

**AGENDA ITEM No. 11**

**PEAK DISTRICT NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY**

**NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY MEETING**

**28 MARCH 2008**

**CORPORATE RESOURCES**

**PART A**

**1. EMPLOYMENT POLICIES (A12/DJU)**

**Proposal**

- 1 That the Authority approves a further 4 employment policies (2 entirely new and 2 developed and from reviewing and updating an existing policy).

**2 RECOMMENDATION:**

**That**

1. **The Authority approve the 4 employment policies annexed to this report and in so doing amend the employment contracts of all relevant staff i.e.**  
**Annex 1: Learning and Development Policy**  
**Annex 2: Succession Planning Policy**  
**Annex 3: Flexible Working Policy**  
**Annex 4: Family Friendly Policy**
2. **The new/updated policies become effective on 1 May 2008 to allow for an appropriate launch to all staff and manager briefings.**

**Policy/Legal Background**

- 3 The Authority's employment policies form part of the contract of employment for all staff (with the exception of the Chief Executive and Directors on Chief Officer terms and Conditions). They advise and guide managers and staff to the standards of performance in the employment relationship required by the Authority. It is appropriate therefore to update and refresh employment policies periodically to ensure they remain good practice and within the requirements of employment law.
- 4 These recommendations support Key Corporate Outcome K1: ensuring value for money, sustainability and high standards of corporate governance in the way we deliver service and K3: Valuing and developing staff and members.

**Key Issues**

5. This report follows the report to the Authority in February 2008 where 5 employment policies were approved (minute reference 6/08).
- 6 As before, the following principles underpin the development of these 4 additional employment policies
- a) Give team managers, Heads of Service, Directors and the Chief Executive management responsibility in employment policies
  - b) The policies will be launched and staff will receive written confirmation of the

change to contracts.

- c) Managers will be briefed on their roles and responsibilities in the policies and skills training will be provided where appropriate. Going forward Human Resources & Performance will advise managers and staff on the policies and coach managers on their implementation where necessary.
- d) These policies follow the new 'house style' in their presentation.
- e) Guidance notes for managers and staff have been developed for all the policies. The guidance notes give more information about implementing the policy. As they are not part of the policies it is not necessary for Members to approve them. The guidance notes are therefore not included in the annexes to this report but can be viewed through the intranet or on request from Human Resources & Performance.
- f) All staff, managers and UNISON have had the opportunity to be involved in the development of the policies and the guidance notes through consultation during February and March.

7 Specific changes resulting from the 2 entirely new policies are as follows.

- a) Approving a Learning and Development Policy is a key step in developing into a Learning Organisation. The policy confirms existing arrangements with regard to developing the annual corporate and vocational learning programmes. It strengthens the identification and review of learning outcomes through manager's pre and post learning meetings. The policy identifies a variety of learning methods (not just courses) and encourages managers to utilise their training in learning styles and equalities to tailor learning to individual needs. Finally it reconfirms recent success in capturing learning needs and undertaking formal learning evaluation through the Learning & Development Planning in the Joint Performance and Achievement Review (JPAR) process.
- b) The introduction of a Succession Planning Policy will enable the authority to become more sophisticated about identifying future organisational, service and individual needs. The aim is to ensure service continuity (identifying changes in future service delivery, organisational structures or staffing resulting from retirement or staff turnover. Key is the message of equality of opportunity. Staff might be identified for learning and development opportunities but not for appointment. Succession planning enables individuals to be 'the best candidates they can possibly be' when opportunities arise. At the point of recruitment, however, the recruitment procedures must be followed to ensure equality of opportunity and that the best candidate is appointed.

8 Whilst the Flexible Working Policy and the Family Friendly policies are new in format, they are an update of the current Work Life Balance Policy. In reviewing the Work Life Balance policy it was decided to split it into 2. This acknowledges that originally work-life balance policies were aimed at staff with family/ carer commitments. In our experience flexible working is actually open to all staff for a variety of reasons. So,

- a) The Flexible Working Policy therefore has little which is new in policy terms, except for updates to reflect the introduction of the e-policy and to reconfirm manager's right to review and cease agreements if they are not working.
- b) The Family Friendly Policy has been updated to include recent changes to statutory provisions for Adoption and for Paternity Leave.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Background**

- 9 Strategic Management Team approved the Work Force Plan Phase 2 Action Plan which included the development of several new employment policies. The Head of Human Resources & Performance (HR & P) also felt other employment polices needed updating. Policy development therefore became a key outcome for the 2007/8 Human Resources & Performance Service Plan.
- 10 These policies have also been developed with support of the Interim Human Resources Consultant.
- 11 Policies approved in February in phase 1 of the project were  
Disciplinary Policy  
Grievance Policy  
Appeals Policy  
Secondment Policy  
Maternity Policy
- 12 The policies for approval in phase 2 through this report are  
Learning & Development Policy  
Succession Planning  
Family Friendly Policies (Adoption, Time off for Dependents etc updated but previously within Work Life Balance Policy)  
Flexible Working (updated but previously within Work Life Balance Policy)
- 13 Other existing HR policies include the following and will be reviewed in due course  
Absence Management Policy  
When Working with Children & Vulnerable Adults  
Managing Change Policy  
Employee Code of Conduct  
Statement of Harassment at Work  
Equality in Employment.
- 14 Implementation of all the above new policies will be 1 May 2008, to allow for the policy launch and managers to be briefed. Skills training is being planned (e.g. Managing Discipline) as part of the 2008/9 Corporate Training Programme to be approved by Strategic Management Team April.

### **Resources**

- 15 In the guidelines for the Family Friendly Policy it is suggested that the Authority pay 2 weeks paternity leave is at full pay (over the statutory provision of £112.75 per week). Currently the authority scheme gives the first week at full pay and the second at Statutory Paternity Pay. The cost of giving the c 3 employees per year taking paternity leave their second week on full pay would be c £722 + on costs of c £158, based on a median salary of £353 per week scale point 21. This cost would be met from service pay budgets

### **Risk Management**

- 16 The content of the policies have been benchmarked with good practice of other employers including other National Parks, partner authorities and other organisations, ACAS guidelines and relevant employment legislation.

### **Human Rights, Equalities, Health & Safety**

- 17 Equalities was key in developing these policies. The policies and their supporting guidance notes have been through the Equalities Impact and Needs Assessment (EINA) process and any issues arising have been resolved in finalising the policies.

### **Consultees**

- 18 Directors, Heads of Service, Team managers, staff, UNISON and staff committee.

The UNISON representative is unable to attend committee but wishes to add these comments to the report; "UNISON supports these policies that promote the mutual interests of staff & the Authority. Minor concerns about equal opportunities in the Succession Planning policy were quickly & successfully resolved in discussion with the Head of Human Resources & Performance. UNISON hopes that staff will eagerly take up chances to improve careers and working conditions".

### **Enclosures**

- 19 Annex 1: Learning & Development Policy  
Annex 2: Succession Planning Policy  
Annex 3: Flexible Working Policy  
Annex 4: Family Friendly Policy

### **List of Background Papers** (not previously published)

- 20 None

### **Report Author**

- 21 Deborah Unwin, Head of Human Resources & Performance

### **Publication date**

- 22 18 March 2008