

Wednesday, 8 May 2024

EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Employment, Health & Safety Committee was held on Wednesday, 8 May 2024 at the Civic Centre, Ridley Street, Redcar.

PRESENT Councillor
Councillors Stuart Smith (Vice-Chair), A Brook,
K Evans, M Fairley, P Grogan, P McInnes and
V Rider.

OFFICIALS S Newton, Vik Smith and J Garnett.

IN ATTENDANCE Councillor .

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Head (Chair), R Clark, A Oliver, L Pallister, D Powlay and L White.

33 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Grogan declared an interest in all matters relating to Fire Safety as the owner of a Fire Protection Company.

34 TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 MARCH 2024 AND NOTE THE ATTENDANCE MATRIX

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 27th March 2024 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record and the attendance matrix be noted.

35 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LGPS) DISCRETIONARY POLICY STATEMENT

The Senior Health and Safety Officer updated Members on Health and Safety Performance and answered Members questions in relation to it.

The updated LGPS Discretionary Policy Statement has been formulated using the suggested template provide by Teesside Pension Fund. The policy statement details how the Council will exercise its discretion in various cases and there are no proposed changes to current arrangements. Under the policy statement the Council will only implement it's discretion where it can be demonstrated as being in the authority's best interest and where it is clear that there are financial

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and/or operational advantages to the authority in doing so.

As part of the ensuing discussion the following points were noted.

- 333 members of staff have opted out of the pension scheme. The majority of those who have opted out are on flexible retirement.
- If an employee was a member of the LGPS at any time between 1 April 1998 and 30 September 2006, they may be protected under the 85-year rule. To satisfy the 85-year rule an employee's age and length of LGPS membership need to add up to 85 and affords some protection to pension benefits depending on how and when the employee retires.
- If staff not on flexible retirement wish to opt out, they are encouraged to join the 50/50 scheme. This way they are paying less into their pension while maintaining their staff benefits.

RESOLVED- Employment Health and Safety Committee approved the updated LGPS Discretionary Policy Statement.

36

RIGHT TO REQUEST FLEXIBLE WORKING

Presented by Jane Garnet

The Flexible Working Policy has been developed to cater for the legislation supporting an employee's statutory right to request flexible working arrangements and reflects the Council's commitment to equality of opportunity, with the intention of helping members of staff balance their commitments and interests outside work with their contractual duties and responsibilities.

This policy applies to all Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council and sets out the process that needs to be followed when applying for flexible working. Employees have a statutory right to request flexible working from their first day of employment.

There are several changes that an employee can request. These include changes to:

- The number of hours worked.
- Times an employee works.
- The place the employee is required to work.

As part of the ensuing discussion the following points were noted.

- 15 staff have taken up flexible working in the last 12 months. These are mainly on condensed hours.

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- The policy is well publicized across council media and is now part of the induction process.
- Flexible working is not suitable for all roles, but we do support the majority of requests.

RESOLVED- Employment Health and Safety Committee approved the updated Flexible work policy.

37 **EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING SCHEME**

Presented by Vikki Smith

The purpose of the report is to seek approval for an Employee Volunteering Scheme to be introduced.

The Employee Volunteering Scheme aims to introduce volunteering opportunities for employees at Redcar and Cleveland Borough Council. The Council will do this by releasing employees from normal duties for 2 days per year (pro-rata for part-time staff) to:

- Allow staff to undertake current volunteering or new volunteering activities.
- Encourage volunteering to be used for staff development via the appraisal processes.
- Identify possible opportunities for volunteering linked to the Corporate Plan's commitment to enhance and support community engagement and volunteering.
- Support local volunteering community groups with projects and activities.

Once we have consultation feedback, we will review how volunteers and groups would like information to be shared with them, so we can look at the most suitable ways to promote, attract and recognise volunteering within the borough.

As part of the ensuing discussion the following points were noted.

- Shirley Pacitto, our new Volunteer co-ordinator, will take the lead on promoting the policy to local community groups that might want to be involved with the program.
- The policy will not be mandatory.
- Voluntary organisations are happy to see the council getting more involved with their programs.

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RESOLVED- Employment Health and Safety Committee approved the Employee Volunteering Scheme.

38 **ANY OTHER ITEM THE CHAIR CERTIFIES AS URGENT**

No urgent items.