



## Restructuring Policy

This Restructuring Policy has been designed to support employees and provide clarity where the Council takes a decision to undertake organisational restructuring in order to improve services and/or efficiency. The process of assigning and appointing existing employees into posts following a restructure, as detailed in this policy, will ensure that all employees are treated fairly and consistently. This policy operates in conjunction with the Council's Pay Protection and Redeployment Policies in order to minimise the impact of organisational change and to support employees during and after a restructuring process.

### 1. Consultation

The Chief Officer (or their nominee) will consult stakeholders, including the trade unions, departmental Human Resources team, about any proposed restructuring process.

Consultation will include; the identification of the group of employees affected, the proposed revised structure, grading of posts, draft job descriptions, person specifications, the selection process to apply to the ringfences and any additional information which is relevant to the proposal.

As part of the consultation process, consideration will be given as to whether the application of the Early Voluntary Retirement and Voluntary Severance schemes would be appropriate in the circumstances, including the consideration of whether the schemes could be used to create bumped opportunities.

Consultation will begin at the earliest opportunity and every effort will be made to produce all of the relevant information and the necessary paperwork.

Following consultation, the Chief Officer (or their nominee) will ensure that all employees within the group of employees affected by the proposal have access to all of the relevant documentation, including the timescale by which the exercise is expected to be completed.

### 2. The New Structure

#### 2.1 Stage one – Assignment of employees

A ring-fence comprising the employees affected by the proposal will be established, with the named employees identified. Dependant upon the scope of the restructuring process, this could comprise a team, service area, department or a number of teams or service areas across the Council.

Employees included within any ring-fence will comprise permanent employees. Temporary employees, including employees under fixed term contracts or contracts of limited duration are also required by legislation to be included except where their exclusion can be objectively justified.

The Council will consult with the relevant trade unions before it reaches any decision on whether any temporary employees can be lawfully excluded from the ring fence. The Head of Human Resources will from time to time issue guidance to managers on whether the Council would be justified in excluding from the ring fence any categories of temporary employees.

Where the overall purpose of a post in the new structure is substantially the same as an existing post, the post holder will be advised that there is no change in their employment status and will be assigned to the post. The employee will then be removed from the ring-fence.

Where more than one employee meets the criteria to be assigned to a post, the decision as to which employee is assigned will be made through a competitive selection process (in accordance with the Council's Recruitment and Selection policy), ring-fenced to only those employees who meet the criteria for assignment.

Once assigned to a post in the new structure an employee will not be able to apply for any remaining vacancies until they are released for general application under the Council's normal recruitment procedure.

## **2.2 Stage two – Employees not assigned under stage 1**

Following stage 1 assignments, all remaining posts will continue to be ring-fenced to all other employees affected by the restructure who were not assigned during stage 1.

The remaining posts will be recruited to on a grade by grade basis, with the higher graded posts being filled first.

Employees remaining in the ring-fence will be invited to express an interest in any remaining vacant posts, in accordance with their grade, within the new structure and will be invited to participate in a competitive selection process (in accordance with the Council's Recruitment and Selection policy), provided they broadly meet the relevant person specification.

Employees whose current salaries lie outside the salary grades of the posts remaining will not be permitted to apply for the posts, since the purpose of the policy is not to afford opportunities for promotion but to provide suitable alternative employment for employees within the ring fence.

Once offered a post, the employee will be immediately removed from the ring-fence and will not be considered for any further posts.

At the conclusion of this process the Council's normal recruitment arrangements will apply to any remaining vacancies.

## **2.3 Absent or Seconded Employees**

Employees who are absent or seconded during a restructuring process will be included in any consultation process which takes place and will receive the same information as their colleagues.

### **3. Following the Restructure**

Any employees without a substantive post will be notified in writing by their departmental Human Resources team of their status and inclusion on the Redeployment Register. Please refer to the Redeployment Policy for further information.

Any employee who is redeployed to a lower graded post will be eligible for pay protection. Please refer to the Pay Protection Policy for more information.

Any unfilled posts in the new structure will be filled initially through redeployment of other supernumerary employees, followed by employees in receipt of pay protection elsewhere in the Council. If suitable candidates are not identified through this process, the remaining posts will be filled in accordance with the Council's normal recruitment procedures.

It is recognised that employees who are involved in organisational change can feel vulnerable or under threat. Should any employee wish to access counselling or discuss how they feel they can contact the Council's Staff Welfare Officer in confidence.