

NON EXEMPT

**EAST HAMPSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Joint HR Committee

12th March 2019

Volunteer Leave Policy

Caroline Tickner, Head of Organisational Development

FOR DECISION

**Portfolio: Portfolio Holder for Governance and Organisational Development
Cllr Nick Drew (EHDC) and Cabinet Lead for People and Communications Cllr
Lulu Bowerman (HBC)**

Head of Service: Caroline Tickner

Key Decision: No

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.1 This report provides the Councils with a revised Volunteer Leave Policy which has been updated to reflect the wider use of volunteering. This policy is for use across East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) and Havant Borough Council (HBC)

1.2 This Policy is intended to ensure that staff at EHDC and HBC can fully contribute to volunteering and the benefits that this brings regardless of geographical location.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Councillors are asked to note the content of the report and approve the revised Policy.

3.0 Executive Summary

3.1 Volunteering continues to provide an opportunity for both staff and communities to benefit. Staff from participation in the community; the development of additional skills; the networks that are created; the new ideas that can be brought back into the workplace and a healthier work/life balance. The communities from the availability of staff to support their organisations in the delivery of their work. In addition to

this volunteering is a great way of creating wider networks in the community and for staff to benefit from these networks and the new ideas that can be generated which can be brought back into the workplace.

- 3.2 A volunteer leave scheme has been in place in both Councils since 2012. The take up to the current schemes has been very low since its' introduction. The revision to the current volunteer scheme enables staff to utilise the scheme regardless of geographical area. This means that wider communities can benefit from the skills that staff bring to volunteering along with enabling staff to develop new skills from their involvement. It is envisaged that staff who live outside of the district/borough may find it easier to volunteer if it is local to their home. The benefits to the organisation of volunteering remain regardless of location. For this reason, the volunteer leave scheme has been updated to reflect this.
- 3.3 The revised scheme still ensures that there are a number of safeguards in place to ensure service delivery is not affected and the benefits of supporting a volunteer leave scheme are realised within EHDC/HBC. These include:
- A volunteer leave form which is designed to ensure that the skills and experience which can be gained through volunteering are brought back into the workplace.
 - A provision for EHDC/HBC to refuse or defer any request for volunteer leave where an employee's absence may compromise service delivery.

4.0 Additional Budgetary Implications

- 4.1 There is no direct additional cost to the Councils through the revision to this scheme.

5.0 Background and relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Directorate Business Plan/s

- 5.1 The adoption of this revised Policy further supports the commitment of the Councils to volunteering.

6.0 Options considered and reasons for the recommendation

- 6.1 The revision to this policy will ensure that the opportunity for paid leave to volunteer will become more accessible to those who wish to volunteer nearer to home. This will support further skills development, enhance well-being and enable staff to become more involved with the community.

7.0 Resource Implications

7.1 Financial Implications

There could be an increase in the use of the volunteer leave policy and therefore indirect costs arise due to loss of officer time. The benefits of the scheme (skills development, engagement in the community and wellbeing) are deemed to far outweigh this.

7.2 Human Resources Implications

Strategic HR resource will be needed to raise awareness of the scheme and encourage the use of it as an employee and organisational benefit.

7.3 Other Resource Implication

Communications resource will be needed to raise the profile of volunteering.

8.0 Legal Implications

8.1 The adoption of the attached scheme is compliant with current legislative requirements.

9.0 Risks

9.1 There is a risk that the scheme is not applied correctly. This will be mitigated through the safeguards that have been put in place and annual reporting to identify any issues/concerns.

10 Consultation

10.1 Consultation has been held with UNISON on broadening out the scheme. There are no concerns that have been raised by either branch. UNISON will be updated on the outcome of Executive Board decisions.

11 Communication

11.1 The Policy will be added to the suite of policies available on AskHR, now in use as part of the Capita delivery of HR services. All staff and managers will be signposted to this addition via the usual communication channels.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Volunteer Leave Policy

Background Papers: N/A

Agreed and signed off by:

Monitoring Officer: *17th January, 2019*

Deputy S151 Officer: *26th February, 2019*

Director: *6th February, 2019*

Portfolio Holder: *26th February, 2019*

Date: 27th February, 2019

Contact Officer: Marthie Turner
Job Title: HR Business Partner
Telephone: 02392 446325
E-Mail: Marthie.turner@easthants.gov.uk