

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

ITEM FOR STAFFING COMMITTEE

15 August 2016

1. MANAGING CONFLICT POLICY

Submitted by: Executive Management Team

Portfolio: Policy, People and Partnerships

Purpose of the Report

To obtain the Committee's approval to adopt the Managing Conflict Policy.

Recommendation

That the policy detailed at Appendix A be approved.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Council recognises that from time to time conflict exists and to a certain extent indicates a healthy exchange of ideas and creativity. However counterproductive conflict can result in employee dissatisfaction relating to their employment resulting in reduced productivity, reduced motivation, absenteeism, displays of inappropriate behaviour and increased work related stress.
- 1.2 This policy is to encourage free communication between employees and their managers to ensure that questions and problems arising during the course of employment can be aired and when possible, resolved quickly and to the satisfaction of all concerned.
- 1.3 This policy is designed to allow employees to raise concerns, problems or complaints and to allow the Council to deal with the concern fairly, consistently and promptly. The aim will be to resolve employee's dissatisfaction without recourse and promotes open communication and fosters a safe environment for addressing differences of opinion.
- 1.5 The policy has been written in line with the ACAS Code of Practice – March 2015 whereby the aim is to settle or resolve areas of dissatisfaction before they become embedded and an employee becomes so aggrieved they may invoke a formal procedure i.e. Grievance Procedure or Dignity at Work.
- 1.6 It encourages the use of mediation to resolve work place disputes in an informal environment.
- 1.7 The joint trade unions have been consulted on the proposed new policy and comments have been incorporated and agreed. At the Employee Consultative Committee meeting a further amendment was suggested with regard to Appendix A of the Policy, under the heading 'Do I have to take part in mediation' the trade unions requested that the final sentence was removed (It may not be possible to take the

issue to the next stage where this has not occurred). The committee agreed to remove this sentence.

2. Aims of the Policy

- 2.1 The overall aim is to use this Policy prior to using the formal Grievance Procedure when it may not be necessary to do so.

3. Issues

- 3.1 At its meeting on 11 July 2016, the Employees Consultative Committee recommended that the Policy be adopted.

4. Legal and Statutory Requirements

- 4.1 It is important that the council's policy on Managing Conflict reflects current best practice and ensures the council fulfils its obligations in accordance with the statutory legislation.

5. Equality Impact Assessment

- 5.1 Implementation of the policy will help to ensure the Borough Council fulfil its responsibilities as an equal opportunities employer.

6. Financial and Resource Implications

- 6.1 None

7. Major Risks

- 7.1 None identified.

8. List of Appendices

Appendix A – Managing Conflict Policy

9. Earlier Committee Resolutions

Employees Consultative Committee – 11 July 2016