

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL
EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S REPORT TO THE
CABINET

Date: 5th June 2019

1. **REPORT TITLE** **Attendance Management Policy**
- Submitted by:** **Alyson Podmore, Interim Head of HR**
- Portfolio:** **Corporate and Service Improvement, People and Partnerships**
- Wards affected:** **All**

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to propose implementing a new Attendance Management policy and procedure for the Council in order to tackle its attendance management issues and to ensure that all staff are being treated fairly and consistently and additional supportive measures are put in place where appropriate.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the proposed Attendance Management policy.

Reasons

To provide a more simplistic, consistent, fair and transparent attendance management policy that can be understood by all with the additional support of guidance material and mandatory training for all line managers and trade union representatives.

2. **Background**

- 2.1 The current Attendance Management policy was implemented in August 2016 which predominately changed the absence triggers from number of days / occurrences to a Bradford Factor Scoring methodology.
- 2.2 When approved at the JNCC meeting in 2016, it was agreed that there would be a review period at 12 months to determine how the policy was working in practice.
- 2.3 A review period was never undertaken.

3. **Issues**

- 3.1 Unions, managers and HR do not like the current policy due to:
- The policy is not clear and creates inconsistency in advice
 - Bradford factor triggers provide complexity for employees and managers

- Long term sickness has a separate process which avoids the employee hitting the long term absence trigger and leads to employees not being supported during this period plus long term sickness absences not being addressed.
- Resources required to calculate the Bradford score is a manual process and as such resource intensive
- In some cases, the triggers have occurred to far in the past as it relies on HR informing managers of trigger events
- The policy does not proactively tackle attendance management issues

4. **Proposal**

4.1 The proposed policy outlines a framework which:

- New triggers are based on hours / days, occurrences and patterns
- One process manages long and short term sickness absence but ensuring that employees on long term sickness are dealt with in a sensitive manner
- More simplistic
- Introduces a 'support plan' which is for both the employer and employee

4.2 The policy will be supported by a Guidance document which will include letters for each event to aid consistency, and will include templates such as support plans, return to work etc.

4.3 The policy and guidance will be further supported by a mandatory training course for all line managers to attend which will be delivered by HR to aid consistency and to enable managers to take the lead in dealing with attendance management issues, with the support of HR.

5. **Recommendations**

5.1 For Cabinet to approve the proposed Attendance Management policy (Appendix X) for Newcastle Under Lyme Borough Council.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 None

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 N/A

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 N/A

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 N/A

10. **Management Sign-Off**

- 10.1 EMT, Trade Unions and JNCC have approved in principle the proposed Attendance Management policy
- 10.2 It is intended that on approval this policy will be supported by a 'Guidance' document and training for all line managers and Trade Union representatives will be delivered internally by HR