

Report to Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Subject: Current staffing issues (Standing Item)

Date: 27 August 2019

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1. Purpose of the Report

This is an information item highlighting to the Committee, any issues of particular interest that relate to the council's workforce.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note this report.

3. Summary of current issues

3.1 The policy changes that were the subject of consultation at the last meeting of this committee were approved by the Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee on 10 July. The "Time Out" policy to allow employees to purchase additional leave is now implemented and the first requests are being made. The changed redundancy policy (now applying a 30% local payment to all cases of redundancy rather than a discretionary award of up to 100% of statutory redundancy pay) and the changed Pay Protection policy (now a two-year tapering payment) will be applied from 1 September.

These policy changes are substantial and the Service Manager, Organisational Development is working with the Communications Team to ensure that all employees get to know about the changes in appropriate ways including the e-gen, cascade team briefings and posters. These communication channels will also offer the Service Manager (OD) as a point of contact for questions.

3.2 All of our employees from a European Economic Area will need to apply to remain and work in the UK after Brexit. The deadline for application will be June 2021 (slightly earlier at December 2020 if there is a "no deal" departure from the EU). This application is called "settled status".

Plans are now in place to inform employees of their requirement to make application if it is their intention to remain as a UK resident and to be allowed to

work in the country. There will also be a communications exercise more widely across residents of the borough to support the work of the Home Office.

In terms of staff there will again be cascade briefings and the Communications Team will ensure that guidance goes out in a range of different formats so that all employees can be properly informed. The HR Team will act as a contact point for any employee that needs support or assistance in the application process.

The Home Office has begun its programme of national communication and already around a million people have successfully registered. To date no applicant has been rejected. It is clear from information shared at a recent conference on the subject that the Home Office are looking to retain as many current residents as possible and would see rejection of an application as very much a last resort. Indeed, there is a reluctance even to issue a clear statement about what would happen to someone who did not manage to make an application in time. The emphasis appears to be on "retention" rather than any form of "expulsion" wherever possible.