



Surrey Heath Borough Council
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Wednesday, 24 January 2024

To: The Members of the **Employment Committee**
(Councillors: David Whitcroft (Chair), Shaun Macdonald (Vice Chair), Alan Ashbery, Lisa Finan-Cooke and Josh Thorne)

In accordance with the Substitute Protocol at Part 4 of the Constitution, Members who are unable to attend this meeting should give their apologies and arrange for a substitute to attend. Members should also inform their group leader of the arrangements made.

Preferred substitutes: Councillors Mark Gordon and Julie Hoad

Dear Councillor,

A meeting of the **Employment Committee** will be held at Council Chamber, Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road, Camberley, GU15 3HD on **Thursday, 1 February 2024 at 7.00 pm**. The agenda will be set out as below.

Please note that this meeting will be recorded.

Yours sincerely

Damian Roberts

Chief Executive

AGENDA

Pages

Part 1 (Public)

- | | | |
|----------|--|--------------|
| 1 | Apologies for Absence | |
| 2 | Minutes of the Previous Meeting | 3 - 4 |
| | To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2023 (copy attached). | |
| 3 | Declarations of Interest | |

Members are invited to declare any interests they may have with respect to matters which are to be considered at this meeting. Members who consider they may have an interest are invited to consult the Monitoring Officer or the Democratic Services Officer prior to the meeting.

4	Speak Up Policy and Procedure	5 - 18
5	Politically Restricted Posts and Guidance	19 - 26
6	Carers' Policy	27 - 36
7	Recruitment Policy	37 - 98
8	Agile Working Policy	99 - 122
9	Pensions Discretions Policy	123 - 140
10	Work Programme	141 - 142
11	Exclusion of Press and Public	

The Committee is advised to RESOLVE that, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act, as set out below:

<u>Item</u>	<u>Paragraph(s)</u>
12	1. Information relating to any individual.

**Part 2
(Exempt)**

12	Annual Report
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**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Employment Committee held on 16
November 2023**

+ Cllr David Whitcroft (Chairman)
- Cllr Shaun Macdonald (Vice Chairman)

- Cllr Alan Ashbery	- Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam
+ Cllr Lisa Finan-Cooke	+ Cllr Josh Thorne
+ Cllr Mark Gordon	+ Cllr Victoria Wheeler
+ Cllr Leanne MacIntyre	

+ Present

- Apologies for absence presented

Substitutes: Cllr Mary Glauert (In place of Cllr Sashi Mylvaganam), Cllr Helen Whitcroft (In place of Cllr Alan Ashbery) and Cllr Richard Wilson (In place of Cllr Shaun Macdonald)

Members in Attendance: Cllr Cliff Betton, Cllr Lewis Mears, Cllr Pat Tedder and Cllr Valerie White

Officers Present: Damian Roberts, Julie Simmonds, Rachel Whillis.

14/EC Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2023 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

15/EC Exclusion of Press and Public

In accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public were excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the ground that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as set out below:

Minute	Paragraph(s)
16/EC	3 - Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

16/EC Pay Settlement 2024/25

The Committee was informed that a series of meetings had taken place with the Joint Staff Consultative Group to negotiate a pay settlement for 2024/25. It was reported that following these negotiations the Consultative Group had agreed to request a consolidated 4% pay increase for 2024/25. This had been informed by presentations from Staff Representatives detailing comparative pay at other local authorities, cost of living data, and views from staff on how a pay increase would impact their decision to seek alternative employment. This had been balanced with

recognising the Council's budgetary position, and factors including the impact any award would have on recruitment and retention of staff.

During negotiations, Staff Representatives had requested an additional day's leave, to be taken as part of the Christmas week where the Council Offices were shut. Member Representatives on the Consultative Group had felt unable to endorse the request; they had, however, agreed for it to be referred to the Committee for consideration.

The Committee was reminded that the Christmas closure arrangements provided for the Council to provide an additional day's leave in exchange for staff taking a day of leave, an arrangement that had been formalised as a contractual entitlement in October 2022.

Members debated the request and noted the opportunity costs associated with the decision, along with the recent formalisation of an additional day's leave. Consideration was given to granting an additional day's leave in 2023 only but this was not supported by a majority of the Committee. Following discussion the Committee decided not to agree the Staff Representatives' request to award an additional day's leave during the Christmas period to be incorporated into Terms and Conditions of Employment.

RECOMMENDED to Full Council that a consolidated 4% pay award be agreed for 2024/25.

RESOLVED that the request from Staff Representatives that an additional day's leave, to be taken during the closure of the Council Offices during the Christmas week, and incorporated in Staff Terms & Conditions of Employment not be agreed.

Chair

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Employment Committee
1st February 2024

Speak Up Policy

Head of Service: Sally Kipping – Head of HR, Performance & Communications
Report Author: Julie Simmonds – HR Manager, Bobbie Ludlow, HR Advisor
Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: N/A

Summary and purpose

This report provides the Employment Committee with details of a revised Speak up Policy and Procedure following a scheduled review. All changes in the Policy are track changed for ease.

Recommendation

The Employment Committee is advised to RESOLVE that the amended Speak Up Policy, as attached as Annex A to this report, be adopted.

1. Background and Supporting Information

- 1.1 This policy has been reviewed to ensure we keep a process which allows staff to speak up in any situation where they feel uncomfortable with what they may have witnessed, information received or found, or how they are treated. As an organisation we want staff to feel safe and know they can reach out so having such a policy in place and up to date is really important.

2. Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 To ensure that all SHBC staff are aware of the Speak up Policy and who or how they can reach out.

3. Proposal and Alternative Options

- 3.1 It is proposed that the revised Speak up Policy and Procedure is adopted, with or without any further amendments considered appropriate.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 No increase of resources required.

5. Section 151 Officer Comments:

5.1 This Speak up Policy and Procedure was taken to CMT for review and comment on 31st October 2023

6. Legal and Governance Issues

6.1 No further matters arising.

7. Monitoring Officer Comments:

7.1 This Speak up Policy and Procedure was taken to CMT for review and comment on 31st October 2023

8. Other Considerations and Impacts

Environment and Climate Change

8.1 Supports the Council's pledge.

Equalities and Human Rights

8.2 Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed.

Risk Management

8.3 n/a

Community Engagement

8.4 Not applicable.

Annexes

Annex A: Speak Up Policy.

Human Resources

Speak Up Policy and Procedure (formerly Whistle-blowing)



November 2019 2023

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Knoll Road, Camberley GU15 3HD
human.resources@surreyheath.gov.uk



Policy and Procedure

I Introduction

Surrey Heath Borough Council ~~sets high standards of quality, honesty, openness and accountability. promotes a positive climate for all staff based on personal respect and dignity to prevent inappropriate behaviour starting.~~ However, there are times when staff at th ~~This policy clearly outlines that there is a zero tolerance for any type of inappropriate behaviour.~~

The Council may become concerned about something that is happening at work. Usually these concerns can be easily resolved and individuals can carry on as normal. Examples of some possible concerns can be found in Section 2 – Definitions which can be of assistance but this is not intended to be an exhaustive list. When staff raise a concern (a qualifying disclosure) about danger or illegality that affects others, for example members of the public, this is known as Speaking Up or as previously referred to as Whistle-blowing.

This policy and procedure is designed to encourage staff to raise any serious concerns, whilst providing protection to staff, who make disclosures to the Council, or to an external party outside the management structure of the Council, and explains the procedure to follow. Surrey Heath Borough Council will treat all such disclosures in an appropriate and sensitive manner. Those making qualifying disclosures (see section 2) are protected against dismissal or detriment by The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.



2 Definitions



Speaking Up is the confidential disclosure by staff of any wrong-doing that they may encounter in the workplace.



Disclosures are deemed to be “qualifying disclosures” which is a term used to identify the categories of information which staff will be able to disclose to a suitable person without fear of reprisal, provided the disclosure is made in good faith. A qualifying disclosure is defined as one which is made in good faith and shows one or more of the following:-

- A criminal offence has been or is likely to be committed;
- Financial malpractice or impropriety or fraud;
- Failure to comply with any legal obligation or statutes including breach of employment contract or professional regulations or Council Governance procedures;
- A miscarriage of justice has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur;
- Dangers to Health or Safety or damage to the environment;
- Improper conduct or unethical behaviour;
- Direct or indirect bullying or harassment;
- Deliberate attempts to ~~cover up~~ conceal any of the above

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. These acts can be in the past, present or future so that, for example, a disclosure that relates to environmental damage that has happened, is happening or is likely to happen. The authority will take any concerns raised seriously.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all those who perform work for Surrey Heath Borough Council and for the purposes of this policy will be termed ‘staff’:



- The Chief Executive, ~~Executive Heads~~[Strategic Directors](#) and Service Heads
- Employees (who are either full or part-time)
- Agency workers, Casual workers and Volunteers
- Contractors and sub-contractors
- Work experience staff, Interns or other trainees

This policy is in addition to the Council's grievance procedures and Financial Regulations: Anti-Fraud ~~policy~~ and [Mental Health policy](#).

4 Policy Statement

Surrey Heath Borough Council recognises that some concerns may be extremely sensitive. This policy and procedure enables staff to confidentially raise concerns within the Council but also has recourse to an external party (see paragraph 7.2 for details) outside the management structure of the Council. This policy and procedure provides staff with protection from victimisation, harassment or disciplinary action as a result of any disclosure where the disclosure is made in good faith and is not made maliciously or for personal gain.

[The Employment Rights Act 1996 provides protection for staff and](#)

~~t~~This Council encourages staff who suspect wrong-doing to report it, as this helps perpetuate ~~our~~ ~~the~~ integrity ~~of the Council~~, even if the suspicion proves unfounded.

5 Equality Assessment Policy

The Council's Equality Scheme demonstrates its commitment to equality internally and externally and ensures that all sections of the community are given an



opportunity to contribute to the wellbeing of the community. An equality impact assessment has been carried out on the Speak Up Policy and Procedure.

The Council ensures that consultation is representative of the community and that consideration is given on how to consult hard to reach groups and will positively learn from responses.

6 Policy Principles

The identity of the staff member will be protected confidential at all stages in any internal concern. However, the Council cannot guarantee that this will be retained if, for example, external legal action results from the disclosure. The Council is not accountable for maintaining anonymity where the staff member/s has told others of the alleged concern.

The Council encourages staff to put their name to a disclosure they make and this will remain confidential however, concerns raised anonymously will be considered and assessed where sufficient information is provided to allow a review of the allegation. This could make the concern more difficult to investigate thoroughly and give feedback on the outcome.

Disclosure of other wrong-doing is also covered by this policy where it is of general malpractice, gross misconduct, breach of the Council's Constitution, breach of Audit Regulations or breach of the codes of conduct of all relevant professional institutions.

7 Procedure for raising concerns



7.1 Reporting concerns can be very daunting and members of staff may find the following checklist a useful guide:

- Don't ignore your concerns;
- Don't try to investigate things yourself. Be clear about what is worrying you:
- WHO: the target of the allegation and if there are others who know about the alleged conduct
- WHAT: what is alleged to have been broken e.g. Policy, law etc
- WHY: what may be gained/benefit from the alleged action
- WHEN: timeframe if known of the alleged incident/s
- Make notes of what you have seen, heard or felt;
- Be prepared to hand over any notes and evidence you may have;
- Act quickly to avoid the concern becoming a major issue;
- Don't feel that you are "telling tales";

Most importantly of all: don't worry, don't suffer in silence

If members of staff are unsure about raising a concern, they can get independent advice from the [union or staff representative \(Tel: 01276 707319\)](#) or Protect (formerly Public Concern at Work) on Tel: 020 3117 2520 [HYPERLINK](#)

"<https://protect-advice.org.uk/>"<https://protect-advice.org.uk/>

7.2 Reporting a concern

Wherever possible any concern should be raised with the appropriate line manager in the first instance. Where the concern involves that line manager, or the staff member feels that the line manager is not the appropriate person, the concern should be raised with one of the following:



- Any ~~Strategic Director~~Executive Head or Head of Service ~~or~~
- Head of Legal, Monitoring Officer (may be the same person as the Head of Legal) ~~or Corporate Enforcement & Audit Manager~~ or Human Resources
- National Audit Office at <https://www.nao.org.uk/contact-us/whistleblowing-disclosures> ~~or~~
- If staff members feel that their concern cannot be raised internally or their attempts to do so have not proven successful they may wish to consider raising the matter externally with our external auditors, BDO (Tel:020 7486 5888)
- Chair or Deputy Chair of Employment Committee (see Member Officer Protocol)

Concerns should be raised in writing setting out:

- The background and history of the concerns
- Giving names, dates and places where possible
- The reason for making the disclosure

Within 10 working days of a concern being raised the individual with whom the employee raised the matter with will write to the employee setting out:

- Acknowledge that the concern has been received
- Indicating how the matter will be dealt with
- Give an estimate of how long it will take to get a final response
- Tell the employee if an investigation has been started

8 Investigation procedure



- 8.1 The Head of Paid Service has given overall responsibility for the maintenance and operation of this policy to the ~~Executive~~ Head of HR, Performance and Communications Transformation and/or the ~~Head of Legal or the Monitoring Officer~~. The Head of Legal Services will delegate the concern to the appropriate person or persons either within Human Resources, or Audit and Corporate Enforcement Team, who will then be the Investigating Officer/s for the case. The Head of Legal Services maintains a record of concerns raised and the outcomes, but in a form which does not endanger the individual's confidentiality and will report as necessary to the Council.
- 8.2 The investigation of the concern will commence as soon as practically possible on its receipt.
- 8.3 The investigating officer will meet with the member of staff who made the disclosure and consider what action will be appropriate. The action taken by the Council may involve an informal review, an internal inquiry or a formal investigation. If misconduct is discovered as a result of any investigation under this procedure the Council's disciplinary procedure will be used, in addition to any appropriate external measures. The Council could decide that the matters raised may be referred to the external Auditor or form the subject of an independent inquiry. The overriding principle, which the Council will have in mind, is the public interest.
- 8.4 The investigating officer will inform the person against whom the complaint is made as soon as is practically possible. This person will be informed of their right to be accompanied by a Staff or Trade Union Representative or appropriate colleague who is not implicated or connected with the case at any future interview or hearing held under the provision of these procedures.



Where appropriate, the matters raised may:

- be investigated by Management, Internal Audit or through the disciplinary process
- be referred to the Police
- be referred to Social Services
- be referred to the External Auditor
- form the subject of an independent inquiry
- be referred to the appropriate Committee of the Council

8.5 All concerns will be treated in the strictest confidence and every effort will be made not to reveal the identity of the staff member if that is their wish. At the appropriate time, however, the identity may need to be revealed as they may be required as a witness. In such circumstances the member of staff concerned will be informed of such action/s. Surrey Heath Borough Council will not knowingly reveal the identity without that staff member having prior knowledge and given consent, except where required by law.

8.6 Wherever possible and subject to data protection and legal constraints, the staff member will be given feedback on the outcome of the investigation. If the decision is taken not to act, an explanation will be given.

8.7 If the allegation is made in good faith, but it is not confirmed by the investigation, no detrimental action will be taken against the staff member making the allegation. If, however, the staff member makes an allegation frivolously, maliciously or for personal gain, disciplinary action may be taken.



Although a staff member making a disclosure is not expected to prove beyond doubt, the truth of an allegation, they will need to demonstrate to the person contacted that there are reasonable grounds for their concern.

- 8.8 Details of the matter, the findings of the subsequent investigation and the action taken will be recorded and placed on a register held by the Head of Paid Service. An annual report may be given to the Employment Committee to advise them of the number of incidents reported ~~and the Service Area~~. No personal or detailed information regarding each case will be provided; it is purely for reporting purposes and to detect any possible patterns.

9. Review

- 9.1 This policy and procedure will be subject to a formal review on an annual basis or earlier by Human Resources.

This policy is available in large print if requested.

Document revisions

■ Document revised (date)	■ Details of revisions made	■ Version



■ March, 2018	■ Public Concern at Work email address amended	■ 2
■	■ Audit & Investigation Manager's Title updated	■
■	■ Audit Commission deleted. Replaced with National Audit Office details	■
■	■ External Auditors details updated	■
■ November, 2019	■ Name change, procedural changes and contact information changes	■

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Surrey Heath Borough Council
Employment Committee
1st February 2024

Politically Restricted Posts

Head of Service Sally Kipping – Head of HR, Performance & Communications
Report Author: Julie Simmonds – HR Manager, Alex Allen, HR Advisor
Key Decision: no
Wards Affected: n/a

Summary and purpose

This report provides the Employment Committee with details of a new Politically Restricted Posts Guide. Within Local Authorities we have politically restricted posts and this guide shares information to staff as to why this information is required and what posts are affected.

Recommendation

The Employment Committee is advised to RESOLVE that the Politically Restricted Posts and Guidance policy, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, be adopted.

1. Background and Supporting Information

1.1 This guide has been prepared so there is clarity around affected posts and why they have been included in the list of politically restricted posts.

2. Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 To ensure that all SHBC staff are aware of the Politically Restricted Posts Guide and roles that are affected and why to show a clear process.

3. Proposal and Alternative Options

3.1 It is proposed that this Politically Restricted Posts Guide is adopted, with or without any further amendments considered appropriate.

4. Resource Implications

4.1 No increase of resources required.

5. Section 151 Officer Comments:

5.1 This Politically Restricted Guide was taken to CMT for review and comment on 31st October 2023

6. Legal and Governance Issues

6.1 The requirements for politically restricted posts are set out in the Local Government & Housing Act 1989.

7. Monitoring Officer Comments:

7.1 This Politically Restricted Guide was taken to CMT for review and comment on 31st October 2023

8. Other Considerations and Impacts

Environment and Climate Change

8.1 Supports the Council's pledge.

Equalities and Human Rights

8.2 Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed.

Risk Management

8.3 n/a

Community Engagement

8.4 Not applicable.

Annexes

Annex A – Politically Restricted Posts Guidance



Human Resources

POLITICALLY RESTRICTED POSTS AND GUIDANCE



October 2023

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Knoll Road, Camberley GU15 3HD
human.resources@surreyheath.gov.uk



1. Introduction

Under the provisions of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (LGHA) certain posts are 'politically restricted' within local authorities. Individuals in politically restricted posts are effectively prevented from engaging in certain political activities as prescribed by the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990.

The law aims to ensure the political impartiality of local government employees who hold posts involving duties of a politically sensitive nature.

Politically restricted posts fall into two broad categories; specified posts or sensitive posts (posts with defined duties), further details are outlined below. This not only debars post holders from holding or standing for elected office but also prevents them from the following:

- be a candidate or prospective candidate for election as an MP, MEP or Councillor
- 'hold office' in a political party
- participate in the general management of a political party or its branch
- act on behalf of a political party or its branch
- 'canvass' at elections for a political party or candidate for election
- speak or write in a manner, which appears to be designed to affect public support for a political party

Under sections 3 (a) and (b) of the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990, for every employee that holds a politically restricted post, the restrictions stated above are incorporated into their terms and conditions of employment.



No Officers are appointed under section 9 of the Local Government Housing Act 1989. However if at any time any such Officers are appointed, additional terms and conditions of employment would be incorporated into employment contracts as required by section 3 (c) of the Local Government Officers (Political Restrictions) Regulations 1990.

Surrey Heath Borough Council is required to produce and regularly review a list of politically restricted posts (Appendix 1). This list will be held and maintained by Human Resources and employees will be notified personally of any amendments that affect their post.

This is a condition of appointment and any job adverts will indicate if the post is politically restricted at point of recruitment.

2. Specified Posts

The specified posts, currently in operation at Surrey Heath Borough Council are:

- The Head of Paid Service (s4 LGHA)
- Non-statutory chief officers (officers reporting to the Head of Paid Service, excluding secretarial/clerical support staff) (s7 LGHA)
- The Monitoring Officer (s5 LGHA)
- The Chief Finance Officer (Section 151) (s151 LGA 1972)
- Heads of Service (reporting directly to Statutory & Non-Statutory Chief Officers (s8 LGHA)
- Officers exercising delegated powers, i.e. persons whose posts are for the time being specified by the authority in a list maintained in accordance with S100G(2) of the LGA 1972
- Assistants to political groups (Section 2 and 9 LGHA)



3. Sensitive Posts

A sensitive post is one which meets one or both of the following duties related criteria:

- Giving advice on a regular basis to the authority itself, to any committee or sub-committee of the authority or to any joint committee on which the authority is represented; or where the authority are operating executive arrangements, to the executive of the authority; or any committee of that executive; or to any member of that executive who is also a member of the authority; and / or
- Communicate on behalf of the authority on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters.

4. Right of Appeal

4.1 Specified posts – Specified posts are automatically subject to restrictions on public politically activity and as such, there is no right of appeal.

4.2 Sensitive posts – the Chief Executive (as Head of Paid Service) has the authority to grant exemptions from political restrictions. Employees wishing to appeal should write to the Head of HR, Performance and Communications setting out the reasons to support their request to remove political restrictions on their post and provide a copy of their job profile. The Head of HR, Performance and Communications will then provide written advice to the Head of Paid Service to facilitate the decision. There is no further right of appeal to this decision.

5. Additional Restrictions

5.1 Restrictions on members becoming officers

A local authority cannot appoint as an employee in any capacity, any councillor who is currently a member of that authority or who had been a member in the previous 12 months (s.116 LGA 1972)

5.2 Restrictions on officers becoming members



No employee, regardless of whether they are in a politically restricted post or not, may be elected or hold office as a member of the local authority by which they are employed.

Appendix I

Specified Posts at Surrey Heath Borough Council
Head of Paid Service
Chief Executive
Statutory Chief Officers
Monitoring Officer (N.B. This may be part of another post)
S151 Officer (N.B. This may be part of another post)
Non-Statutory Chief Officers
Strategic Director of Finance and Customer Service
Strategic Director of Environment and Community
Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Head of HR, Performance and Communications
Head of Property and Economic Development
Reportees to Statutory and Non-Statutory Chief Officers
Head of Planning
Revenues and Benefits Manager
Chief Accountant
Customer Services Manager
Senior Transaction and System Accountant
Senior Auditor
Democratic Services Manager
Principal Solicitor (Litigation)
Principal Solicitor (Property and Planning)
Community Development Manager
HR Manager
ICT Manager – Digital Development
ICT Manager – Network and Security
Communications Manager
Organisational Development Manager
Technical Services Manager



Regeneration Manager
Property Asset Manager
Economic Development Manager
Corporate Enforcement Manager
Partnerships Director (JWS)
Environmental Health and Licencing Manager
Recreation and Leisure Services Manager
Housing Services Manager
Family Support Team Manager

Sensitive Posts at Surrey Heath Borough Council

Senior Democratic Services Officers
Democratic Services Officers
Civic Support and Events Officer
Communications Officers
Digital Communications Officer
Digital Communications Administrators
Senior Solicitor
Development Manager
Development Management Team Leaders
Planning Policy and Conservation Manager
Planning Policy and Conservation Team Leader
Principal Planning Policy Officer
Senior Planning Policy Officer
Planning Policy Officers



Surrey Heath Borough Council
Employment Committee
1st February 2024

Carers' Policy

Head of Service Sally Kipping – Head of HR, Performance & Communications
Report Author: Julie Simmonds, HR Manager and Alex Allen, HR Advisor
Key Decision: no
Wards Affected: n/a

Summary and purpose

This report provides the Employment Committee with details of a new Carer's Policy which details a new provision for staff with caring responsibilities beyond our Family Friendly Policy which is aimed towards children. It is to support the increasing number of staff who have to balance work obligations alongside caring responsibilities for say an elderly relative. It is also preparing for the new [Carer's Leave Act 2023](#) which comes into force on 6th April 2024.

Recommendation

The Employment Committee is advised to RESOLVE that the Carers' Policy, as set out at Annex A to this report, be adopted.

1. Background and Supporting Information

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to have a Policy where staff feel supported and can give them options for dealing with situations as they may arise. This assistance can help the wellbeing of our staff with the aim of allowing them the time they may need to deal with caring responsibilities and the burdens these can bring.

2. Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 The Carers' Policy is aimed to support our staff with balancing work obligations and caring responsibilities which could lead to stress and the possibility of sickness absence.

3. Proposal and Alternative Options

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Carers' Policy is adopted, , with or without any further amendments considered appropriate.

4. Resource Implications

4.1 No increase of resources required.

5. Section 151 Officer Comments:

5.1 This Carers' Policy has been to CMT for review and comments.

6. Legal and Governance Issues

6.1 No further matters arising.

7. Monitoring Officer Comments:

7.1 This Carers' Policy has been to CMT for review and comments.

8. Other Considerations and Impacts

Environment and Climate Change

8.1 Supports the Council's pledge.

Equalities and Human Rights

8.2 Equalities Impact Assessment will be completed.

Risk Management

8.3 n/a

Community Engagement

8.4 Not applicable.

Annexes

Annex A – Carers' Policy



Human Resources

CARERS' POLICY



January 2024

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Knoll Road, Camberley GU15 3HD
human.resources@surreyheath.gov.uk



1. Introduction

This policy sets out Surrey Heath Borough Council's commitment to supporting employees who are Carers and the support that we offer them to combine work with care. It should be read in conjunction with the [leave and special leave](#) and flexible working policies and the staff health and wellbeing information on Warbler.

2. Purpose and Scope

Many of our staff will be juggling care responsibilities with work and family life. We seek, wherever possible, to support and assist employees to balance their caring responsibilities with their work. This assistance can be beneficial to both the employee's wellbeing and service delivery, and can help employees with caring responsibilities to remain in work.

It is recognised that not all carers will require the same type of support and that their requirements may change as their dependant's circumstances change. The council has a duty and commitment to ensure that no discrimination (whether directly or indirectly) occurs relating to any personal protected characteristics as outlined in the Equality Act 2010 [Gov.UK Equality Act 2010: Guidance](#)

Human Resources can provide advice and guidance to employees and managers on the application of this policy. Employees with caring responsibilities are encouraged to identify themselves as a carer to their manager. Their status as a carer will remain confidential if they wish, but it is helpful for the manager to be aware in case support is needed by the employee.

3. Definition of a carer

A carer is an individual who provides a substantial amount of unpaid care on a regular basis for another person who is dependent upon their care or support; it can also be an individual who provides more occasional support to cope with changes in circumstances or the health of a dependant. This could include care



for a spouse, partner, parent, sibling, child or other dependant (including a friend or neighbour) because of their illness, frailty, disability, or a mental health problem.

A 'Kinship Carer' is the relative or friend of a child, who is not the child's parent who looks after the child in the carers' home on a full-time or 'most of the time' basis, typically because their parents aren't able to care for them. A 'kinship carer' could be a grandparent, older sibling, aunt, uncle, family friend or neighbour.

The activities that carers undertake are wide ranging, including but not limited to:

- Emotional support
- Help with personal care
- Help with mobility
- Accompanying to medical and other appointments
- Being a careline responder for emergencies
- Help with routine household tasks such as shopping, cooking, cleaning etc.

4. Carers' Circumstances

4.1 Carers' needs differ from the needs of employees with routine childcare responsibilities. Caring can be unpredictable and emotionally upsetting. An employee may acquire caring responsibilities overnight, for example when a relative or friend has a stroke, or caring responsibilities may develop over time, for example when a friends relative or friend has a debilitating long term health condition.

4.2 With routine childcare, the child's needs become more predictable as they grow older, go to school and become more independent. Caring



responsibilities may increase or change as medical conditions develop. For example an elderly parent might become more frail and dependent over time, and a disabled child may continue to have significant support when they become an adult, or their support needs may change as they become older.

5. Support available for unexpected caring emergencies

5.1 Emergency time off for dependants

Employees have a right to take a reasonable period of unpaid time off work to deal with a sudden problem or emergency involving a dependant. A dependant is the spouse, partner, child or parent of the employee or someone who depends on an employee for care. This type of leave may be used to deal with an immediate issue such as an unexpected breakdown in care arrangements, and to make longer term arrangements. There is no right in law to paid time off for family emergencies.

6. Support available for longer term caring responsibilities

6.1 Flexible Working

As a council, we offer various types of flexible working options including part-time, flexi-time, job share, working from home, requesting specific start and finish times and nine-day fortnight. These are designed to help employees ensure they have an appropriate work-life balance, whilst ensuring business needs are met.



Further information on the options available can be found in the Flexible Working Policy and Leave and Special Leave Policy.

6.2 Carers' Leave

Employees who are carers are able to take one week's unpaid leave each year for the purpose of caring for a dependant, or arranging care for a dependant, with long-term mental or physical health needs. The leave may be taken as a block of consecutive days or as non-consecutive, half-days or full days.

The right to apply for carers leave is a day one employment right and employees must notify the council, in writing of their intention to take carer's leave. This notice must include the dates the employee intends to take and confirmation of the employees entitlement to take the leave. An employee must give at least twice the amount of notice than the period of leave requested or three days' notice, whichever is longest.

6.3 Sabbaticals

Employees with continuous employment with the council of at least two years can apply for a period of unpaid leave for a sabbatical between one to six months in length. Employees do not have to resign from the council whilst on a sabbatical and continuous service will not be affected. Employees will return to their substantive post at the end of the sabbatical, if the post still exists.

If a service restructure is undertaken during the sabbatical period then the employee will be consulted in accordance with the [Organisational Change Policy](#).

6.4 Parental Leave

Employees with one year's continuous service who have parental responsibilities are entitled to take unpaid time off work to look after a child (aged under 18), or to make arrangements for the child's welfare. It is intended to cover matters which can be foreseen, as opposed to sudden emergencies. The employed parents of a child under the age of 18 each have the right to take up to 18 weeks



parental leave for each child until the child's 18th birthday, with a maximum of four weeks of parental leave in any one year.

6.5 Other Leave Options

Employees with caring commitments may need time off work to meet their caring responsibilities. For example, they may need to attend medical appointments with a dependant or deal with a dependant's discharge from hospital. In such circumstances, they should seek the prior consent of their line manager.

Employees should discuss with their line manager any known leave needs relating to their caring commitments. This will enable the manager to plan work and other leave arrangements. Line managers will, where possible, approve annual leave requests from employees who wish to take time off to meet their caring responsibilities.

Where possible, Carers should book appointments that they need to attend with a dependant at the start or end of the working day or outside core hours to minimise disruption to work. However, it is recognised that this is not always within the Carer's control, particularly with medical appointments and operations.

Carers may benefit from flexible leave arrangements (in addition to flexible working arrangements) to manage all aspects of their caring role. The Council offers carers the following additional leave options

- Flexitime
- Time off in lieu
- Annual leave
- Compassionate leave – If dependant become seriously ill



7. Responsibilities

7.1 Line Managers

Line managers have a critical role to play in ensuring that any employees are well supported and managed if they need to take time out in order to manage their caring responsibilities. Each Carer's situation requires a different response from the manager and managers should take into account the whole range of organisational support available when putting in place support for carers.

Employees need to be confident that they will not be treated less favourably if they take up the organisation's support for Carers and it is vital that managers approach these conversations with employees in a supportive and sensitive manner. Managers should create a workplace culture that is supportive of Carers, by encouraging employees to make use of the support offered to Carers and encouraging discussion around Carers' issues.

Managers will treat all discussions and requests relating to care responsibilities in a confidential manner and should always give sympathetic consideration to requests for support from those who have such responsibilities, based on a shared understanding of the situation and its potential impact on the employee and the service.

8. Information and Support

8.1 Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

The Employee Assistance Programme provides confidential, independent and unbiased information and guidance for home and work issues. More information on how to access the programme can be found [here](#).



8.2 Carer's Assessment

Carers have a legal right to have a carer's assessment. This assessment is usually carried out by the Local Authority in which the carer resides. [Carer's assessments - Social care and support guide - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

8.3 Website links to external carer organisations

These links will take you to organisations that offer support and guidance to carers:

www.actionforcarers.org.uk

<https://www.surreycc.gov.uk/carers>

www.carersuk.org

www.mind.org.uk

www.independentage.org

<http://www.carers.org/>



Surrey Heath Borough Council
Employment Committee
1st February 2024

Recruitment Policy

Head of Service: Sally Kipping – Head of HR, Performance & Communications
Report Author: Julie Simmonds – HR Manager and Jo Hill, HR Advisor
Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: n/a

Summary and purpose

This report provides the Employment Committee on our Recruitment Policy following a review with the aim of giving managers more information and options which is also linked to our intranet, Warbler. The purpose is to ensure Managers think of alternatives when a post becomes vacant as opposed to thinking they need to recruit like for like. We want to give staff opportunities to broaden their knowledge and develop within SHBC wherever we can give these opportunities.

All changes to the policy are tracked change for ease.

Recommendation

The Committee is advised to RESOLVE that the revised Recruitment Policy, as set out at Annex A to this report, be adopted.

1. Background and Supporting Information

1.1 The Recruitment Policy has been reviewed to update information and also include:

1.1.1 Career Grades - We have used Career Grades within SHBC for a number of years and wish for this to become more of an option for consideration when a role becomes vacant within the organisation. This will support either internal staff or external recruitment with growing in a role and their salary increasing as their knowledge and experience grows until they reach the ultimate grade given to the role.

1.1.2 Secondments - We have also included secondments as another alternative for filling vacancies as they may arise we can give staff an

opportunity to broaden their knowledge, develop their skills and enhance their professional development.

2. Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 To give Managers and staff greater opportunities and clarity around different options for filling a vacant post. It is also to provide this information to Managers and staff both through this policy but through Warbler for consistency.

3. Proposal and Alternative Options

- 3.1 To recommend this Recruitment Policy to Employment Committee for adoption.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 n/a

5. Section 151 Officer Comments:

- 5.1 This policy was taken to CMT for their comments on 12th December 2023

6. Legal and Governance Issues

- 6.1 No further matters arising.

7. Monitoring Officer Comments:

- 7.1 This policy was taken to CMT for their comments on 12th December 2023

8. Other Considerations and Impacts

Environment and Climate Change

- 8.1 n/a

Equalities and Human Rights

- 8.2 Equality Impact Assessment will be completed

Risk Management

- 8.3 No matters arising.

Community Engagement

- 8.4 n/a

Annexes

Annex A - Recruitment Policy

Background Papers

n/a

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Human Resources

RECRUITMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE



November 2023

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Knoll Road, Camberley GU15 3HD
human.resources@surreyheath.gov.uk



Contents

1. Introduction
2. Scope
3. Policy Statement
4. Equality Impact Assessment
5. Principles & Aims
6. Promoting Equality & Diversity
7. [Career Grades](#)
8. Approval to Hire
 - 8.1. New Roles (or those changed by >33%)
 - 8.2. Existing Roles (or those changed by <33%)
 - 8.3. Staffing Requests
9. Job [DescriptionsProfiles](#)
 - 9.1 Purpose
 - 9.2 Structure & Style
 - 9.3 Writing New Job [DescriptionsProfiles](#)
 - 9.4 Reviewing Existing Job [DescriptionsProfiles](#)
10. Person Specifications [\(included within the Job Profile\)](#)
 - 10.1. Purpose
 - 10.2. Devising Selection Criteria
11. Advertisements
 - 11.1 Purpose
 - 11.2 Duration
 - 11.3 Timings
 - 11.4 Advert Placement
 - 11.5 Advert Process
 - 11.6 Structure and Style
 - 11.7 Example Advert
 - 11.8 Avoiding Discrimination



12.Shortlisting

- 12.1. Purpose
- 12.2. Shortlisting Process
- 12.3. Shortlisting Tips
- 12.4. Avoiding Discrimination

13.Selection Tests

- 13.1. Purpose
- 13.2. Guidance
- 13.3. Types of Selection Measures
- 13.4. Psychometric Questionnaires
- 13.5. Selection Measure Validation
- 13.6. Reasonable Adjustments
- 13.7. Selection Measure Preparation
- 13.8. Selection Measure Results

14.Interviews

- 14.1. Purpose
- 14.2. Interview Panel
- 14.3. Interview Preparation
- 14.4. Core Interview Questions
- 14.5. Interview Packs
- 14.6. Interview Documents
- 14.7. Candidates with Disabilities
- 14.8. Interview Guidance for Candidates with Disabilities

15.Interview Questions

- 15.1. Purpose
- 15.2. Interview Structure
- 15.3. Types of Interview Questions
- 15.4. Questions to Avoid
- 15.5. Keeping Control
- 15.6. Closing the Interview

16.Feedback

- 16.1. Purpose



- 16.2. Composing Feedback
- 16.3. Data Protection
- 17. Interview Decision & Offer of Employment
- 18. Post-Offer Recruitment Process

The Baseline Personnel Security Standard BPSS-Compliant Pre-Employment Checks

- 19. Background and Process
- 20. Identity & Immigration Status Verification
- 21. Employment History/Occupational Status Verification
- 22. Incomplete Employment/Occupational History
- 23. Criminal Record Checks
- 24. Application Procedure for ~~Tier 1 and 2~~ Disclosures and Barring Services (DBS) certification
- 25. Selecting an Appropriate Disclosure Level for the Role
- 26. Local Government Continuous Service
- 27. Medical Clearance
- 28. Successful Clearance
- 28.29. Prior to joining Surrey Heath Borough Council
- 29.30. Induction

Appendixes

- 1. Document Checking & Verification Procedure
- 2. Recruitment Process (Flowchart)
- 3. BPSS Pre-Employment Checks Process (Flowchart)

List of Figures

- 87.1 Staffing Request Form
- 110.1 Example Advert



~~11.1 Essential Criteria for Shortlisting~~

~~176.1 Interview Panel Decision Form~~

~~2019.1 Nationality/Immigration Status Declaration Form~~

~~2221.1 Occupational Status Declaration~~

~~2524.1 Disclosure Levels — Tier 1-2~~



Recruiting Manager Guidance Notes

I. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out guidance for use by recruiting managers when recruiting and selecting staff. It is designed to ensure compliance with relevant legislation and ~~His~~Her Majesty's Government (HMG) guidance while maintaining the Council's commitment to diversity and equality of opportunity.

As a local government organisation, Surrey Heath Borough Council has aligned its pre-employment checks with HMG Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS).

The process of recruitment involves considerable investment in time and money, and it is important that it is effective and also fair to individuals.

Failure to follow the manager guidance notes will prejudice one or more of the objectives listed below and may lead to problems of poor employee relations or, in some cases lead to employment tribunal claims. Following the offer of employment, failure to successfully complete the appropriate pre-employment checks within a satisfactory time period or manner will automatically preclude employment.

Whilst these guidelines address a number of common and key issues, there will always be some matters which require further information and advice and in these cases you may contact Human Resources for further guidance.

2. Scope

The Recruitment Policy and associated guidelines are for use by recruiting managers when recruiting and selecting staff both internally and externally, as applicable.

In accordance with the HMG BPSS guidelines, all staff may be subject to BPSS-compliant pre-employment checks upon offer of employment to a position



working directly for the Council or on its behalf. The level of checks completed will be determined by the role that is being recruited.

Agency staff will also be required to meet baseline security standards, but the responsibility for carrying out the relevant verifications falls on the direct employer, i.e. the agency. However, local security protocol dictates that identification and immigration documents should be verified again by Council staff prior to the start date. Human Resources will liaise with recruitment agencies to ensure that agency and Council verification responsibilities have been met.

This policy and procedure should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Offer Letter
- Statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment (individual)
- Information Security Policy

NB: This Policy and Procedure will not apply when appointing Chief Executives.

3. Policy Statement

The Council recognises the importance of following best practice at all stages of the recruitment process in order to secure the best results for recruitment of Council Officers.

4. Equality Assessment

As a local government organisation, Surrey Heath Borough Council takes its commitment to equality and diversity seriously and strives to promote equal opportunities throughout its recruitment process.

~~For front-line services in particular, e~~Creating a culturally and socially diverse workforce that reflects the diverse range of customers it serves and the



community in which it is based would be particularly positive for those that interact with them.

The full BPSS Compliant Pre-Employment Checks will apply only to employees and workers whose role has been identified as necessary. However, exceptions will be risk-assessed on a case-by-case basis (and in line with the SHBC Equality Strategy) and may be granted in special circumstances. Such approval must be obtained from the ~~appropriate parties.~~[HR Manager/Head of HR, Performance and Communications.](#)

5. Principle and Aims

- 5.1 To select the right people to provide quality services to residents of the Borough.
- 5.2 To manage the recruitment and selection process within an equal opportunities framework and ensure uniformity and consistency of approach across the Council.
- 5.3 To ensure that all appointments are made based on appropriate suitability and capability measures.
- 5.4 To present a positive image of the Council as an employer of choice.
- 5.5 To provide a fair and consistent vetting framework for prospective Council staff or affiliates.
- 5.6 To adhere to the relevant guidelines provided by HMG for undertaking of BPSS-compliant pre-employment checks.
- 5.7 To strive for best practice pre-employment procedures, with minimal disruption to the provision ~~of the~~ service delivery.

6. Promoting Equality & Diversity in Recruitment and Selection

- 6.1 Employing a diverse workforce will send out a message that the Council is committed to equality in the workplace and is compliant with the Equality Act 2010.
- 6.2 The Council – and other public sector organisations in England, Scotland and Wales – have an **Equality Duty**; a legal requirement to work towards set aims. The Council is committed to promoting



equality and diversity within all aspects of Council services and ~~working~~
~~working toward~~steward to:

- Eliminateing unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010 (for more information about types of discrimination, see <https://www.gov.uk/discrimination-your-rights>).
- Advanceing equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- ~~Foster~~Fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

6.3 Recruiting managers have a responsibility to avoid any direct or indirect discrimination during the recruitment process.

6.4 All complaints or concerns relating to potential discriminatory treatment of candidates will be treated very seriously and will be investigated.

7. Career Grades

Where possible, the Council will consider hiring candidates using a career grade framework. A career grade framework provides a basis for progression within or through a grade structure and can be a useful tool for recruitment, retention and succession planning. A career grade can be built upon any existing post and grade.

A career grade should be viewed as a series of jobs with different levels of responsibilities, requiring different knowledge and skill levels leading to different grades.

Movement within a career grade will be based on the measurement of progression against set milestones. The milestones should be devised by the recruiting manager using the standard template.

Examples of career grade milestones could be:

- Demonstrate experience of a mixed caseload relevant to the role
- Demonstrate experience of developing polices
- Achievement of qualification relevant to the role
- Experience of managing working groups
- Proven ability to make oral presentations



7.8. Approval to Hire

87.1 New Roles (or those changed by >33%)

87.1.1 All new or significantly changed roles **must** be reviewed by a Job Evaluation Panel prior to approval to hire. Job Evaluation (JE) is carried out for all new jobs (where there are no comparative roles in the organisation already) and for jobs that have changed more than approximately 33%.

87.1.2 To apply for a job evaluation please complete the **Job Analysis Proforma**, referring to the **Job Evaluation Policy and the Job Evaluation Factors and Notes for Guidance** where applicable. Attaching additional information, such as previous and new ~~job descriptions/person specifications~~ **job profiles (using the job profile template)**, organisation charts, etc. will all help to support an application.

Once a grade for a job has been determined, the relevant line manager and/or post holder **will be** advised by HR of the outcome. ~~All forms required for the Job Evaluation are available via the Council intranet. A Staffing Resources Form will now need to be submitted by the recruiting manager in order to recruit to this position.~~

87.2 Existing Roles (or those changed <33%)

87.2.1 Requests for approval to hire may be submitted without the need for review by a Job Evaluation Panel.

87.3 Staffing Requests

87.3.1 Approval to hire may be **initially** granted by ~~the Executive Head~~ **Strategic Director** or Head of Service following completion and authorisation of the **Staffing Request Form (available on the intranet)**. This form should normally be completed by the relevant line manager requesting additional staffing, including details relating to budget allocation and savings (where appropriate).



87.3.2 Following additional approvals by HR, Finance and the Chief Executive, theis completed form should be is automatically submitted to Human Resources and the recruiting manager. along with The proposed Job Profile (Job Profile Template) Job Description, Person Specification and draft advert (Advert Template) for the role should be sent to Human Resources so that the recruitment process may be initiated. At this point Human Resources will confirm whether a criminal record check is required for the role. A minimum of four days' notice is required in order for Human Resources to publish a job advert.

Fig. 87.1. Staffing Request Form





Staffing request form

All fields marked with * are required and must be filled.

Section 1 - Your contact details

Email of staff member filling this form out *

example@example.com

Please tell us which level of management you are? (this affects how this form is routed through the approvals workflow) *

- Team leader
- WMT manager with direct report to CMT Manager
- CMT manager



CONFIDENTIAL

REQUEST FOR: ADDITIONAL STAFFING
Purpose: Approval is requested to:
The reason being:

SUMMARY OF REQUEST

Financial Year:	Payment:	£	
	On-costs (29.1%):	£	
	TOTAL COSTS:	£	
Service Area:			
Details of Expenditure (please include Post Title and Number) :			
Period of additional cover / expenditure:		From:	To:
Benefits of Expenditure:			
How this will be funded:			
How will the vacancy margin be achieved:			



Staffing Resources Request

Your name*

--	--

Your email*

Your phone number*

Your manager's name*

--	--

Your manager's email*

Your manager's phone number*

Which team needs more staff resources?*

How do you think you can help to reduce the cost of the request?*

Reason for the request*



8.9. Job Descriptions Profiles

98.1 Purpose

Job ~~descriptions~~profiles are written statements of the primary tasks, functions, responsibilities and relationships of a role. Job ~~descriptions~~profiles are essential aids to recruitment, job evaluation, induction, performance management and staff development review processes.

98.1.1 ~~Job~~ profiles~~descriptions~~ should:

- Provide a clear and concise description of the whole job so its purpose is clearly understood
- Describe each major task clearly in a separate sentence(s)
- Describe how much direction and supervision is required to conduct the functions of the position and the interaction with other positions within the Council to achieve a given result
- Provide a context for understanding the objectives of the position by defining and clarifying its responsibilities, supervision and relationships
- Confirm if a DBS check is required for the role and the appropriate level i.e. Basic, Standard or Enhanced.

98.2 Structure and Style

Job ~~descriptions~~profiles should be produced using the standard template. ~~This template is available on the intranet and may also be supplied to Human Resources.~~

98.3 Writing New Job Descriptions Profiles

If the role is completely new, recruiting managers will have to produce a new ~~person specification and job description~~job profile to be used for the recruitment and selection process.

The job description profile must be reviewed by a Job Evaluation Panel prior to recruitment.

98.3.1 Tips for writing new job profiles~~descriptions~~:

- Use gender-neutral language.
- When listing tasks, state what the task is rather than how you expect the post-holder to carry out the task. Remember that job ~~descriptions~~



profiles are summaries of key tasks and responsibilities, not exhaustive lists.

- Be concise and only include an appropriate amount of detail. A detailed job description can be inflexible to change and therefore too restrictive. Too little details, however, may be vague and misleading to candidates.
- Avoid naming computer systems as these may be rapidly replaced or outdated.
- Avoid unnecessary jargon that external candidates may not understand.
- Include a date at the end of your job description-profile for future reference.

98.4 Reviewing Existing Job DescriptionsProfiles

If you are advertising for an existing role, you should start by reviewing the related Job Description-Profile to check that it is still an accurate representation of the post. A copy of the current Job DescriptionProfile may be provided by Human Resources. Please include the date that you reviewed the job profile-description at the bottom of the document.

9.10. Person Specifications (included within the Job Profile)

109.1 Purpose

The person specification is a description of the qualifications, skills, experience, knowledge and other attributes (selection criteria) which are essential or desirable for a candidate to possess in order to perform the duties of the job.

109.1.1 The specification should be derived from the job profiledescription and forms the foundation for the recruitment process and is a fundamental document upon which scoring at shortlisting and interview stages are based.

109.1.2 The person specification should be used to inform the advert and interview process.



109.2 Devising Selection Criteria

Selection criteria are statements that describe the qualifications, knowledge, skills, abilities and experience that are required in a job. They represent the essential (or in some cases, desirable) criteria that applicants will be expected to meet in order to be shortlisted for interview. The person specification should indicate which criteria are essential, so that potential applicants can self-evaluate their suitability for the role. The person specification also advises potential applicants at which point in the recruitment process they will be assessed on a particular criteria (e.g. application stage, interview stage).

109.3 Selection criteria may include any of the following:

- Qualifications (specify type).
- Experience (specify type and level but NOT length).
- Knowledge (job specific knowledge, e.g. Health & Safety legislation).
- Skills (e.g. presentation skills, computer skills).
- Competencies (e.g. behaviours required in order to perform the role effectively – being proactive, being able to work independently with minimal supervision, etc.).

109.4 In order to meet best practice requirements, selection criteria must be:

- **Specific**

This helps ensure that candidates understand the skills/qualifications and experience you are looking for and also consistency of selection decisions by shortlisting or interview panel members.

E.g. Rather than “good communication skills”, try to specify the nature and level of communication skills that the job requires.

- **Justifiable**

Selection criteria must be justifiable in relation to the job tasks and requirements. Non-justifiable criteria could be discriminatory and prevent suitable applicants applying for your position.



E.g. A requirement for an applicant for a general administrative role to hold a good degree will be unjustifiable.

- **Measurable**

When writing selection criteria, you need to consider how you are going to assess how each candidate measures against the criteria.

E.g. How would you assess the criteria “Committed to promoting equal opportunities”?

- **Non-Discriminatory**

Selection criteria must be fair, objective and directly relevant to the job requirements. Discriminatory language or statements concerning protected characteristics covered by the Equality Act 2010 must not be used (i.e. age, gender reassignment, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief and pregnancy/maternity).

E.g. A requirement that an applicant must be a ‘native English speaker’ is likely to be considered by an employment tribunal as discriminatory on the basis of nationality or race.

10.1.1. Advertisements

10.1.1 Purpose

Advertisements should be devised with the following aims in mind:

- To attract suitable candidates to apply for the position (and minimise unsuitable candidate applications).
- To market the benefits of working for the Council.

10.1.2 Duration

Where possible, all vacancies should be advertised in accordance with the Council’s recommended durations below:

- Internal – minimum of 1 week (7 calendar days).
- External – minimum of 2 weeks (14 calendar days).

10.1.3 Where appropriate, internal and external adverts will be advertised simultaneously, but an offer of employment will not be made until all suitable internal candidates have been interviewed. Human Resources will assume



that a vacancy is to be advertised both internally and externally unless told otherwise by the recruiting manager. If you wish to advertise a role internally and externally at the same time please discuss with Human Resources.

11.4 Do consider whether a vacancy could be advertised as a secondment. Filling a role by way of a secondment can provide an opportunity for an internal candidate to develop new skills in a different area of the Council and enhance their professional development.

110.45—Advert Placement

Human Resources have responsibility for placing both internal and external adverts. However, recruiting managers are responsible for producing the initial draft and for updating the relevant job profile person specification and job description, which will be attached to the final advert.

Please read the Structure & Style and Avoiding Discrimination sections below before preparing your draft advert.

110.54.1 When planning your advertisement consider:

- The need to shortlist the applications shortly after the closing date.
- Interview date. It is helpful to notify candidates at advertising stage of the interview date if possible, to minimise the number of candidates withdrawing their application because they cannot attend the interview.

110.65 The basic process for adverts is as follows:

110.65.1 Internal Adverts

Following final approval, internal adverts will be placed for a minimum of 7 calendar days ~~both i) on the intranet and ii) on the notice boards of Surrey Heath House.~~ Adverts will also be distributed to managers of off-site locations to be advertised locally; e.g. Camberley Theatre.

110.65.2 External Adverts - Council Website



All external adverts will be ~~publically~~ publicly visible via the Council website, generally for a minimum of two weeks. The Council's advertising and recruitment process is administered via an online applicant tracking system (ATS), which is accessible to recruiting managers for the purposes of viewing the application data and online shortlisting. Instructions for using the ATS are available from Human Resources.

I ~~10.65~~.3 External Adverts – Other Websites

The Council's policy is to advertise on our website and ~~JobsGoPublic~~ Jobs Go Public first. Vacancies posted on Jobs Go Public are automatically loaded on to LinkedIn and Indeed. However, if the first advert run is unsuccessful, or you are advertising for a specialist/technical role that may benefit from advertising on a particular professional website, please contact Human Resources who will obtain a quote for the placement and the relevant approvals. The cost for advertising on a professional website will need to be covered by the budget of the service area.

I ~~10.76~~ Structure & Style

~~Ask Human Resources for an up-to-date internal/external advert template (for a new position) or a previous version of an advert for an existing role as a basis to work from. The job advert template to be used when recruiting for an internal or external new position can be found on the Recruitment page on Warbler. Please contact Human Resources for a previous version of an advert for an existing role as a basis to work from.~~

I ~~10.78~~—The style of the advertisement should be appropriate to the nature of the position. Sentences should be short, clear and easy to understand. Paragraphs should be short and thereby easy to read.

I ~~10.98~~ There is a certain degree of flexibility with the structure and content of each advert as this will depend on the requirements of the role being advertised. **However, all adverts should contain the following:**



- One or two brief sentences which set the context of the role/department.
- One or two sentences highlighting the most attractive features of the position or highlighting key responsibilities, e.g.g. “You will play a key role in ...”
- A few sentences summarising the key selection criteria required for the role. This must directly relate to the person specification; **do not introduce new selection criteria for the role.**
- Information about how to apply for your vacancy and the closing date.
- Human Resources will add the following information: Salary, hours of work (weekly), type of contract, annual leave entitlement, position number and other relevant benefits.

110.109 Example Advert

The following fictional advertisement provides an illustration of the style, structure of a fictional advertisement for an administrative position.

Fig 110.1

Parking Administrator
 Parking Services
 Fixed Contract - Maternity Cover
 Internal secondment opportunity

Hours: 25 per week, Monday to Friday, 5 hours per day
 Salary Range: £23,577 - £27,696 (pro rata)
 Grade: SH04
 Post number: DAL042

We are looking for an enthusiastic and experienced administrator to work within our busy parking team.

This role will work closely with the Parking Services Manager providing administrative, financial and notice processing functions. This role will on occasion provide direct support to the Car Park team, covering the office in Main Square car park, full on-the-job training will be given.

~~This will be a varied and interesting role which will require excellent customer services and negotiation skills. As the applicant, you will be self-confident, have excellent ICT skills and a comprehensive knowledge of Microsoft software.~~

Knowledge of parking enforcement and the NVQ Level 3 Parking Notice Processing qualification are highly desirable.

Benefits include 24 days annual leave (pro rata), Local Government Pension Scheme, free parking and lifestyle rewards benefits.

For an informal chat about the position please call XXX on XXX.

Applications should be forwarded to recruitment@surreyheath.gov.uk quoting the job title.

Closing date: Sunday 21st October 2018
 Interview Date: Monday 29th October 2018

Surrey Heath Borough Council is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and service delivery and welcomes applications from all sectors of the community.



Finance Transactions Officer

Salary range	£27,161 - £31,812 per annum
Grade	SH 04
Contract	Permanent
Hours	37 per week
Location	Surrey Heath House, Knoll Road, Camberley & remote

Join Surrey Heath Borough Council and be part of an organisation who is committed to delivery through meaningful community engagement and excellent customer service. We have a friendly and supportive staff culture with people who want to help make a real difference in our community for everyone that lives and works here. We welcome a culture of innovation and creativity by welcoming new ideas from everyone.

About the Role

We are seeking an enthusiastic, committed and well organised team player to join our Finance Transactions & Systems team in delivering a professional and exceptional service to our suppliers, customers and the public.

Your main role will be to provide fast and accurate processing, recording and posting of the Council's transactions and ensuring that debts and invoices are paid promptly. You will also be involved in proper accounting for Vat, administering credit card and procurement card programmes and ensuring that reconciliations are completed.

About You

Ideally you will hold an AAT or equivalent accountancy qualification and have an understanding of Local Government Services and Regulations. Although not essential, experience of the Civica financial system would be an advantage. However, training and support will be provided for the successful candidate.

You must be reliable, confident and have the ability to prioritise and work under pressure. You will have experience of dealing with customers and have excellent customer care skills.

Additional Information**Benefits**

We are committed to providing a healthy work life balance for our employees, with hybrid working and other flexible working arrangements on offer. A laptop will be provided for your role. We offer a generous benefits package including a minimum of 23 days' annual leave rising to 28 days after 5 years' service, plus Bank Holidays, a generous local government pension scheme, free parking for all employees and payment of a professional membership fee. As well as subsidised gym membership at our local Places Leisure Centre and great savings from supermarkets, shopping, cycle to work schemes and holidays via the My Staff Shop scheme.

Closing date: 29th October 2023

Interview date: 30th & 31st October

Contact details

For an informal discussion, please contact Michelle Smith, Senior Accountant on 01276 707265, Michelle.Smith@surreyheath.gov.uk

Our Commitment

Surrey Heath Borough Council is committed to equality of opportunity in employment and service



110.110 Avoiding Discrimination

Ensure your advertisement does not potentially discriminate against candidates by avoiding direct or indirect discriminatory criteria.

For example:

- Do not state a minimum duration of experience
- Do not use unnecessary jargon or abbreviations that may not be understood by overseas candidates.
- Do use gender neutral language
- Do state that you will accept overseas qualifications in place of a UK qualification where appropriate (this will depend on the role)

110.12+ When you have completed your draft advert, please email it to human.resources@surreyheath.gov.uk or recruitment@surreyheath.gov.uk, where it will be actioned by a member of the Human Resources team within 4 working days.

12+ Shortlisting

12+.1 Purpose

Shortlisting reduces a larger list of applicants to a shorter list containing only the details of the individuals that meet a set of essential criteria.

12+.2 Shortlisting Process

~~There are two elements to the Council's shortlisting process:~~

- ~~The hard copy application shortlisting process – for internal applicants or external applicants that have not submitted online. Hard copy applications will be provided to the recruiting manager by Human Resources.~~
- ~~The online shortlisting process (for external applicants only – log on and follow the guidance notes available from Human Resources).~~

Once an advert has closed, the Human Resources team will contact the recruiting manager to let them know how many applications have been received and ask for them to complete the online shortlisting process within the Jobs Go Public portal. The applications are anonymised for the recruiting manager, removing all personal data.



~~Fig 11.1 Essential Criteria for Shortlisting Form~~

SHORTLISTING FORM Appendix C

Post:	Post No:	Rating	Description
Interview date(s):		3	Fully Met - good response which demonstrates required skills and with a range of supporting evidence.
Name of shortlisting officers:		2	Partially Met - adequate response with minimal supporting evidence.
		1	Not Met / Partially Met - weak response with little detail.
		0	Not Met - fails to address criteria.
		NT	Not Tested

Candidate Name	Essential Criteria (refer to Person Specification)																	Selected for Interview			
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	TOTAL	YES (Y) NO (N)		

12.3 Shortlisting Tips

Below are some general guidelines for shortlisting. Please note that the lists are not exhaustive and any specific queries may be directed to Human Resources.

DO

- **Have at least two members of staff on the shortlisting panel.**
Ideally, at least one member of staff should have attended a recruitment and selection course.
- **Ensure that all applications are treated confidentially.**
The recruiting manager must ensure that applications are only circulated to those involved in the shortlisting process. Do not print out applications but work from the ATS portal to review the online applications wherever possible. If you have to print out applications, these must be kept secure and all copies, even the successful applicant, must be shredded at the end of the interview process.
- **Assess each applicant objectively and consistently against the selection criteria listed in the person specification.**
When shortlisting, assess each candidate in turn against the essential criteria, and then any desirable criteria, giving a score for each criteria.
- **Decide which criteria you will be using for shortlisting before you begin and the types of evidence that you will be looking for.**



Some criteria may only be suitable for assessing at interview or test stage.

- **Ensure that the scoring for your candidates is consistent and fair.**
Your shortlisted candidates should be those who scored the highest; do not shortlist someone who scores lower than other non-shortlisted candidates and/or does not meet the essential criteria.
- **Ensure that all the shortlisted candidates fully meet the essential criteria.**

Normally all candidates who meet the essential criteria should be shortlisted unless there are too many to be interviewed. In such cases, you should shortlist the candidates who score the highest when assessed against the selection criteria.

DO NOT

- **Score every essential criteria listed on the person specification.**
Some criteria will not be measurable at the application stage. Take note of which criteria have been listed on the criteria as available for scoring at the application stage and select the most appropriate of these criteria to produce your final shortlisting scores. However, where possible please keep the number of criteria to a minimum of **ten**.
- **Score entire sections of the person specification.**
The individual criteria have been specially selected to reflect the personal attributes required for the role. By scoring sections instead of individual criteria the shortlisting score will be taking account of non-essential criteria and will therefore be less consistent and reflective of whether the candidate meets the minimum criteria for interview.
- **Introduce new criteria not listed on the original person specification.**
This would be inappropriate as applicants would not have had the opportunity to self-evaluate against this criterion before applying.
- **Make assumptions about a candidate's skills, experience or qualifications.**
Do not take candidate assertions for granted but rather look for evidence that backs up any claims. If candidates have not provided any demonstrable evidence, ensure that they are scored accordingly.



I+2.4 Avoiding Discrimination

When shortlisting, take care to be objective and base your selection decisions solely on the selection criteria on the person specification. In some cases, failure to avoid discrimination may be unlawful.

Examples to consider are:

- **It is the Council's policy to interview any disabled candidates that meet the minimum requirements for a role.** Where an applicant has stated that they have a **disability or specific impairment**, do not assume that they will not be able to undertake the duties of the role. Special adaptive equipment, changing working patterns and other reasonable adjustments will frequently enable disabled candidates to carry out full duties of a particular position.
- **Poor handwriting or spelling mistakes** in an application form may be the result of a disability such as dyslexia, or due to English not being the applicants first language. Discriminating on these grounds would be unlawful unless the person ~~specifications~~specification listed a high standard of written English as an essential criterion.
- **Periods of inactivity between work or study** may be directly linked to a disability or if they have not been employed for a long period, this could be the result of a career break or a period of absence due to a health condition or disability. ~~Discriminating~~Discriminating on these grounds would be unlawful. Any discussions regarding fitness for work should be undertaken by Human Resources, not by the recruiting manager.

I32 Selection Measures

I32.1 Purpose

Selection measures must only be used if they effectively measure abilities or skills that are relevant to the job and selection criteria (person specification). If you are considering using a selection test or measure, you will need to analyse the Job ~~Description~~Profile and Person Specification to



determine what type of measure would be most appropriate, possibly in consultation with colleagues, the former post-holder or Human Resources.

I 32.2 Certain types of skills (such as IT skills) can be more readily measured by tasks than by interview – it is in these cases that selection measures would be most appropriate.

I 32.3 Types of Selection Measures

Effective selection measures aim to replicate actual job tasks or situations to assess if the candidate has the skills, experience or qualifications to carry out the work. They may also provide the candidate with an idea of the type of task they will be expected to carry out as part of the role.

I 32.3.1 Possible selection measures include:

- Prioritisation or ‘in-tray’ exercises which ask candidates to prioritise a list of tasks (which would be actual/similar tasks required for the post) and explain why they would carry out tasks in a specific order
- Drafting a report, letter, memo or briefing
- Correcting a document to check proof-reading and attention to detail
- Computer based tasks – which could range from technical tests for IT staff to tests for administrative staff in using specific computer packages required by the role
- ~~Typing test or audio-typing tasks~~
- Numerical tasks
- Presentations

I 32.4 Psychometric Questionnaires

Where appropriate, the Council may choose to utilise psychometric questionnaires to provide information on applicant skills or key behaviours that may not be easily measured by alternative means.

The information obtained from these questionnaires is intended only to compliment other competency measures and the results should never form the basis for a decision not to recruit.



N.B. Psychometric questionnaires must be administered only by trained Administrators. Any managers wishing to utilise this service must contact Human Resources for guidance.

I 32.5 Selection Measure Validation

Selection exercises should normally be validated before being used in the selection process.

I 32.5.1 Validation involves asking a colleague (preferably someone who has carried out the role) to perform a 'dry run' of the test under the proposed conditions, then obtaining feedback from them regarding the process. Validation is particularly important for testing proposed time-limits.

I 32.5.2 Validation will also help ensure that tests do not discriminate against one particular group and ensure that the test is relevant to the selection criteria and role.

I 32.6 Reasonable Adjustments

Remember, it is the employer's responsibility to ensure that selection measures do not discriminate against disabled candidates and offer reasonable adjustments where appropriate, such as additional time to complete a task or permitting a reader or scribe to assist the candidate with the exercise. Adjustments may also need to be made for candidates for whom English is not a first language.

I 32.7 Selection Measure Preparation

You must ensure that all candidates are given the same (clear) instructions, equipment (pens, paper, calculator, PC) and conditions to carry out the test – including the same time to complete it. If possible, book a quiet office or room for the test. When carrying out computer-based tasks, you will need to make arrangements to ensure that candidates cannot access previous candidates' task responses or confidential data.

I 32.7.1 Ensure that you provide Human Resources with any details of the selection measure that may need to be communicated to the candidate in advance,



e.g. type of task, duration, whether it is computer-based. Most tasks will be 'blind' (i.e. the candidates will not have prior knowledge of the questions) except in cases where candidates are asked to prepare a presentation for use during the interview.

I 32.8 Selection Measure Results

The results of selection measures must be reviewed fairly and objectively and the method of scoring should be determined in advance. You will need to consider how the test results will be considered or weighted with interview outcomes when making the selection decision. Using a scoring system for both interview and test results can help facilitate this.

I 32.9 Selection measure results and scores must be returned to Human Resources with all other recruitment documents.

I 43 Interviews

Guidance and training is available to assist with the interview process, please contact Human Resources for further information.

I 43.1 Purpose

Selection interviews should be designed to build upon the information already provided by the candidate in their application, to determine their suitability for a particular role by assessing each applicant's role-relevant skills, experience and knowledge. Interviews also give the candidate an opportunity to find **out** more information about working for the Council and the services that it provides to the local community and beyond.

I 43.2 Interview Panel

Ideally, the interview panel should include the same staff members that were involved in the shortlisting of the candidates. However, if this is not possible, please **ensure** ~~be sure~~ that all members of the interview panel are the same when conducting interviews.



I ~~43~~.2.1 In the event of a manager requiring extra support during the interview process, it is acceptable for a more experienced manager or a member of the Human Resources team to sit in on the interviews. Similarly, this would be appropriate for situations that may pose a potential conflict of interest to the recruiting manager or where the manager feels it would be appropriate to have a neutral member of staff on the panel.

I ~~43~~.3 Interview Preparation

Where possible, interview dates and panel composition should be determined before the post is advertised. This will help ensure that the most appropriate panel members are available and give candidates sufficient warning of the interview date.

I ~~43~~.4 A core set of interview questions should be prepared which should be asked of all candidates. However, candidates can be questioned further on an individual basis in relation to their responses to these key questions.

I ~~43~~.5 ~~The recruiting manager will be required~~ Human Resources will to prepare and distribute interview packs to the panel prior to the interview date and book an interview room, if appropriate. ~~If you require the pack by a specific date due to absence or annual leave, please inform Human Resources in advance so that your request may be accommodated.~~

I ~~43~~.6 Interviewers should familiarise themselves with candidate's application forms, the job ~~description profile~~ and the person specification for the role.

I ~~43~~.7 Candidates with Disabilities

All candidates are asked in their interview invitation (sent out by Human Resources) if they require any special arrangements in order to attend the interview. If any such adjustments are required for disabled candidates, the Human Resources team will notify the interview panel of any special arrangements in advance.

I ~~43~~.8 If you are interviewing a candidate with a disability or health condition, it is important that:

- You do not make assumptions about their disability and how it may impact on their ability to carry out the job.



- You ask the disabled candidate the same key questions that you ask of all other candidates. Any questions about the candidate's disability should only relate to their ability to do the job and to identify any reasonable adjustments which will enable them to perform the role.
- Your selection decision is based on the applicant's capability after the reasonable adjustments have been made.
- You do not use a candidate's disability as a reason for not selecting them; this will be regarded as unlawful discrimination under the Equality Act 2010.

I 43.9 Interview Record & Notes

All members of the panel must take notes during each interview, which should be used as the basis for the selection decision.

I 43.9.1 Following the interview, managers must ensure that all interview notes are collated and returned to Human Resources for filing/appropriate disposal.
[The interview template can be found on Warbler.](#)

I 43.9.2 Under the Data Protection Policy candidates have a right to access data we hold about them including interview notes, which may also be used as the basis for feedback and to help defend selection decisions if unsuccessful candidates make discrimination claims.

I 54 Interview Questions

I 54.1 Purpose

Interview questions and selection tests should also derive from the person specification and be designed to elicit more evidence on candidates against the criteria. A number of core interview questions should be asked of all candidates – although probing follow up questions may need to be asked of each candidate to elicit more information as appropriate.

I 54.2 A structured interview that uses the same questions based on the selection criteria for every candidate will help ensure consistency of process



– i.e. that candidates are assessed fairly and only against the selection criteria – in addition to help defending discrimination claims from unsuccessful applicants.

15.3 The interview chair should prepare the questions in advance of the interview, agree the core questions with the panel and identify who will ask each question. Each panel member should capture detailed notes of the answer given against each question on the question sheet. They should also note any additional questions asked and keep a blank copy of the questions asked for future reference for at least 6 months after the interview takes place.

I 5.44.3 Types of Interview Questions

- **Open questions**
Open questions encourage candidates to talk and therefore are a useful way of commencing interviews.
E.g. Please tell me how your experience makes you suitable for this job?
- **Probing questions**
These will often be unplanned due to their nature. Use probing questions as a follow on from other questions to elicit more information if you think the full facts have not been disclosed.
E.g. What exactly was your role in the project?
- **Closed questions**
Closed questions should be used to clarify facts and are designed to elicit a brief response, often a yes or no answer or a simple fact.
E.g. How many staff did you manage?
- **Critical incident questions**
Focus on past experience in order to assess how candidates will deal with future events. Such questions can't provide useful information on the nature of candidates' experience and how they have dealt with incidents in the past.
E.g. Please describe an occasion where you have had to negotiate with others to reach a successful outcome?



15.54.4 — Questions You May Wish to Avoid

- **Discriminatory questions**

You should ~~not~~ never ask any questions which could discriminate against candidates on the basis of age, marital status, gender/sex, race/nationality, disability, sexual orientation or religion/belief.
E.g. Who will look after the children while you are at work?

- **Hypothetical questions**

Hypothetical questions lead to hypothetical answers and may not reflect how a candidate will behave in reality. It is better to focus a question on a past incident rather than a fictional one; this will be a better predictor of how an applicant is likely to perform in future. If you do decide to ask a hypothetical question, be clear on what you want to achieve.

You could ask a hypothetical question like ‘What would you want to achieve within your first 3 months in post?’ You know the answer will not be an accurate insight in to the role and expectations but what they believe they can deliver given the information they have.

If looking for a response which could link to how they will deal with certain aspects of the role then look for something which is based on previous experience like ‘Give an example of where you have had to deal with an unhappy client’.

E.g. How would you deal with an unhappy client?

- **Multiple questions**

A long sentence with Multiple questions within can often confuse candidates and are likely to be only partially answered. It is better to answer a series of single questions rather than multiple questions posed simultaneously.

E.g. Can you tell me about your experience of staff management including if you have had any responsibility for staff appraisal and whether you have ever had to take formal disciplinary action against staff, and if so, why?

- **Leading questions**



Leading questions encourage candidates to answer in a specific way, and the answer is normally a foregone conclusion.

E.g. This job involves working to deadlines – are you able to do this?

5.64.5 Keeping control

Some candidates can give verbose answers and you may need to politely refocus the candidates to move onto other areas.

E.g. Thank you, I have a good idea of your experience on this; could you now tell me about

5.6.14.5.1 Playback questions can be useful in checking you have understood a candidate's answer correctly and summarising their response for notes and to enable you to move on to the next question.

E.g. As I understand it, you have had experience of staff management including recruiting and appraising staff but have no experience of managing poor performance. Have I got this right?

5.74.6 Closing the interview

You may find it useful to close the questions by checking if there is any information the candidate thinks is relevant that has not been explored yet.

E.g. Is there anything else about your experience that has not been raised yet in this interview, but which you think is relevant for the post?

5.84.7 If the post involves weekend working, shift working or unsocial hours, you should explain this to all candidates at the end of the interview and ask them if this would be a problem.

5.94.8 You should give candidates the opportunity to ask questions about the role at the very end of the interview.

5.104.9 It is good practice to let the candidates know how and when they will be told the outcome of the interview.



I 65 Feedback

I 65.1 Purpose

Feedback is very helpful for both internal and external candidates:

- **Internal candidates** – assisting them to understand why they may have been unsuccessful, focusing them on how to improve any future applications and identifying any training needs to support their future development.
- **External candidates** – wish to find out the reasons for their non-appointment and ways in which they could improve any future applications.

I 65.2 Composing Feedback

Human Resources will generally take responsibility for contacting candidates following the shortlisting or interview stages to advise candidates of their success. However, all candidates are entitled to request feedback regarding their performance at interview stage. The feedback should be provided by the recruiting manager. Please contact Human Resources in this instance for further information.

I 65.3 Data Protection

Under the Data Protection Policy, candidates have a right to access data we hold about them including interview notes, which may also be used as the basis for feedback and to help defend selection decisions if unsuccessful candidates make discrimination claims.



I 76 Interview Decision & Offer of Employment

I 76.1 Interview Decisions

All interview decision criteria should be entered on the [Interview Panel Decision Form](#), including all scores and comments pertinent to the decision making process.

Fig I 76.1. Interview Panel Decision Form

INTERVIEW PANEL DECISION FORM

<p>Vacancy:</p> <p>Panel Members:</p> <p>1. (Chair)</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>Date:</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">Rating</th> <th style="text-align: left;">Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">3</td> <td>Fully Met - provides wide range of examples that demonstrate skills, experience and high level of understanding.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">2</td> <td>Partially Met - good overall response demonstrating required skills but limited range of examples.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">1</td> <td>Not/Partially Met - adequate response with minimal supporting evidence.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">0</td> <td>Not Met - weak response with little or no detail.</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">NT</td> <td>Not tested.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This form is to be used for recording the Panel's selection discussion and final decision. The information recorded here may be used for providing feedback to candidates (where requested). It is the responsibility of the Chair to complete the form, although decisions made are the responsibility of the Panel.</p>	Rating	Description	3	Fully Met - provides wide range of examples that demonstrate skills, experience and high level of understanding.	2	Partially Met - good overall response demonstrating required skills but limited range of examples.	1	Not/Partially Met - adequate response with minimal supporting evidence.	0	Not Met - weak response with little or no detail.	NT	Not tested.
Rating	Description												
3	Fully Met - provides wide range of examples that demonstrate skills, experience and high level of understanding.												
2	Partially Met - good overall response demonstrating required skills but limited range of examples.												
1	Not/Partially Met - adequate response with minimal supporting evidence.												
0	Not Met - weak response with little or no detail.												
NT	Not tested.												

Candidates Name:																	TOTAL
Person Specification Criteria																	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
Comments:																	

I 76.2 Interview decisions should be based on the merits of the individual candidates according to their shortlisting, task and interview scores.

I 76.3 Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the employment offers should always be offered to the highest scoring candidate (and if the offer is declined, the next highest scoring candidate, etc.). Any issues relating to the suitability of a candidate for a role should be reflected in their scores. If this is not the case, recruiting managers should discuss their concerns with Human Resources.



17.6.4 Do not offer a role to any candidate without discussing the outcome of your selection process with Human Resources first.

~~16.5 However, following discussion with Human Resources a recruiting manager may contact a successful candidate by telephone to discuss an offer of employment.~~

~~17.56.6~~ Only staff from Human Resources are authorised to make formal written offers of employment to salaried staff. Therefore, all recruiting managers need to be extremely careful when communicating with successful candidates. If you are in any doubt regarding the correct process for discussing a job offer with a candidate, contact Human Resources for guidance.

~~17.6 However, following discussion with Human Resources, a recruiting manager may contact a successful candidate by telephone to discuss an offer of employment.~~

17.6.7 Making a Verbal Job Offer

~~You should~~ Human Resources will inform the successful candidate that:

- They are the preferred candidate following interview
- All offers of employment are subject to the satisfactory completion of the Council's pre-employment checks (further details of which will be included in their offer letter).
- ~~That Human Resources will contact them to confirm~~ The offer of employment will be confirmed in writing by Human Resources once a starting salary has been agreed.

DO NOT:

- ~~Make an unconditional offer of employment which is not subject to satisfactory references or eligibility to work in the UK.~~
- ~~Discuss or negotiate contractual terms and conditions other than salary expectations.~~

187 Post-Offer Recruitment Process

For details of the post-offer recruitment process, see the **BPSS-Compliant Recruitment Policy and Procedure**.



BPSS Compliant Pre-employment Checks

198 Background & Process

198.1 For recruitment purposes, local authorities are ~~now~~ required to complete mandatory pre-employment security checks in accordance with HMG advised Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) prior to start date. Checks 1 – 3 apply to all –staff and check 4 applies to roles identified as requiring a criminal record check.

198.2 Please refer to Appendix 2 & 3; Recruitment Process Flowchart & BPSS Pre-employment Check Procedure Flowchart for further information.

198.3 The pre-employment checks include:

- i) identify verification.
- ii) immigration status verification.
- iii) reference check (covering 3 years occupational history).
- iv) criminal record check (where appropriate).

198.4 Throughout the recruitment process, prospective employees are expected to assist the Council in the completion of all checks described above by prompt provision of relevant documents and information where requested.

198.5 Failure to successfully complete the appropriate pre-employment checks within a satisfactory time period or manner will automatically preclude employment. The council reserves the right to withdraw an offer of employment where the baseline security requirements have not been met.

198.6 As an organisation using the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) to assess applicants' suitability for positions of trust, Surrey Heath Borough Council complies fully with the relevant codes of practice and undertakes to treat all



applicants for positions fairly. It undertakes not to discriminate unfairly against any subject of a disclosure on the basis of conviction or other information revealed.

198.7 The policies and procedures outlined in this document will continue to be reviewed on a regular basis and will be subject to amendment in line with changes in the law or HMG guidance.

2019 Identity & Immigration Status Verification

2019.1 Identity and eligibility to work in the UK must be verified before any individual can begin their employment. Identity can be verified by physically checking a range of appropriate documentation (e.g. passport or other photo ID together with utility bills, bank statements, etc).

2019.2 **Under no circumstances** should an employee begin working for the Council prior to presentation and verification of **original** documents proving the immigration status of an individual and their right to work in the UK. See **guidance notes a** ff for further instructions regarding document checking and verification.

2019.3 Personal identity and immigration documents should only be checked and verified by trained, authorised staff.

2019.4 For the purposes of recruitment, the Council generally adheres to the document requirements set for Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) applications.

2019.5 **For roles that do not require any criminal record check, the DBS documentation requirements are set as a baseline standard that applicants are expected to meet if possible.** In the event that an applicant is unable to meet the document requirement for any of the routes described by the DBS document checking guidance notes, in exceptional circumstances the applicant's details may be submitted to Human Resources for risk assessment.



2019.6 In order to avoid incurring a penalty under The Immigration Act 2016, the Council must adhere to set procedures including:

2019.6.1 To take all reasonable steps to check the validity of immigration documents. Proof of this verification process must be documented.

2019.6.2 To ensure that staff will not be penalised for not identifying counterfeit or fraudulent documents, but **must** ensure all reasonable steps are taken to check the validity of such documents.

2019.7 Checks relating to prospective employee’s eligibility to work in the UK must be applied evenly in accordance with the Council’s obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

2019.8 New employees will also be required to complete an online Nationality/Immigration Status Declaration Form as part of their new starter paperwork. However, self-declaration is merely a further check in the immigration status verification process and should never replace checking original documents.

Fig 2019.1 Nationality/Immigration Status Declaration Form

PERSONAL DETAILS			
SURNAME:		FORENAME(S):	
MAIDEN SURNAME:		PREFERRED NAME:	
ALIAS(ES)/ OTHER NAMES:			
TITLE (MR, MRS, MISS):		DATE OF BIRTH:	
HOME TELEPHONE:		MOBILE TELEPHONE:	

NATIONALITY DETAILS	
In the context of the questions below, Nationality refers to the political nation or group of nations to which you belong, i.e. the nation responsible for issuing your passport.	
NATIONALITY AT BIRTH:	
PRESENT NATIONALITY: Please provide an original copy of your passport (if you have not already done so)	
Have you ever possessed any other nationality or citizenship that is not declared above?	YES/NO If yes, please provide details:



Nationality / immigration status declaration

Important: This form contains 'personal' data as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be processed accordingly. This data is supplied solely for the purpose of a check against the UK's immigration and nationality records in accordance with BPSS guidelines.

By ticking the declaration at the bottom of this form, you are explicitly consenting for the data you provide to be processed in the manner described above. If you have any concerns about any of the questions or what we will do with the information you provide, please contact Human Resources immediately for further information.

In the context of the questions below, Nationality refers to the political nation or group of nations to which you belong, i.e. the nation responsible for issuing your passport.

Nationality at birth

Present nationality

Have you ever possessed any other nationality or citizenship that is not declared above?

A person subject to immigration control is: i) a person who requires leave to enter or remain in the UK but their immigration status is undetermined/being appealed ii) a person who has leave to enter or remain but does not have recourse to public funds iii) a 'sponsored immigrant' for whom an identified 3rdparty is responsible.

Are you subject to immigration control?

~~2019.9~~ N.B. NINO Confirmations

National Insurance numbers are **not proof of identification or immigration status** and fraudulent numbers may be acquired more easily than other document types. The Council will accept related letters and payslips as proof of NI number for payroll purposes, or proof of address only.

~~210~~ Employment History/Occupational status Verification

~~210.1~~ Surrey Heath Borough Council has adopted a referencing policy in line with the HMG advised BPSS best practice guidance for employment/occupational history verification. Prospective employees are required to provide a full, unbroken employment/occupational history for the last 3 years to date at



the point of application. This account will be verified at the offer stage as part of the BPSS-compliant pre-employment checks.

- 210.2** For prospective employees with only one employer during the 3 years preceding offer, the verification process is straightforward (minimum requirement: one reference from the employer covering the 3 year period only).
- 210.3** However for those that have had multiple roles, have had period of unemployment (greater than 3 months) or periods of over 3 months spent abroad, the verification process may cause significant delay to the start date of the individual. All employment gaps longer than 3 months should be investigated.
- 210.4** Where possible, employment references should be received ~~on-headed paper~~ from a valid company account and include the start and end date of each period of employment and job title. Ideally, the reference should confirm that the individual's business was properly conducted and was terminated satisfactorily. However, many organisations are now choosing to provide only basic references ~~so the latter may prove problematic.~~ Employment references should be sought from impartial sources (Human Resources, management) not from colleagues or family friends except for the purposes of supporting other documentation.
- 210.5** In the absence of impartial, direct referencing it is acceptable to approach personal references or to seek verification via indirect sources, e.g. the provision of documents confirming receipt of benefits, a 'To Whom it May Concern' letter/email confirming employment dates ~~on-headed paper from a valid company account~~ that is not addressed directly to the Council or medical documents confirming periods of incapacity.
- 210.6** Personal references should be individuals that have known the prospective employee personally for over 5 years and are willing to endorse the good character of the individual in question.



210.7 All documentation must match the declared employment/occupational history (allowing for a reasonable margin of error). ~~In the event of significant or numerous inconsistencies please contact Human Resources.~~

22+ Incomplete employment history/occupational history

22+.1 While an incomplete employment/occupational history will not necessarily preclude employment, it is the Council's responsibility to – as far as possible – ensure that prospective employees are not concealing inappropriate associations or gaps and to verify employment history that has been provided.

22+.2 In the event of unverifiable employment/occupational gaps in the individual's history greater than 3 months, prospective employees will be required to complete and sign an **OCCUPATIONAL STATUS DECLARATION FORM (GAPS IN EMPLOYMENT)**. This serves as a record of their self-verification and summary for reference in the event of risk assessment by ~~the~~ Human Resources.

Fig 22+.1 Occupational Status Declaration

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS DECLARATION (Gaps in Employment)			
<p>Important: This form contains 'personal' data as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be processed accordingly. This data is supplied solely for the purpose to check against your employment records in accordance with BPSS guidelines.</p> <p>By signing the declaration on this form, you are explicitly consenting for the data you provide to be processed in the manner described above. If you have any concerns, about any of the questions or what we will do with the information you provide, please contact Human Resources immediately for further information.</p>			
Name Details			
Surname:		Forename(s):	
Maiden Surname:		Preferred Name:	
<i>(please provide an original copy of the certificate, e.g. Deed Poll or Marriage)</i>			
Title:		<i>(eg: Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms, Dr)</i>	
Date of Birth:			
Home Tel No:		Mobile Tel No:	
Occupational Status Details			
<p>BPSS guidelines require that appropriate measures should be undertaken to establish an unbroken occupational history for a minimum of 3 years prior to the offer date.</p> <p>Please complete the table below with details. Where possible, please submit documentation or evidence to support your claim. If you are unable to provide evidence for your occupational status during the period stated please indicate this in the box provided.</p>			
Occupational History			
Status	Dates	Supporting Documents?	Details of Evidence
		YES / NO	
		YES / NO	







Occupational Status Declaration Form

(Gaps in Employment)

All fields marked with * are required and must be filled.

Important: This form contains 'personal' data as defined by the Data Protection Act 1998 and will be processed accordingly. This data is supplied solely for the purpose to check against your employment records in accordance with Baseline Personnel Security Standard (BPSS) guidelines.

By completing the declaration on this form, you are explicitly consenting for the data you provide to be processed in the manner described above. If you have any concerns, about any of the questions or what we will do with the information you provide, please contact Human Resources immediately for further information.

Name *

First Name

Last Name

Previous Surname (if applicable)

Email *

example@example.com

BPSS guidelines require that appropriate measures should be undertaken to establish an unbroken occupational history for a minimum of 3 years prior to the offer date.

Occupational History

1a. Employment Status

1b. Date From: *

Day

Month

Year



1b. Date to: *

Day

Month

Year



1c. Employer Name



232 Criminal Record Checks

232.1 In accordance with HMG BPSS requirements, staff must undergo a criminal record check if they have been recruited in to a role where this has been identified as necessary. Examples of such roles include those working with children or vulnerable adults, finance professionals or legal professionals.

232.2 Roles identified as requiring a criminal record check fall under a 32-tier clearance model:

Tier 3: Basic Disclosure – unspent convictions

- Tier 2: Standard Disclosure – unspent and spent convictions only.
- Tier 1: Enhance Disclosure – unspent, spent and any information relevant to role.

232.3 Currently, Tier 1 and 2 all clearances are requested directly from the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) – the replacement for the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). Surrey Heath Borough Council use the services of Surrey County Council an umbrella body (Babcock International) to submit DBS Checks.

31. 243 Application procedure for ~~Tier 1 and 2 Disclosures~~ Disclosure and Barring Services (DBS) certification

243.1 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Checks – formerly CRB checks.

Individuals working in eligible roles will be asked to provide their identity documents at interview stage. sent a link to the DBS application form and related guidance notes to assist completion of the form. Once this is complete the relevant supporting documentation should be provided to The Human Resources department will complete the online DBS application



form, which will be emailed to the successful candidate to finalise. As a Registered Body, Surrey Heath Borough Council complies with the DBS Code of Practice and has written policies on the recruitment of ex-offenders and the handling of Disclosure information. Copies of these documents are available from Human Resources on request. A criminal record is not necessarily a bar to employment.

Once you receive your DBS certificate this is your information which we require to see as part of this recruitment process. Upon sight of the certificate we will note on our electronic Human Resources Information System (HRIS) the certificate number, type of certificate and issue date, ~~not~~ no copies of the actual certificate are kept on record.

254 Selecting an appropriate disclosure level for the role

The table below provides further information relating to the application of each tier of disclosure to the workforce. Use this guide, but any specific queries may be directed to Human Resources.

Table 254.1 Disclosure Levels from gov.uk—~~Tier 1-2~~

Basis DBS Check

A Basic DBS check is for any purpose, including employment. The certificate will contain details of convictions and conditional cautions that are considered to be unspent under the terms of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (ROA) 1974.

Standard DBS Check

A Standard DBS check is suitable for certain roles, such as a security guard. The certificate will contain details of both spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings that are held on the Police National Computer, which are not subject to filtering.

Enhanced DBS Check

An Enhanced DBS check is suitable for people working with children or adults in certain circumstances such as those in receipt of healthcare or personal care. An



Enhanced DBS check is also suitable for a small number of other roles such as taxi licence applications or people working in the Gambling Commission.

TIER 1 **Enhanced DBS Check** **Average Timescale: 4 weeks**

Roles that involve regular interaction with 'at risk' groups, such as children or vulnerable adults (or both), in order to undertake their normal duties. This includes the same as the standard check plus any additional information held by local police that's reasonably considered relevant to the workforce being applied for (adult, child or 'other' workforce). 'Other' workforce means those who don't work with children or adults specifically, but potentially both e.g. taxi drivers. In this case, the police will only release information that's relevant to the post being applied for.

TIER 2 **Standard DBS Check** **Average Timescale: 4 weeks**

Roles where the employee may be required to interact with vulnerable groups as part of their role either as undertaken by daily duties or exceptional circumstances. Generally public-focused roles, e.g. Car Parks.

Roles where the employee has responsibility for a workforce that undertakes public-focused duties that may expose them to such interactions.

This will check for spent and unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands and final warnings.

265 Local Government Continuous Service

265.1 In-keeping with the provisions of The Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government, etc.) (Modification) Order 1999, Surrey Heath Borough Council will recognise continuous employment carried over from another Authority as equivalent to employment at Surrey Heath Borough Council for the purposes of pre-employment verifications.

276 Medical Clearance



276.1 Medical endorsement of fitness is not required for BPSS purposes, but it forms part of the Council's mandatory pre-employment checks. The questionnaire is distributed by a third party (~~Team Prevent~~Optima Health) and reviewed by an independent medical professional.

276.2 Where appropriate, ~~Team Prevent~~Optima Health will issue a report to Human Resources detailing any specific medical conditions that may require adjustments at work. Human Resources will schedule a meeting with the affected employee to discuss the adjustments. Any relevant information will be disseminated to the manager following the meeting if appropriate.

287 Successful Clearance

287.1 The pre-employment check process may be considered complete when:

- i) Original identity and immigration documents have been seen, copied and verified. Qualification and address details have been seen, copied and verified.
- ii) Medical report has been received and individuals have been determined to be FIT for role or special working arrangements have been agreed and emplaced.
- iii) Employment/occupational history for at least 3 years has been verified, or unverifiable gaps declared by the individual on the correct form.
- iv) Original disclosure certificate appropriate to role has been presented to and checked by Human Resources. Certificate number and expiry date must be recorded electronically as a copy of the certificate may not be kept on file as the individual owns this information.

29 Prior to joining Surrey Heath Borough Council

29.1 Upon completion of all pre-employment checks, Human Resources will liaise with the recruiting manager and the successful candidate to agree a convenient start date. To embed an early relationship ahead of a new starter joining, it is



recommended that the recruiting manager contacts the candidate to offer their congratulations and share any information they feel might be pertinent.

A statement of terms and conditions of employment will be issued to the successful candidate once the start date has been agreed. The candidate will also be sent an online link to new starter forms and policies to be completed in advance of their first day of employment.

3028 Induction

3028.1 All inductions should be carried out on the first day of service by Human Resources, unless agreed otherwise.

3028.2 There are a number of mandatory induction processes and forms that must be completed at this stage. These will vary according to the individual's i) job role, ii) working location and iii) contract type. It is essential that any representative carrying out the induction on behalf of Human Resources must be clear as to which apply in each case, thus ensuring compliance to the Council's statutory duties.



APPENDIX I

Document Checking & Verification Procedure

FOR MANAGER INFORMATION ONLY:

Checks should only be undertaken by Human Resources unless explicit permission has been granted for other staff members to complete them.

Under no circumstances should an employee begin working for Council prior to presentation and verification of **original documents* proving the immigration status of an individual and their right to work in the UK.**

Personal identity and immigration documents should only be checked and verified by trained, authorised staff.

Procedure

I. Visual Check of the document

The table below provides very basic instructions for checking and verification of identity and immigration documents.



This is not an exhaustive guide and please do not hesitate to contact Human Resources if you have any queries relating to document verification or immigration.

2. Photocopy document

Copy the document as per the guidance in the table, or for other documents copy all pages that contain information relating to the identity or immigration status – e.g. for a utility bill, you want to copy information confirming the name and address of the individual but not how much they owe on their account!

3. Verify Copies

All checked/verified documents must be dated and signed by the authorised staff member undertaking the check. By signing the document, you are confirming that you believe the original has been presented to you at that time. While you are not personally responsible for identifying counterfeit documents, a false declaration (e.g. verifying a document for which you have not seen the original) may result in disciplinary action or legal consequences.

Feeling unsure ...?

If you do not feel confident that the documents you are checking are authentic or correct, please copy the document and contact Human Resources immediately.

You are not required to endorse a document that you do not believe to be genuine and you should not advise the individual that you believe their document to be invalid without sufficient evidence.

In the event of a document query, Human Resources may seek further advice or expertise from other departments or government services

Table: Basic Document Checks (Identity/Immigration)

<u>Document - ORIGINAL COPY</u>	<u>Check</u>	<u>Photocopy</u>
--	---------------------	-------------------------



<p><u>Passport UK & EU</u></p>	<p><u>Details page states PASSPORT not TRAVEL DOCUMENT</u> <u>Front page states European Union and/or United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland</u> <u>Expiry date</u> <u>Nationality (Citizen not resident)</u> <u>Name, Date of birth vs other documents</u> <u>Some pages react to UV light</u></p>	<p><u>Front cover, pages confirming right to work in the UK, plus pages including nationality details, photograph, date of expiry, name/signature.</u></p>
<p><u>Passport Non-EU</u></p>	<p><u>Refer to HR for verification</u></p>	<p><u>Front cover, pages confirming right to work in the UK, plus pages including nationality details, photograph, date of expiry, name/signature.</u></p>
<p><u>Birth Certificate (UK)</u></p>	<p><u>Date of issue - if not issued in year of birth, may not be used as primary ID</u> <u>Before April 1969 = landscape, after April 1969 = portrait</u> <u>Watermarked but does not react to UV light</u> <u>Name, date of birth vs other documents</u> <u>May be handwritten, typed or computer generated.</u></p>	<p><u>All pages</u></p>
<p><u>Certificate of Naturalisation</u></p>	<p><u>States British Nationality Act 1981</u></p>	<p><u>All pages</u></p>



-	<u>Date of issue - does this fall before issue date of passport/immigration docs?</u> <u>Name, date of birth vs other documents</u>	
<u>Birth Certificate Non-EU</u>	<u>Refer to HR for verification</u>	<u>All pages</u>
<u>Driving Licence (UK/ Channel Islands/ EU only)</u> - - - - - -	<u>Check country of issue Photocard or paper version (if issued before 1998).</u> <u>Expiry date - photocard only</u> <u>Security features - photocard only, eg. e.g. Holographics, image under photo shows expiry date when tilted (pre-2014 issue)</u> <u>Endorsements - are they relevant to role?</u> <u>Name, date of birth vs other documents</u> <u>Address - £1000 fine if not current</u>	<u>All pages</u>

Gov.uk guidance on document checking:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/basic-passport-checks>

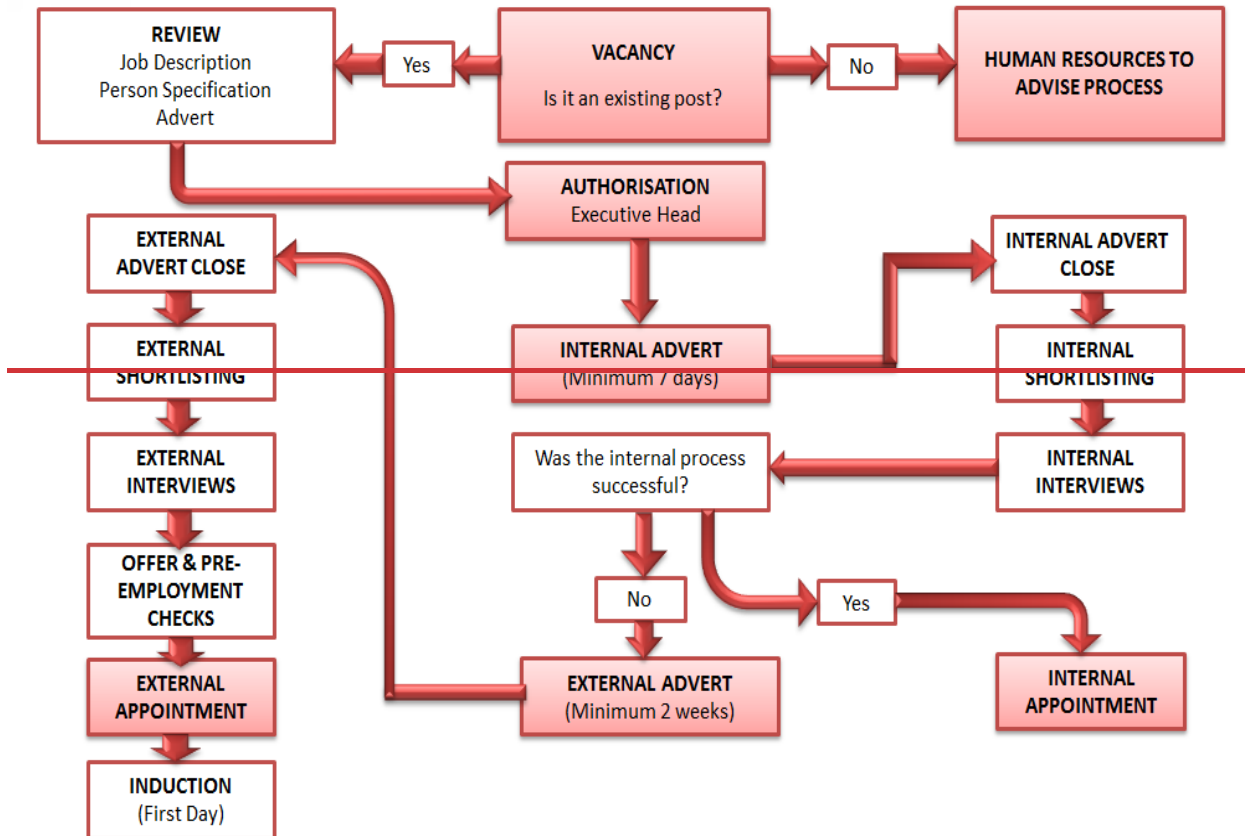




APPENDIX 2

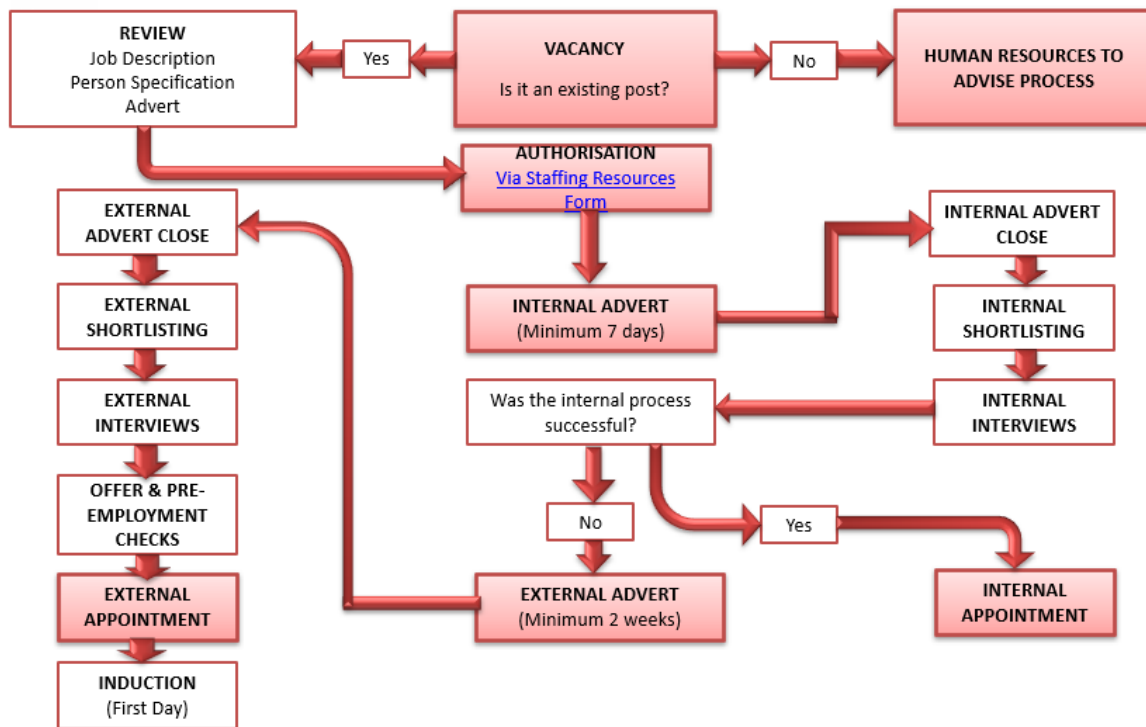


Surrey Heath Borough Council Recruitment Process





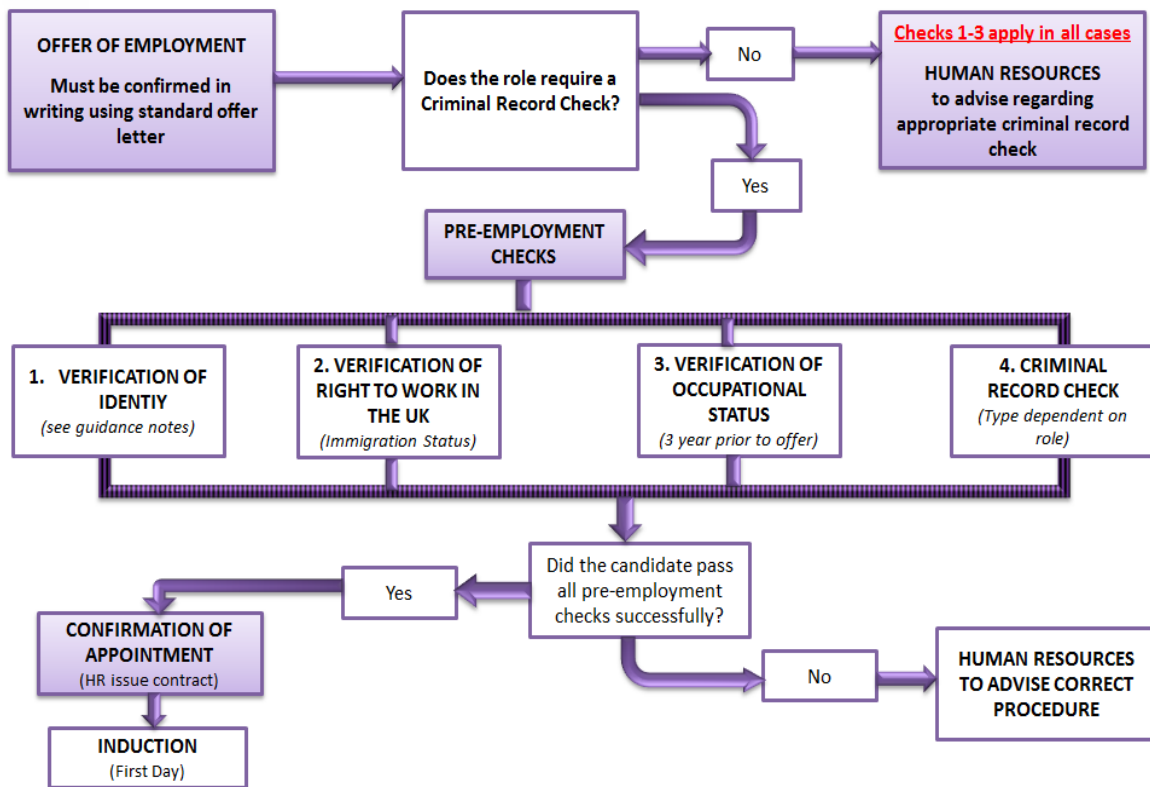
Surrey Heath Borough Council Recruitment Process



APPENDIX 3



Surrey Heath Borough Council BPSS Pre-Employment Checks Process





Surrey Heath Borough Council
Employment Committee
1st February 2024

Agile Working Policy

Head of Service: Sally Kipping – Head of HR, Performance & Communications
Report Author: Julie Simmonds – HR Manager and Bobbie Ludlow, HR Advisor
Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: n/a

Summary and purpose

This report provides the Employment Committee information on our Agile Working Policy following a review with the aim of giving managers and staff updated information. All changes to the policy are tracked change for ease.

Recommendation

The Committee is advised to RESOLVE that the revised Agile Working Policy, as set out at Annex A to this report, be adopted.

1. Background and Supporting Information

1.1 The Agile Working Policy has been reviewed to update information from an HR, ICT and Health & Safety perspective with input into the policy from each of those areas. We are lucky to have a good ICT set up with almost all software used being cloud based. This allows staff to work productively from home if they so wish and their role in the Council supports this. There remains the requirement for staff to be in the office a minimum of 1 day per week.

2. Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 To give Managers and staff clear information of how agile working within the council works and allow them ways of working to help with work/life balance. This in turn can help reduce stress which could lead to sickness absence. It can also be appealing to anyone wishing to apply for roles at SHBC.

3. Proposal and Alternative Options

3.1 It is proposed that the revised policy is adopted, with or without any further amendments considered appropriate.

4. Contribution to the Council's Five Year Strategy

4.1 No matters arising.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 n/a

6. Section 151 Officer Comments:

6.1 This policy was taken to CMT for their comments on 12th December 2023

7. Legal and Governance Issues

7.1 No matters arising.

8. Monitoring Officer Comments:

8.1 This policy was taken to CMT for their comments on 12th December 2023

9. Other Considerations and Impacts

Environment and Climate Change

9.1 n/a

Equalities and Human Rights

9.2 Equality Impact Assessment will be completed

Risk Management

9.3 No matters arising.

Community Engagement

9.4 n/a

Annexes

Annex A - Agile Working Policy

Background Papers

n/a



Human Resources

AGILE WORKING POLICY



January 2024

Surrey Heath Borough Council
Knoll Road, Camberley GU15 3HD
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Contents

1.	Introduction	32
2.	Purpose and Scope	43
3.	Policy	54
4.	Procedure for approving Office, Agile and Homeworking Arrangements.....	87
5	Hours of work	98
6.	Contact and cover	109
7.	Office Environment and Parking.....	1210
8.	Team Ethos.....	1311
9.	Management of performance	1312
10.	Equipment.....	1513
11.	Expenses and allowances	1615
12.	Health and Safety and Risk Assessment.....	1715
13.	Corporate standards	1917
14.	Security.....	2018
15.	Liability	2018
16.	Changing circumstances	2119
17.	Tax and Allowances.....	2120
18 .	First Aid.....	21



I. Introduction

- I.1 We encourage our employees to adopt a flexible, collaborative working style which supports the delivery of effective customer service, whilst also offering [the benefit of](#) staff flexibility in how they work. Agile technology enables us to work remotely, and allows staff to access the information and tools that they need to carry out their work at any time from any location. [Surrey Heath Borough Council is aware that staff are increasingly diverse and this includes a high percentage of parents and individuals with caring responsibilities.](#) We want to be able to support our staff with working as flexibly as possible to meet the demands of their role.
- I.2 In general terms, all staff are required to attend the office a minimum of 1 day a week. Your actual pattern and place of work will be determined by the role that you deliver for the Council, and the arrangements that are agreed between you, your manager and your team. This could range from you being in the office 1 day a week to 5 days a week, as and when required and this will be kept under review.
- I.3 Section 3 categorises how some roles within the Council will require [staff employees](#) to have a fixed work location, ~~or~~ [W-working](#) at different locations other than [Surrey Heath Borough Council, SHBC](#) ~~but, for all other employees~~ there will be an expectation [that staff will](#) be flexible [regarding their working arrangements](#) in their work location. ~~We are working towards achieving remote working and bookable desk arrangements for the majority of staff.~~
- I.4 There are also long term advantages associated with improved employee work-life balance and greater job satisfaction resulting from greater individual ownership over the ways in which people work. Agile working can also have a positive impact upon performance and customer service. This will be monitored and if it proves otherwise, time in the office may need to be increased.



- 1.5 Workspace modernisation has taken on new importance ~~with~~ since COVID-19, ensuring that our working environment is as safe as can be. We need to be highly adaptable to respond and adjust to the changing situation now and in the future. ~~with any virus which may become prevalent.~~

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 This document sets out the Policy, Procedure and standards for remote and mobile working and applies to all ~~staff~~employees working for the Council whose work location may be flexible. Our continued aim is to increase the rate of retention of staff, reduce absence, attract new talent, promote work-life balance and reduce employee stress. In doing so, this will improve the Council's efficiency, productivity and competitiveness.
- 2.2 In addition to 1.2, the following employees will normally be excluded from working from home:
- Employees who are subject to formal support arrangements under the Capability Procedure.
 - Employees who are subject to a formal warning under the Disciplinary.15.3
 - Procedure for a breach of this procedure or other relevant misconduct.
 - Employees who are subject to temporary close supervision in order to obtain quantitative or qualitative data on work outputs.
- 2.3 Agency workers may be assigned as agile or home workers depending on the nature of the role, and the service should assess what equipment will be necessary for them to undertake the duties associated with the role.
- 2.4 This Policy will be applied fairly and consistently to all staff employed in the Council regardless of the work location and number of hours worked.
- 2.5 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:



- Statement of Terms and Conditions of Employment (individual)
- Flexible Working Policy
- Health and Safety Information for officers
- Information Security Policy
- Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Off- site Working Policy and Procedure
- [Information Governance Policy & Strategy](#)
- [Leave and Special Leave Policy](#)
- [Family Fiendly Policy\(to discuss possible paid leave\)](#)
- [Carers Policy \(June 2025\)](#)

~~[COVID working guidelines.](#)~~

3. Policy

3.1 Categorisation of workers and definitions:

Category	Description
Office Worker	Workers will need to be office based for the majority of their working week. and will work in a fixed office location at a fixed desk. The nature of the work dictates that work must be mainly carried out at the office (e.g. acting as a ‘hub’ for the team or continuously responding to clients from a fixed building).
Non Office Worker	Some workers are required to work off site at other locations for example in the Car Parking or Theatre.
Agile Worker	Workers who can work effectively for part of the week at a different location and can choose to split their time between home and a Council office with bookable desk arrangements (where appropriate) .



Homeworker	Workers who work the majority of their working week away from the office. These workers will either work from home or another suitable location and attend a Council office with flexi -desk arrangements when necessary.
Equipment	
<p>For some specialist packages, such as Photoshop we will need to review the employees requirements on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Where appropriate, all employees will be provided with laptops that can be used with desktop docking stations with dual monitors at many desks across any Council offices, or for homeworking. The laptops will pick up the corporate Wi-Fi and / or, a direct wired internet connection automatically from any Council office and, employees will use personal Wi-Fi and / or a direct wired internet connection when working from home.</p> <p>In current circumstances some employees may be using their own equipment to work from home, in this case employees need to ensure they have completed and signed a bring your own device agreement form. ICT can only provide limited support while using personal equipment.</p> <p>For day-to-day activity staff need to use their SHBC issued equipment to access work resources in Okta. In the event of an issue with SHBC equipment short-term access to browser-based applications via Okta from own equipment is possible. The ICT Service Desk is unable to provide support on non-Surrey Heath equipment but can provide user notes for assistance.</p> <p>Telephony is built into the laptops provided or via the 8x8 mobile app.</p>	



- 3.2 No existing employee whose job is assessed as suitable for an agile or home working arrangement will be required to work away from the office environment if they choose not to do so. All existing staff (at the time of this policy being adopted) choosing to become agile or home workers, do so on a voluntary basis.
- 3.3 Existing employees who work under an agile or homeworking arrangement will be expected to do so on a permanent basis or until operational requirements are redefined. Because of office accommodation requirements it may not be possible to allow employees to change to different office working arrangements. However, it is recognised that there may be exceptional circumstances where a line manager in conjunction with HR may agree to a change a role to office based working, and these should be assessed on a case by case basis.
- 3.4 Employees will be provided with ICT support by raising a ticket through Fresh Service, including equipment (Laptop, riser, keyboard, mouse), software, training and technical support and advice, as appropriate to their work style.
- 3.5 Employees who work at home as part of their working arrangement will be provided with advice and information on appropriate insurance. (Please see 15.3 for further information).
- 3.6 Employees working away from the office (at home or at other work locations) must be contactable by telephone or virtually through MS Teams or Zoom during pre-defined working hours.
- 3.7 Employees who volunteer to become agile or home workers or, new employees who are recruited as agile or homeworkers are expected to provide themselves with a suitable workspace within the home where they can work effectively. All working environments (including the home 'office') will be subject to a risk assessment to ensure the health and safety of relevant employees. Employees may be prevented from working from home where their workspace within the home has been assessed as not compliant with health and safety requirements (see 12.3). [The Facilities](#)



[Team are contactable regarding suitable office equipment for homeworking.](#)

- 3.8 All employees working at home must have suitable dependent care arrangements in place. Employees should enquire with their managers if they need further support and/or flexibility. It is the employees responsibility to ensure they have suitable care provisions in place allowing for minimal distractions when carrying out their role.
- 3.9 Council office locations which accommodate agile workers will have adequate arrangements for 'flexi-desks', including workstations (laptop docking stations) and meeting spaces.
- 3.10 ~~For employees working at SHBC who do not have a permanent desk they will be required to use a cloud-based booking system.~~ [The Council SHBC](#) have a clear desk policy and [staff employees](#) will be able to keep personal items in [either](#) moveable pedestals ~~or lockable lockers~~ for security purposes.
- 3.11 ~~We To~~ ensure that [staff employees](#) are working in a clean and safe environment [at Surrey Heath Borough Council. SHBC will continue with their current cleaning processes.](#) There ~~continue to be~~ [will also be](#) supplies of antibacterial wipes ~~and sprays~~ for employees ~~to regular~~ use. [The Facilities Team can provide additional supplies of cleaning materials.](#)
- 3.12 All equipment provided to the employee is for the exclusive use of that employee (i.e. not for use by family/friends).
- 3.13 Managers and [staff employees](#) will be provided with procedures, training and support, as necessary, to ensure that performance and conduct can be managed for agile and home workers.

4. Procedure for approving Office, Agile and Homeworking Arrangements



- 4.1 The line manager, in conjunction with the Strategic Director/ Head of Service and HR, will determine the business requirements within their teams.
- 4.2 The line manager will meet [staff employees](#), as necessary, to discuss the implications of transferring to agile or homeworking, and will ensure that they have access to any relevant guidance documents and to discuss any concerns. HR or ICT can provide further information or answer specific queries.
- 4.3 If an employee cannot work remotely due to a change of circumstances, a fixed office base will be considered if there are sound reasons that affect the employee's ability to work flexibly.
- 4.4 In cases where the employee has been excluded from working from home (see 2.2 above), in exceptional circumstances the line manager may, in conjunction with the Strategic Director/ Head of Service and HR, determine that agile or homeworking may commence or continue. This decision should take account of the operational needs of the service, the nature of the problem, and be subject to suitable management arrangements being in place.
- 4.5 Agile working arrangements may be suspended for short periods for operational reasons, after consultation with affected employees.

5 Hours of work

- 5.1 [Staff Employees](#) working away from the office must be available to work between 7.30am and 6.00pm Monday to Friday as specified in the bandwidths contained in Council's Flexible Working Scheme, unless the post specifically requires work to be carried out outside these hours, or where alternative arrangements have been agreed with the line manager, subject to service provision.



- 5.2 Full time [staff employees](#) should always be at work between any core hours (Monday- Thursday 10.00am-4pm and Friday 10.00am – 3.30pm) agreed by the service, and must take a lunch break of at least ½ hour between 12.00 noon and 2.30 pm unless, otherwise agreed with their line manager that a break may be taken outside this time. The minimum requirements for [staff employee](#) rest breaks are at least a ~~30~~ minutes break during each working day where their work pattern is longer than six hours.
- 5.3 For part time [staff employees](#), the line manager and employee should agree the normal daily working hours, during which period the employee should be contactable by telephone, virtually and email, as appropriate.
- 5.4 ~~Following a conversation the line manager may agree with the employee to take reasonable ‘time out’ during working hours in order to improve work life balance (e.g. to take children from school to an after school activity, walk the dog or attend appointments). If there are times where you may need to take time out of your working day, for example to attend an appointment then this must be firstly agreed prior to the event and recorded on Itrent under flexitime. The link is enclosed Flexi time policy and the policy is found on Warbler and on the home screen in iTrent there is information regarding how to record flexitime.~~
- 5.5 [Staff Employees](#) working from home need to consider their dependent care arrangements. Homeworking is not a substitute for dependent care arrangements, and employees working from home should not do so whilst in sole charge of dependants requiring care and supervision. Consult with your line manager if support and flexibility is required.
- 5.6 All [workersemployees](#) have a responsibility to adhere to the Working Time Regulations (WTR) with respect to weekly working hours and rest breaks. Line managers should monitor the number of hours [staffemployees](#) are working flexibly to ensure that WTR are not breached.

6. Contact and cover



- 6.1 Line Managers should ensure that [staff employees](#) are clear on the standards that apply to them locally in terms of contact, availability, telephone cover, office cover, working from home etc.
- 6.2 [Staff Employees](#) who are unable to work due to being unwell should contact their line manager in accordance with the normal Sickness Absence procedure regardless of the location they are working from. It is the managers responsibility to ensure iTrent is updated to reflect any sickness absence [on day one.](#)
- 6.3 All [staff employees](#) working flexibly should be contactable by their line manager and other officers of the Council during their normal working hours or the hours specified in their Outlook Calendar. Where appropriate, they should also be contactable ~~by customers~~ [by customers](#)/clients. Agreed 'time out' should clearly be blocked out in the Outlook calendar to indicate that the employee cannot be contacted during these hours. Use of 'private' in Outlook should be used wisely and only when necessary.
- 6.4 All [workersemployees](#) should keep their Outlook calendars up to date with their location and times of meetings and make them available to the whole team or service. Managers should ensure this is adhered to for Health and Safety reasons as well as knowing who is where in their team.
- 6.5 All [staff employees](#) should adhere to the Council's Telephony Usage Standards. Suitable personal voicemail messages should be recorded so that callers have the right information if the employee is unavailable or away from work. [Please see the enclosed link from Warbler](#)
<https://warbler.workvivo.com/search?query=8x8+message>
- 6.6 Flexible workers should ensure they are always logged onto the 8x8 system when at work. This ensures that calls to their telephone extension are routed to and from their preferred device (lap top with or without head set, mobile as appropriate). Employees are required to constantly update their status on 8x8 to ensure that the system is live and accurate.



- 6.7 Agile and homeworkers may be required by the line manager to participate in a rota system to cover office hours or essential services such as customer help lines and duty systems. This requirement will be determined on a case by case basis in each workplace/team.
- 6.8 Agile and homeworkers will be required to attend meetings, training, seminars etc. as appropriate to the job, and to provide reasonable cover for absent colleagues at the request of the line manager.

7. Office Environment and Parking

- 7.1 Agile and Homeworkers will be allocated a 'designated office' which is deemed to be their place of work when not working from home or at other locations.
- 7.2 The Council will provide workstations ~~(also known as 'flexi-desks')~~ [for Agile for Agile](#) and Homeworkers to use when they are in the office. They will be required to use whichever convenient workstation is available through the booking system [\(where applicable\)](#) and therefore employees will not have the right of exclusive use of a particular workstation. All ~~flexi-~~desks should be cleared at the end of the working session and left clean and tidy for the next occupant.
- 7.3 Although Teams will have designated area's within the Council Offices, if a desk is not available immediately within that area, then look for an alternative desk on the booking system. If you are not attending the office all day, only book the desk for the time required to allow other staff to search on the booking system and use.
- 7.3 Agile and Homeworkers will have access to lockable storage in the designated office for their personal files, papers, ICT equipment and stationery.



- 7.4 Where an Occupational Health assessment has determined that an Agile or Home worker requires specific workstation equipment to carry out their work, they may be given priority use of a specific workstation if this is the only practical way to provide it.
- 7.5 [The Staff Car Parking Guidelines](#) remain in place for all Staff.

8. Team Ethos

- 8.1 Good communication is essential to agile working and under flexible working arrangements it will be the manager's responsibility to ensure that they maintain team ethos within their team. Managers will therefore need to consider:

The use of effective communication which may include regular contact and supervision meetings, updates, team meetings, informal break chats.

Planning team building and team activities.

Inducting new staff members into the team including their socialisation into the team.

Ensuring emotional support is available as required either through access to managers or through the introduction of a buddy system within the team.

Creating opportunities for team working, mentoring and training opportunities.

Managers will be supported in sourcing appropriate training to meet their needs in supporting their particular teams to work effectively and promote team wellbeing, and training will also be available to wider staff members where required. Contact HR if you need any further support.

9. Management of performance

- 9.1 Managers must put in place arrangements to ensure that the performance of each employee can be managed effectively without continuous direct supervision. Under remote working arrangements, performance



management and regular contact is more important and therefore needs to be more planned and formalised.

9.2 Performance management should include;

Regular 1:1 meetings with the employee to discuss work issues, including progress towards objectives. These should occur at least once every 4 to 6 weeks, and give the manager and the employee the opportunity to raise any matters of concern. [The manager should seek advice from HR to discuss next steps regarding the member of their team.](#)

The use of updates between managers and employees in between supervision meetings through effective communication.

The use of 'SMART' work objectives in performance review and 1:1 meetings.

Regular feedback from customers and other data on work output (where appropriate).

Effective communication mechanisms such as team briefings, team meetings, team building days etc.

Providing support mechanisms and a supportive environment to staff who find remote working challenging.

For new employees, ensure they have all they need in order for them to settle into their role as quickly as possible. Complete the 1 month, 3 month and 6⁵ month probation form to identify any training, support, access to software and anything else a new member of staff may require.-

[The manager must record detailed notes on the probation form which is recorded on staff files.](#)

9.3 Home and Agile working arrangements require employees to be well-organised and motivated, with clear objectives and timescales for achieving them. Management of home and agile workers must take into account the need for support, and training if necessary, to manage their own workload without direct supervision.



- 9.4 If the line manager has any concerns about the employee's conduct or performance, these should be raised as soon as possible with the employee. The line manager should consider with the employee whether any additional advice or support is required to help them to reach the required standards. Consideration should be given as to whether the home or agile working arrangement should be suspended after taking advice from HR.
- 9.5 Serious concerns about underperformance should be addressed through either the Capability Procedure, or the Disciplinary Procedure if the behaviour constitutes misconduct.
- 9.6 Managers and employees are able to access training, support and advice on the effective management of home and agile working arrangements through the corporate training programme and HR.

10. Equipment

- 10.1 The Council's ICT service will provide support and advice to an employee working remotely, however the service is unable to support an employee's home internet connection. Where an employee's home internet connection does not work they must contact their line manager who should advise them that they need to come into the office to work until the problem is resolved.
- 10.2 Agile and Homeworkers must have broadband installed with a wireless router or a wired (R45 Ethernet) network connection. Employees who do not wish to purchase broadband may not be allowed to work from home. Employees should not use Council-issued 3G cards to access the network when working from home. Any specific requirements which may be required needs to discussed with ICT as there needs to be assessment for security.
- 10.3 Equipment supplied by the Council is for business purposes. Employees should refer to the ICT Policy regarding the use of Council equipment for



personal use for more information. The equipment must not be used by anyone (e.g. members of the family, friends etc) other than the employee.

- 10.4 Where Council owned equipment requires maintenance or repair, this must only be carried out by the Council's ICT Service.
- 10.5 For security and support reasons employees will not be provided with a home printer unless in exceptional circumstances a business case for home printing has been investigated and approved.
- 10.6 All equipment remains the property of the Council and must be returned on demand. By raising a ticket through Fresh Service requesting IT equipment it will enable the ICT Team to keep an inventory of all equipment issued to employees.
- 10.7 Managers must work with the employee and ICT to ensure that adequate precautions are taken to maintain confidentiality of information assessed or stored in an off-site/home working environment in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy for Home Working, the, Data Protection Act 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/data-protection> and related legislation or guidelines.
- 10.8 Employees are expected to take reasonable precautions to keep Council property and information secure. Confidential and personal data must be shredded or returned to the Council for proper disposal.
- 10.9 In the event of loss, theft or damage to Council equipment, employees must report the incident to ICT, Strategic Director/Head of Service and/or local police (as appropriate) within 24 hours. If data is lost, this must be reported to the Information Governance Manager.
- 10.10 Purchase of office equipment or stationary for use at home will not be reimbursed but obtained through the Council's Facilities Team or ICT.

11. Expenses and allowances



- 11.1 Employees will not be entitled to any allowances or reimbursement of utility bills for working from home with the exception of 17.1.
- 11.2 Mileage is not payable when the Agile or Homeworker attends the designated office as detailed in your terms and conditions of work. Any other mileage incurred will be paid at the relevant mileage rate depending on the reason for travel and any car user status attached to the post. (see car user policy)
- 11.3 For Homeworkers who are not based in a Council office and are attending site visits throughout the day, working time will begin when travel to the first site commences and ends when reaching home at the end of the day.

12. Health and Safety and Risk Assessment

- 12.1 Most of the regulations made under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 apply to employees working at home as well as to employees working at Council accommodation.
- 12.2 Managers have a responsibility to ensure that a health and safety risk self-assessment is completed for the employee's work area in the home, to ensure that work can be undertaken safely without endangering the health of the worker or their family. [Corporate Guidance— Risk Assessment Policy Risk assessment focus on prevention, as opposed to reacting when things go wrong. It is therefore possible to prevent accidents and injuries that could ruin lives. Once a risk assessment is completed, the significant risks must be communicated to the staff, to enable their co-operation to ensure that they work in a safe working environment.](#)
- 12.3 The Workrite on-line Homeworking Assessment for Mobile and Flexible Working should be completed as a joint exercise between the line manager and employee. Employees have responsibility for implementing any actions identified in order to reduce/mitigate risks in their home and to make their work environment safe. The cost of any adjustments to the home working



environment to meet health and safety requirements should be borne by the employee (with the exception of 3.7).

- 12.4 Managers should be reviewing health and safety on a regular basis and should be discussed on a frequent basis during 1:1 meetings. Where there are concerns, appropriate advice should be sought.
- 12.5 Where employees are visiting clients/sites etc. they must ensure they make frequent contact with their office/[line manager](#), usually after each visit in line with the Service's Off Site Working Policy.
- 12.6 Any accidents whether they occur in the work place, whilst working from home or on a visit should be reported to the line manager as normal and recorded on an accident report form.
- 12.7 Employees with particular needs will be assessed by the Health and Safety Officer and/ or Occupational Health. Recommendations will be made about the specific equipment needed (e.g. special computer mouse, or a specific type of chair). This equipment will be provided for the employee to use at their main work location. If the main work location is not the office, the cost of providing additional/specialist equipment for working at home will be considered however, if this cost is judged unreasonable, the Council may determine that the worker should be required to work in the office. Prior to making this decision the line manager should seek advice from HR.
- 12.8 Electrical equipment supplied by the Council should be regularly tested, in line with the annual frequency at the employee's designated office location.
- 12.9 Employees must never use handheld mobile phones or email devices whilst driving and employees should be stationary when making or receiving telephone calls whilst driving. (see car user policy)
- 12.10 If the line manager determines that a new employee cannot safely work at home, they must work in the office at a [flexi-desk](#).



12.11 Mental Health considerations will be at the forefront of how new working arrangements are affecting individuals and we encourage you to speak to your manager or HR if you are experiencing any issues.

13. Corporate standards

13.1 All employees should respect others when it comes to the working environment and be aware of how their behaviour might impact on others working in a flexible environment. It is recommended that locally services agree to a list of standards that are then communicated to employees to follow.

13.2 The standards below represent the minimum that is expected from employees, it is not intended to be an exclusive or exhaustive list and should be used as the basis for local agreements:

- Be aware of noise levels in the office.
- Leave all **flexi**-desks clean and clear for the next user.
- There should be no attempt to 'claim' or personalise **flexi**-desks.
- 'Fixed' desks should be left clear when employees are on leave to allow other employees to use them.
- Time keeping should be adhered to both at the start and end of meetings as a courtesy to those attending the meeting as well as to the next user of the room.
- Leave meeting areas tidy (e.g. clearing up dirty cups at the end of a meeting)
- Avoid eating smelly foods at desks.
- Avoid having meetings at desks as this can disturb others. Where possible, meetings should be held either in meeting rooms or in break-out areas.
- Earphones should be used for Teams meetings attended at the desk to reduce noise levels.

Where problems develop with working environments these should be reported using the management structure in place to resolve issues as they arise.



14. Security

- 14.1 Employees must ensure that all Council data and equipment (including laptops, handheld email devices, mobiles phones etc.) are stored securely, and that it is not at risk of loss or theft. Guidelines for employees on data security when working away from the office is provided in the Off Site Working Policy.

15. Liability

- 15.1 Employees working away from the office are covered by the Council's insurance policy for employer's liability and personal accident in the same way as office-based employees.
- 15.2 Equipment supplied to employees working away from the office is covered by the Council's insurance arrangements providing it is used for work purposes only, and in line with manufacturer's instructions.
- 15.3 All employees working from home for part of their working week should contact their own insurance company to advise that they will be working from home. The Council will not reimburse any increase in premium should this occur. Employees undertaking authorised off-site work are covered by the Council's employee liability insurance to the same extent as office-based workers. However, the extent of the insurance will in some cases be limited by the circumstances and the nature of the loss/damage incurred.
- 15.4 It is the employee's responsibility to check with relevant third parties (e.g. insurers) to ensure that they have relevant permissions to work from home without restrictions or penalty. The Council will not be liable for any charges related to investigating or obtaining such confirmation.
- 15.5 If an employee is home working in rented accommodation they should advise mortgagees or landlords that they intend to work at home. However, using a room or part of a room to work in would not normally



require planning permission. Working from home should not affect Council Tax liability.

16. Changing circumstances

- 16.1 When one of the circumstances below arises, the Council reserves the right to reconsider the working arrangements under which the employee works. No changes will be made without consulting the individual concerned.

The employee moves to a different job role, either permanently or on a secondment or acting up basis. The suitability of the new role for agile or homeworking will need to be assessed.

The employee moves home. Arrangements for homeworking will need to be reassessed.

The Council undertakes a reorganisation of the work area. All job roles will need to be reassessed in the light of changes to job profiles and person specifications.

- 16.2 Managers are responsible for reclaiming equipment where an employee leaves or moves posts in order for it to be reallocated to the next post holder.
- 16.3 Managers are responsible for keeping a record of work arrangements in their team and informing HR of any changes to their regular hours.

17. Tax and Allowances

- 17.1 Employees should be aware that the guidelines around claiming tax relief for working from home has changed for any claims on or after 6th April 2023³² [due to the increase in the cost of living](#). For additional information and to see if you can claim please see the enclosed link and contact the HR Team for further guidance. <https://www.gov.uk/tax-relief-for-employees/working-at-home>



First aid

18.1 Staff are covered under the Council's accident insurance policy in their home. Accidents must be reported immediately to the nominated person set out in the Council's Health and Safety Policy.



Surrey Heath Borough Council
Employment Committee
1st February 2024

Pensions Discretions Policy

Head of Service Sally Kipping – Head of HR, Performance & Communications
Report Author: Julie Simmonds – HR Manager
Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: n/a

Summary and purpose

This report provides the Employment Committee with information regarding the Council's Pensions Discretions Policy which is an annual item on the agenda.

Each pension fund has to have a discretionary policy, which needs to be kept under review. However, its noted that there is no legal requirement that it be reviewed annually and Surrey County Council have not issued an updated Pensions Discretions Policy.

The policy has not changed but it has come back this year again points as a reminder of the considerations. It has also been taken to Corporate Management Team for consideration.

Recommendation

The Committee is advised to RESOLVE that no amendments be made to the current Pensions Discretions Policy.

1. Background and Supporting Information

1.1 The Pension Discretions Policy has to be reviewed and it has been an annual review to date. If there is a need to change it before the annual review it will come back for recommendation sooner.

2. Reasons for Recommendation

2.1 Each pension fund has to have a discretionary policy, which needs to be kept under review

3. Proposal and Alternative Options

3.1 The continuation of the existing Pensions Discretions Policy brought to Employment Committee January 2023.

4. Contribution to the Council's Five Year Strategy

4.1 No matters arising.

5. Resource Implications

5.1 n/a

6. Section 151 Officer Comments:

6.1 This policy was taken to CMT 12th December 2023

7. Legal and Governance Issues

7.1 No further matters arising.

8. Monitoring Officer Comments:

8.1 This policy was taken to CMT 12th December 2023

9. Other Considerations and Impacts

Environment and Climate Change

9.1 n/a

Equalities and Human Rights

9.2 Equality Impact Assessment completed Jan 2020 and no changes to Pensions Discretions Policy have been made since this date

Risk Management

9.3 No matters arising.

Community Engagement

9.4 n/a

Annexes

Annex A - Pensions Discretions Policy

Background Papers

n/a

PENSIONS DISCRETIONS POLICY



Surrey Heath Borough Council Pension Discretions Policy

1 Introduction

- 1.1** Surrey Heath Borough Council (the Council) is a participating employer in the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and as an employer is under a legal duty to prepare and publish a written statement of its policy relating to certain discretionary powers under the Regulations which apply to the Local Government Pension Scheme (“the LGPS”).
- 1.2** Surrey Heath Borough Council is also under a duty to formulate, publish and keep under review a Statement of Policy in respect of how these powers are applied where they relate to the payment of compensation to employees whose employment is terminated as a result of redundancy or certain other reasons.
- 1.3** This document is intended to comply with these duties and the following table, sets out the discretionary powers concerned, identifies the relevant Regulation that gives Surrey Heath Borough Council the discretion and describes how the discretion will be exercised.
- 1.4** The policy set out in this document will not be departed from except as provided for in the policy or following a variation to the policy approved by Surrey Heath Borough Council.
- 1.5** This statement is not a definitive statement of the law and is subject to the provisions of the relevant Regulations.
- 1.6** The Regulations that apply to the LGPS are:
- The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (these are referred to as the “Pensions Regulations”);
 - The Local Government Pension Scheme (Transitional Provisions, Savings and Amendment) Regulations 2014 (referred to as the “Transitional Regulations”);
 - The Local Government Pension Scheme (Benefits, Membership and Contributions) Regulations 2007 applied to the LGPS before 1 April 2014, are preserved in part on a transitional basis by the Transitional Regulations and are referred to as the “Benefits Regulations”
- 1.7** The Regulations which apply to the payment of compensation to employees whose employment is terminated as a result of redundancy, other specified reasons or injury are:
- The Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) (England and Wales) Regulations 2006 (referred to as the “Compensation Regulations”).
 - The Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (Injury Allowances) Regulations 2011 (referred to as the “Injury Regulations”).

2 Definitions

In the Appendix below:

- 2.1** “The Scheme” or “the Pension Scheme” means the LGPS and “the Fund” or “the Pension Fund” means the fund maintained under the LGPS;
- 2.2** “Member” means a member of the LGPS;
- 2.3** “Active member” means a member in employment and paying, or treated as paying, contributions to the LGPS, or absent from employment for a reason mentioned in Regulation 11 of the Pensions Regulations.
- 2.4** References to a member with transitional protection are those who can count membership accrued before 1 October 2006 and who have statutory transitional protection under the Transitional Regulations, wholly or partly, from changes that would otherwise be made to their pension entitlements and/or from actuarial reductions that would otherwise be applied to their pension benefits as a result of the coming into force of the Pensions Regulations on 1 April 2014.
- 2.5** References to a member meeting “the 85 year rule” are those a members whose age in whole years when added to the member’s total membership in whole years is 85 years or more.

3 Scope

This policy covers all employees who are members of the LGPS and are employed at Surrey Heath Borough Council.

4 Equality Assessment Policy

The Council’s Equality Scheme demonstrates its commitment to equality internally and externally and ensures that all sections of the community are given an opportunity to contribute to the wellbeing of the community. An equality impact assessment has been carried out on this policy and procedure. The Council ensures that consultation is representative of the community and that consideration is given on how to consult ‘hard-to-reach’ groups and will positively learn from responses.

5 Policy Statement

- 5.1** This Policy document provides a full summary of the key discretions in-line with the LGPS Regulations. This policy contains no contractual rights.

- 5.2 Discretionary compensation payments will only be awarded in exceptional circumstances.
- 5.3 The Council retains the right to change the policy at any time. Where reference is made in this policy to an officer with a decision making role, the authority to make these decisions will be for them and their successor roles should there be a change in the future.
- 5.4 Only the version of the policy that is current at the time a relevant event occurs will be applicable.
- 5.5 The full list of the Council's policy statement relating to pensions discretions awarded by the Regulations can be found at Appendix A.

6. Policy Review

- 6.1 This policy and the discretions found at Appendix A will be reviewed annually.

Appendix 1**Summary of Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Discretions with Surrey Heath Borough Council**

NB: Where the discretion concerns a Tier 1 or Tier 2 Officer the delegation will be the Employment Committee
 Tier 1 Officer is the Head of Paid Service and the Tier 2 Officers are the Strategic Directors and Heads of Service

No	Area	Regulation	Discretion	Policy summary	Delegation
1	Whether to vary an employee's contribution band	Regulations 9 and 10 Pensions Regulations	Members must pay pension contributions at the appropriate rate set on 1 st April or the first day of active membership, if later.	Surrey Heath Borough Council may vary employee's contribution rate if there is a material change and each case will be considered on its merits.	Head of HR, Performance and Communications.
2	Whether to increase assumed pensionable pay in certain specific circumstances	Regulation 21(5), 21(5A) and 21(5B) Pension Regulations	If a member is absent as a result of illness, child related leave or reserve forces leave their pension benefits may be based on assumed pensionable pay (APP). If, in the employer's opinion, the member's APP is materially lower than their pay in the twelve months preceding the absence they can either include (1) a "regular" lump sum	Surrey Heath Borough Council may increase assumed pensionable pay and each case will be considered on its merits.	Head of HR, Performance and Communications.

			received during that period or (2) substitute a higher pensionable pay having regard for their earnings in that period.		
3	Funding of Additional Pension Contributions	Regulations 16(2)(e) and 16 (4) (d) Pensions Regulations	Whether to fund, in whole or in part, a shared cost additional pension contributions (SCAPC) on behalf of an active member by regular contributions (Regulation 16(2)(e)) or by lump sum (Regulation 16(4)(d))	<p>Surrey Heath Borough Council does not currently make discretionary contributions towards the cost of APCs to purchase extra annual pension, nor will the Council establish such a scheme in the future unless this would result in a significant financial advantage. This may be considered in exceptional circumstances where there are business benefits. Consideration will be based on the same rationale as the Council's policy relating to granting extra annual pension.</p> <p>Note: Discretion does not apply where member elects within 30 days of</p>	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.

				return from authorised unpaid leave to pay a SCAPC to cover the cost of 'lost' pension as the regulations state that the employer must, in these cases, contribute 2/3 of the cost to a SCAPC.	
4	Shared Cost Additional Voluntary Contributions (SCAVCs)	Regulation 17(1) and Schedule 1 (definition of SCAVC) Pension Regulations	Whether to contribute towards a Shared Cost Additional Contribution arrangement. Pre-201 SCAVCs also fall under Regulation 17 by virtue of Regulation 15(2A) Transitional Regulations.	Surrey Heath Borough Council will not contribute to SCAVCs except in exceptional circumstances.	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.
5	Whether to grant early payment of pension on compassionate grounds (pre-1st April 1998 leavers)	Regulation D11(2) (c) of 1995 Regulations	Whether to agree to early payment of pension benefits from age 50 on compassionate grounds. The employer should note that pension benefits paid before age 55 may attract an unauthorised payments surcharge and they may have to pay a strain cost because the pension	Surrey Heath Borough Council will only agree to early payment of pension in exceptional circumstances.	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.

			benefits cannot be reduced.		
6	Flexible Retirement	Regulation 30(6) Pensions Regulations Regulations 11(2) and (3) of Transitional Regulations	Whether to agree to an employee aged 55 or over reducing their hours of work or their grade so that they may receive all or some of their retirement pension while still employed. Whether, in addition to any pre-1 st April 2008 pension benefits which the member must draw, to permit the member to draw; (a) all, part or none of benefits accrued between 1 st April 2008 and 31 st March 2014 and (b) all, part or none of the pension benefits built up after 31 st March 2014.	There is a general presumption that the Council will consider requests for Flexible retirement on their merits and to agree where it is in the Council's interests. On the basis that pension benefits taken before normal retirement age are reduced in accordance with guidance issued by the Government Actuary. See separate Flexible Retirement Policy Statement	Both the Head of HR, Performance and Communications and the Head of Paid Service. The Head of HR, Performance and Communications and the Employment Committee where the flexible retirement request concerns the Head of Paid Service.
7	Switching-on the 85-year rule (excludes flexible retirement)	Schedule 2 of Transitional Regulations	Whether to switch on the 85-year rule under Regulation 1(2) and 1(3)	Whilst there will be no general adoption of this discretion, Surrey Heath	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.

			of Schedule 2 of the Transitional Regulations.	Borough Council may agree to switch on the 85 year rule in exceptional circumstances such as compassionate grounds, or where it is in Surrey Heath's business interests, and taking into account the affordability of the employer costs arising.	
8	Waiving of Actuarial Reduction to Pensions	Regulation 30(8), Pensions Regulations Schedule 2 of Transitional Regulations	(Post 2014) Whether to agree to waive, in whole or in part, any actuarial reduction that would otherwise apply to the pension paid to a former employee aged 55 or over under 30(5) or 30(6) [flexible retirement] using regulation 30(8) of the Pension Regulations. (Pre-2014) Whether to waive actuarial reductions entirely under 30(5) or 30 A(5) [deferred pensioner members] of the Benefits Regulations and Regulation 2(1), of	This may be considered in exceptional circumstances where there are business benefits. Surrey Heath Borough Council reserves the right to review the details of each case based on its individual merits.	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.

			Schedule 2 of the Transitional Regulations.		
9	Award of Additional Pension (not exceeding the overall additional pension limit of £6, 822 (April 2018 and uplifted annually)).	Regulation 32, Pensions Regulations	<p>To award additional pension at full cost to the employer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) an active member; or (2) a former active member who was dismissed by reason of redundancy, business efficiency or mutual consent on grounds of business efficiency. <p>Additionally, in the case of a member falling within (2) above, the resolution to award additional pension must be made within 6 months from the date on which the employment ended.</p>	This is a general presumption that Surrey Heath Borough Council will not award additional membership. However, Surrey Heath Borough Council will consider and decide individual cases on their merits where it is in Surrey Heath's interest and taking account of the employer costs of the additional pension.	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.

10	Aggregation of Benefits: Concurrent Employments	Regulation 22(7)(b), Pensions Regulations	Whether to allow an active member with concurrent employments, who ceases an employment with an entitlement to a deferred pension, more than 12 months to elect not to have their deferred pension aggregated with their active member's pension account.	Surrey Heath Borough Council will only extend the deadline in exceptional circumstances.	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.
11	Aggregation of Benefits: Deferred Member becoming Active Member	Regulation 22(8) (b), Pensions Regulations	Whether to allow a deferred member who becomes an active member longer than 12 months in which to elect not to have their deferred benefits aggregated with the benefits in their active member's pension account.	Surrey Heath Borough Council will only extend the deadline in exceptional circumstances.	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.
12	Aggregation of Benefits: Deferred Member becoming Active Member (pre-2014 membership)	Regulation 10(6) (b) Transitional Regulations	Whether to allow a deferred member who becomes an active member longer than 12 months in which to elect for their pre-2014 deferred benefits to be aggregated with their	Surrey Heath Borough Council will only extend the deadline in exceptional circumstances.	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.

			active member's pension account (but, technically, they would lose the final salary link if they have not made an election under 5(5). Transitional Regulations within twelve months of becoming an active member of 2013 scheme).		
13	Inward Transfer of Pension Rights	Regulation 100, Pensions Regulations	Whether to allow an employee who has been an active member in their current employment for more than 12 months to ask for the transfer of certain accrued pension rights to be considered. Note: Regulation 100(6) of the Pensions Regulations requires that a request must be made within 12 months beginning with the date on which the member first became an active member in an employment or such longer period as the	Surrey Heath Borough Council will only extend the deadline in exceptional circumstances.	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.

			employer and the Administering Authority may allow. The discretion is, therefore, only exercisable if both the Employing Authority and the Administering Authority agree.		
14	Redundancy Payments	Regulation 5, Compensation Regulation 2006	Whether to base redundancy pay on actual pay where actual pay exceeds the statutory maximum under the Employment Rights Act 1996 (£508.00 from April 2018).	Surrey Heath Borough Council will base the calculation of a week's pay for redundancy on actual pay if it is higher than the statutory limit.	Both the Head of HR, Performance and Communications and the Head of Paid Service.
15	Compensation for loss of Employment	Regulation 6, Compensation Regulations 2006	Whether to pay compensation to a person whose employment ceases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - by reason of redundancy; - in the interest of the efficient exercise of the employing authority's functions; or 	Surrey Heath Borough Council will only award compensation for loss of employment in exceptional circumstances.	Both the Head of HR, Performance and Communications and the Head of Paid Service.

			in the case of a joint appointment, because the other holder of the appointment leaves.		
16	Injury Allowances	14(1) of the Compensation Regulations 2011	<p>Scheme employer (LGPS employers), apart from admission bodies, must formulate, publish and keep under review a policy on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. whether to make and injury award to those who sustain an injury or contract a disease as a result of anything they were required to do in performing the duties of their job and in consequence of which they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - suffer a reduction in remuneration, or - cease to be employed as a result 	Surrey Heath Borough Council may only pay injury allowances in exceptional circumstances.	Both the Head of Paid Service and the Employment Committee.

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Surrey Heath Borough Council
Employment Committee
1st February 2024

Work Programme 2023/24

Head of Service Sally Kipping – HR, Performance & Communications
Report Author: Julie Simmonds – HR Manager
Key Decision: No
Wards Affected: n/a

Summary and purpose

To agree the work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year.

Recommendation

The Committee is advised to RESOLVE that the work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year be agreed, as set out at Annex A.

1. Background and Supporting Information

- 1.1 At each meeting the Committee will consider the work programme, be advised of updates and agree amendments as appropriate.
- 1.2 Meetings have been scheduled for the 2023/24 municipal year as follows:
- 28 March 2024

2. Proposal and Alternative Options

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Committee considers the list of topics listed in Annex A of the work programme and makes such amendments as appropriate

Annexes

Annex A –Work Programme for 2023/24

**Employment Committee
Work Programme
2023/24**

Committee meetings for the municipal year are scheduled to be held on the following dates:

- 28 March 2024

The following work for the 2023/24 municipal year has been identified for consideration by the Committee:

Meeting	Topic	Source
7 March 2024	Pay Settlement 24/25	HR
	Grievance Policy and Procedure for Statutory and non-statutory CMT	HR
	Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for Statutory and non-statutory CMT	HR
	Casual and Fixed Term Staff Policy	HR (review)

To be scheduled:
Aggression at Work Policy – 24/25
Carers' Policy
Family Friendly Policy
Leave and Special Leave