

Tuesday, 26 July 2022

Report of the Head of HR & OD

HR Policies

Exempt Information

This report is non exempt.

Purpose

To update members regarding the development of two HR policies; SMART Working and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

Recommendations

That the SMART Working Policy and Disclosure and Barring Service policy are formally approved for immediate implementation.

Executive Summary

The SMART Working policy is a new policy and applies to those employees designated as a home or hybrid worker under the Recovery & Reset programme. It provides advice and good practice to enable employees to work from home effectively and safely.

The policy is wide ranging, covering key themes including expectations of the manager, expectations of the employee, wellbeing, health and safety, insurance, council equipment, information security, mileage and time recording. Appendices cover the DSE risk assessment, Teams meeting etiquette and a summary of which roles have been assigned as site, hybrid or home based.

The Disclosure and Barring (DBS) policy is also a new policy. This policy applies to all employees and candidates to whom a conditional job offer has been made. The guidance from Disclosure and Barring Service and the Government's "Finding out which DBS check is right for your employee tool" was applied to each role within the organisation. This ensures that every role is vetted to the appropriate level; a basic check, a standard check, an enhanced check or an enhanced check with barred list.

TBC is also committed to "Ban the Box" (Fair chance recruitment) which commits to collect criminal record data at a later stage of the recruitment process as collecting criminal record data from all applicants when many will not be shortlisted could be construed as excessive data collection. Instead, TBC will request criminal record details at the point when it is really needed, at the conditional offer stage rather than at the initial recruitment stage.

Once approved, the policies will come into effect and be implemented through Astute. The application form for new applicants will also be amended to ensure that criminal record detail is obtained at a later stage of the recruitment process.

Options Considered

Not applicable.

Resource Implications

Costs relating to the implementation of SMART working were approved by Council and included within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy following a review of all relevant policies as part of the Reset & Recovery workstream - including a home working allowance of £26 per month (pro rata for part time staff). Hybrid workers will receive £13 per month (pro rata for part time staff).

The cost of the DBS checks can be met from existing budgets.

Legal/Risk Implications Background

Not undertaking 3 yearly DBS refresher check as a matter of routine could increase the risk of the continued employment of an employee with a criminal record. However, this will be mitigated under the Code of Conduct where employees are required to advise their manager of a new criminal conviction or caution. TBC reserves the right to undertake 'with cause' DBS rechecks and to undertake audit spot checks.

Equalities Implications

Both policies have been Community Impact Assessed. Where there are implications, measures will be put in place to minimise an adverse impact.

Environment and Sustainability Implications (including climate change)

None.

Background Information

HR policies are reviewed on a 3 years cycle to ensure they are legally compliant, meet best practice and are clear for employees and staff. All policies have undergone consultation with the recognised Trade Unions.

Report Author

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List of Background Papers

None

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – SMART Working Policy
- Appendix 2 – SMART Working designations
- Appendix 3 – DSE Assessment
- Appendix 4 – Teams Etiquette
- Appendix 5 – Disclosure and Barring Service Policy
- Appendix 6 – DBS designation by role