Cyngor Tref Trallwng Welshpool Town Council

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Title	Policy Review - Sept 26
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OFFICERS RECOMMENDATION

1. **To note the comparison of the Council's current employment policy framework with section B.12 of the Finance & Governance Toolkit.**
2. **To instruct officers, with support from the Council's human resources provider, to prioritise the preparation or review of policies covering adoption and paternity leave, capability, recruitment and shared parental leave.**
3. **To establish and maintain a central employment policy schedule recording approval and review dates.**

1. Purpose

1. To compare the Council's current employment policy framework with the core employment policies identified in section B.12 of the Finance & Governance Toolkit and to agree the action required to address the identified gaps.

2. Background

1. Section B.12 of the Finance & Governance Toolkit recommends that councils have appropriate core employment policies and procedures in place. A review has been undertaken against the policies listed in that section.
2. The Council currently has policies or procedures covering alcohol, drugs and substance misuse; staff appraisal; bullying and harassment; dignity at work; discipline and grievance; equality and diversity; health and safety at work; maternity leave; Member and officer relations; attendance management; stress management; time off in lieu; and whistleblowing.
3. Annual leave arrangements are covered through employees' contracts of employment. Staff training is addressed through the Council's statutory training plan. Employee Code of Conduct is covered by the Code of Conduct (Qualifying Local Government Employees) (Wales) Order 2001.

4. The review identified that the Council does not currently have separate policies covering adoption and paternity leave, capability, recruitment, or shared parental leave.

5. The Council's external human resources provider has supplied a batch of model policies which the Town Clerk is reviewing. It is anticipated that some of the policies currently recorded as not being in place will be covered by these model documents.

3. Advice

1. The Council has policies or other documented arrangements covering 16 of the 20 areas identified in section B.12 of the Toolkit. The principal gaps relate to adoption and paternity leave, capability, recruitment and shared parental leave.

2. Priority should be given to reviewing the model policies relating to the four identified gaps. A capability procedure would provide a consistent process for managing performance concerns, while a recruitment procedure would support fair, transparent and consistent appointments. Adoption, paternity and shared parental leave policies would provide employees and managers with clear information on the applicable arrangements.

3. The wider batch of model policies should also be compared with the Council's existing documents. Existing policies should not be replaced automatically where they remain suitable. Officers should identify duplication, inconsistencies and any documents requiring legal or procedural updating before presenting revised or new policies to Members for approval.

4. Once the exercise is complete, the Town Clerk considers that a central policy schedule should be maintained showing the approval date, next review date and any related documents. This would provide a clear audit trail and assist future reviews against the Toolkit.

4. Links to Strategic Objectives and Interim Strategic Plan

1. N/A

5. Resource & Legal Implications

1. The review will require officer time and input from the Council's human resources provider.

2. Employment policies must reflect current employment law, employees' contracts and the Council's established terms and conditions. New or revised policies should be checked by the Council's human resources provider before adoption.

3. The Code of Conduct (Qualifying Local Government Employees) (Wales) Order 2001 continues to apply to qualifying employees, but officers should ensure that staff can readily access and understand the standards expected of them. Where a proposed policy would alter contractual terms, appropriate consultation and employment advice may be required before implementation.

6. Specific Implications

1. N/A

7. Recommendation

1. To note the comparison of the Council's current employment policy framework with section B.12 of the Finance & Governance Toolkit.

2. To instruct officers, with support from the Council's human resources provider, to prioritise the preparation or review of policies covering adoption and paternity leave, capability, recruitment and shared parental leave.

3. To establish and maintain a central employment policy schedule recording approval and review dates.

8. Decision

1. To resolve to approve the recommendations set out above.