



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

24TH FEBRUARY 2020

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES – SHEENAGH REES

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All wards

Introduction of a Carer's Policy

1. Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to seek Member approval to introduce a Carer's Policy to support employees with caring responsibilities.

2. Background:

The Council has a responsibility for the welfare of its employees and as such recognises that some employees are carers and therefore may need extra support whilst at work to assist them with their caring responsibilities.

Carers UK estimates that there are currently six and a half million carers in the UK - a number that continues to rise. More than four million carers provide up to 19 hours of unpaid care for a family member or friend each week and of these, more than three million are still in paid work.

Employees do not legally have to notify their employer that they are a carer. However, in a healthy working environment, carers are more likely to notify someone of their responsibilities. Generally checking on an employee's wellbeing regularly during one to ones, supervisions and/or appraisals can encourage open dialogue with employees and provide opportunities for employees to raise anything that may be impacting on their general wellbeing.

When an employee informs their manager that they are a carer, the manager can take simple but effective action to enable them to balance their caring and employment responsibilities and these actions are set out in the policy.

The policy defines carers as employees with significant caring responsibilities that have a substantial impact on their working lives. These employees are responsible for the care and support of disabled, elderly or sick partners, relatives or friends who are unable to care for themselves. It distinguishes carers from employees who have childcare responsibilities as the requirements of a carer are more unpredictable and emotionally distressing.

3. Development of the Policy

The introduction of a Carers Policy was first discussed by the joint trade unions at the Local Government Services Forum. The trade unions put forward a sample policy drafted by the Employers for Carers Organisation. Using this sample policy, the attached Carers Policy (provided in **Appendix 1**) was developed and subsequently agreed by the trade unions.

4. Communication of the Policy

As this is a new policy, it is important that it is communicated widely across the Council. We will do this by including an article in the Council's newsletter In The Loop, we will place it on the HR Intranet, we will send an email to all Heads of Service requesting them to cascade details of the new policy to all their service areas and we will also advertise the policy on the payslips to ensure that all employees, whether they have an online payslip or a paper payslip, are aware of the new policy.

5. Financial Impacts:

There are no financial impacts associated with this report.

6. Integrated impact assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage assessment, attached at appendix 1 has indicated that a more in-depth assessment is not required. A summary is included below:

“A full impact is not required as there is no impact on any protected group. It also has no negative impact on bio-diversity or the Welsh Language”.

7. Valleys Communities Impacts:

No Implications

8. Workforce Impacts:

The introduction of this policy will have a positive impact on those employees across our workforce who are carers.

9. Legal Impacts:

No implications.

10. Risk Management Impacts:

No implications.

11. Consultation:

There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item. The proposed changes have been communicated with the Trade Unions via the Local Government Services Forum who were fully supportive of the introduction of this policy.

12. Recommendations:

It is **RECOMMENDED** that Members **APPROVE** the introduction of the Carers Policy.

FOR DECISION

13. Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Carers Policy

Appendix 2 – First Stage Integrated Impact Assessment

14. List of background papers:

None.

15. Officer Contact

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