the culture and workplace we strive for at the council, where every member of staff is respected and by making this a policy it strengthens our approach of zero tolerance of bullying and harassment in the workplace.
2. The policy covers employees and managers responsibilities, how to identify behaviours of bullying and harassment, support and resources available for employees and managers, our duty under the Equality Act and the procedures to follow in the event of a concern raised.
3. The policy revision was brought forward as an outcome from working with our Black and Asian Staff Networking Group and was announced in the Chief Executives blog on 28th July 2023.

Recruitment & Selection Policy

4. The Recruitment & Selection Policy sets out our framework for manager's to follow when recruiting to a role. The Policy revision has been brought about to include the principles of Safer Recruitment for managers to consider when running a recruitment campaign and highlight best practice.
5. The policy covers Safer Recruitment practices, manager's responsibilities when recruiting to a role and the procedure to follow throughout the recruitment cycle.

Community impact

6. Recruiting and retaining staff with essential skills and experience will support the council to deliver on the priorities and objectives set out in the County Plan. The adoption of these HR policies supports recruitment and retention, whilst ensuring the council can manage its resources effectively. Having the right workforce in place will enable us to ensure children are healthy, and inspired to achieve; and that care experienced children and young people are well supported and make good life choices.
7. The Workforce and Organisational Development Strategy 2021-2024 aims to develop an engaged, agile and resilient workforce. The adoption of the policies set out in this report will enhance our offer to staff and our employer value proposition by being an employer that people want to work for and is recognised that they support staff at times where they may need it most.

Environmental Impact

8. Whilst this is a decision on back office functions and will have minimal environmental impacts, consideration has been made to minimise waste and resource use in line with the Council's Environmental Policy.

Equality duty

9. Please state how does this decision / proposal pay due regards to our public sector equality duty as set out below [do not remove the wording in the note, from section 149, below]

Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

9. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. The council's human resources policies pay full regard to the council's responsibility as set out in the public sector equality duty and ensures that all protected characteristics are fully addressed.

Resource implications

10. There are no resource implications or direct costs identified with the introduction of the policies

Legal implications

11. This section is to be completed in its entirety by the legal services team.

Risk management

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation
Dignity & Respect at Work Policy	
Risk – There are no risks identified with the introduction of this policy	
Opportunities – The introduction of this policy will embody our zero tolerance approach to bullying and harassment in the workplace, making work a place where staff feel safe, respected and valued	
Recruitment & Selection Policy	
Risk – There is a risk that without the principles of safer recruitment being known, a person unsuitable to work with children, young people or vulnerable adults could be employed	The introduction of the policy will aid to mitigate this risk

12. These risks will be managed at a service level

Consultees

13. Consultation has been held with the trade unions, corporate leadership team and Employment Panel who are supportive of introducing these policies.

Appendices

None

Background papers

None identified

Report Reviewers Used for appraising this report:

Please note this section must be completed before the report can be published		
Governance	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.
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Procurement	Click or tap here to enter text.	Date Click or tap to enter a date.
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[Note: Please remember to overwrite or delete the guidance highlighted in grey]

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.