



Report of the Director of Corporate and Adult Services

## **Terms of Reference – the position of The Personnel Committee in the Policy Development Process**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1.1 To agree that, for minor policy changes to existing policies which do not involve fundamental changes to the underlying principles of the policy, the consultation process outlined in Figure 1 of Appendix 2 is followed.
- 1.2 To agree that, for new policies or changes to existing policies which involve changes to underlying principles of the policy, the consultation process outlined in Figure 2 is followed.
- 1.3 To agree that the decision regarding which process to follow with regard to policy changes should be made by the Assistant Director – Human Resources, in consultation with the appropriate Corporate HR Adviser.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 2.1 The stimulus for policy review and development comes from a variety of sources – for example changes to legislation, departmental experience of existing policies and practices and changing organisational needs within the Council.
- 2.2 In an increasingly large number of cases these require relatively minor changes to existing policies involving for example changes to wording, removal or addition of certain provisions and so on but leaving the underlying principles of the policy intact.
- 2.3 Less frequently there may be a need to introduce a new policy or completely rewrite a policy which does impact on the underlying principles and which may be sufficiently contentious as to make it difficult to secure agreement with the trade unions. This in turn could lead to a dispute between the Council and the trade unions.
- 2.4 The Personnel Committee has requested advice on where its terms of reference place it in relation to policy development.
- 2.5 There is a need to find a balance between making sure that members of the Personnel Committee have full and advanced knowledge of difficult and contentious policy decisions and involving them in the minutiae of minor changes in policy.

- 2.6 Personnel Committee meets on an “as and when required” basis and it does not seem to be good use of members’ time to be calling meetings for relatively minor or cosmetic changes to policies.
- 2.7 The current practice for consultation/negotiations is outlined in Figure 1 of the flow charts at Appendix 2. The recommendation is to continue with this practice for minor policy changes.
- 2.8 For new policies and policies involving changes to underlying principles in existing policies, the consultation route outlined in Figure 2 on the flow chart at Appendix 2 is recommended. This involves taking a draft of the new policy to the Personnel Committee who will need to give approval for any further consultation to proceed.
- 2.9 It is envisaged that the decision over whether changes are of a minor or fundamental nature will be taken by the Assistant Director – Human Resources in consultation with the Corporate HR Adviser – Operations and Policy or the Corporate HR Adviser – Occupational Health Safety and Welfare.
- 2.10 In the event that changes considered minor are more contentious than was anticipated, this will emerge at the negotiation stage with the trade unions. In this case, the process will be stopped to allow the proposals to be referred to the Personnel Committee.

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**Background papers:** None

**List of appendices:** Appendix 1 – Implications

Appendix 2 – Consultation process – flow charts

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial**

1. None directly arising.

**Legal**

2. None directly arising.

**Human Resources**

3. None directly arising.

**Equalities Impact**

4. None directly arising.

CONSULTATION PROCESSES – FLOW CHARTS

Figure 1

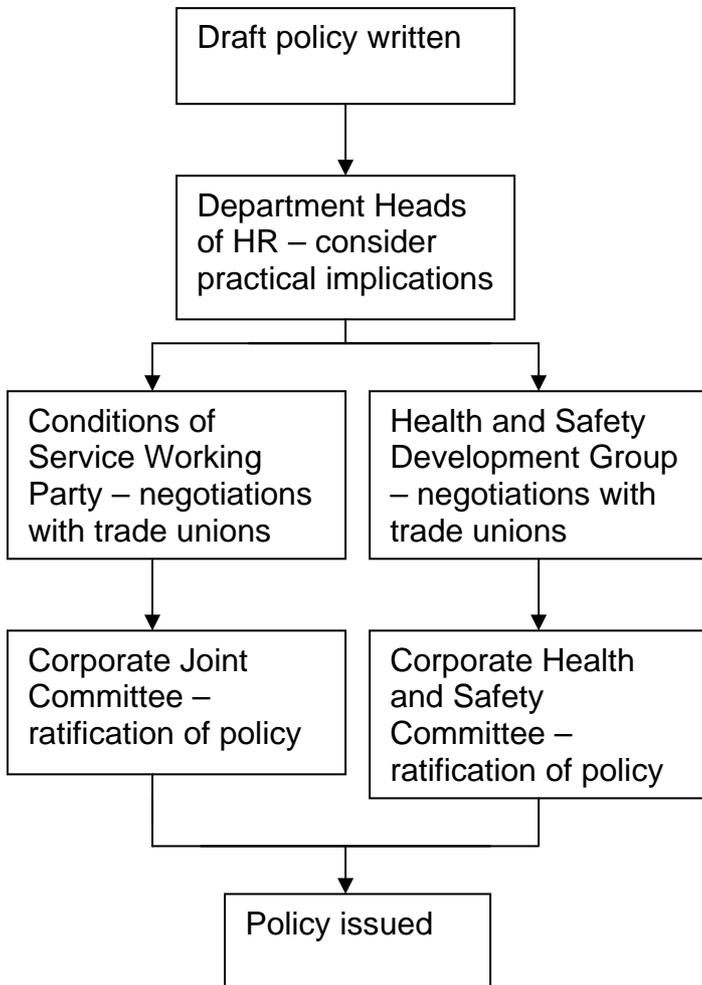


Figure 2

