

Trade Union Consultation Meeting

Wednesday, 07 December 2022, 10.30am, Microsoft Teams

Decision Notes and Actions Arising

Attendees LBE

Julie Mimmagh, Chair
Shemelia Lewis, Note Taker

Presenting Officers:
None

Trade Unions

Tracy Adnan (Unison)
Christine Sesstein (Unison)
Nick Long (Unite)

Apologies

Paul Bishop (Unison)
Anna Woodcock (GMB)
Denise Handscomb-Teagle (GMB)

		OWNER
1.	Principles of Managing Absence and Attendance	
	<p><i>Julie Mimmagh presented</i></p> <p>The section covering 'pay during phased return work' of the Absence and Attendance policy has been updated. The amended policy is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If following Occupational Health advice an employee is subject to a phased return, the days that the member of staff is not able to work (but would usually be working days) should be paid at the normal rate of pay, for a phased return of up to a maximum of 4 weeks. • If a phased return is extended or agreed for a period longer than 4 weeks and the employee has exhausted their sick pay entitlement, this should be managed as a temporary change of hours, processed by the Line Manager. Where the employee has not exhausted their sick pay entitlement, the days that the member of staff is not able to work (but would usually be working days) should be recorded and processed as sick pay. • If all sick pay entitlement is exhausted, where staff have built up accrued annual leave, they can be encouraged to use their annual leave entitlement as an alternative to a reduction in their working hours. The periods of annual leave should be recorded as normal annual leave on MI Portal. • Managers should make a clear note of sickness recordings during a phased return to work for future reference and when receiving trigger alerts. Managers are not expected to instigate formal absence and attendance meetings based on triggers received for sick days inputted to support the phased return to work period. <p>CS suggested that the stage 1 review should still be in the policy to better support staff, and managers can be more accommodating to their staff's needs through discussions so that further absence and the progression of formal meetings is avoided. JM responded that the service is trying to make it a robust process and that the stage 1 review unnecessarily extends the process. CS responded that this may make people feel anxious and like the process is being rushed. JM responded that the service has</p>	

	<p>ensured that managers are communicating with their staff throughout the entire process so that they feel supported, but staff are still anxious and stressed at each stage. TA responded that staff will not avoid the stress that comes with the process, but we must focus better on how staff can be reassured.</p> <p>NL suggested there should be added wording for home workers, the changing culture of work patterns and how to support staff who are not regularly in the office. JM responded that managers are setting up meetings with their staff via Teams so that there is still a line of communication with home workers. TA suggested it is better to have the meetings in person so there is better communication and will have the opportunity to judge the interaction. This could be held in a local coffee shop or at their home for people who may not be able to attend the office. JM responded that HR will always advise managers to offer options to meet either face to face at a suitable location or via Teams or telephone.</p> <p>CS asked for advice on managing disability as a long-term sickness. When would a disability be taken into a consideration during this process? JM responded that where a member of staff has a disability it would consider reasonable adjustments based on occupational health advise. The focus should always be on the individuals capabilities to meet the requirements of the role and maintain regular attendance at work. Reasonable adjustments are considered but they are not excluded from the process. CS responded that an individual could be capable of doing their role but due to their disability they would need to take time off, what happens in this instance? JM responded that the council has a service to deliver and there will always be adjustments made for a member of staff to be able to do their role. If they're still not able to do the role after adjustments have been made, we will also consider redeployment to a more suitable role, if an alternative role is available.</p> <p>NL asked how does Enfield Council's sickness statistics compare to neighbouring boroughs, are we in the upper quartile? JM responded that sickness absence is high, but it is hard to compare as Enfield to neighbouring authorities has Enfield provides most services in-house including a high number of manual type posts. Sickness tends to be higher among manual workers. Enfield would need to be compared with other local authorities who insource similar services.</p> <p>Actions: review stage 1 review meeting and update TU staff</p>	JM
2.	Notes of previous meeting, 23rd November 2022	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No outstanding actions 	
3.	Any other business	
	<p>Christmas pay is on 21st December, concerns on the long wait for January pay JM Suggested to propose delaying the pay, so it does not affect people's budgets. TA responded that TU staff won't make a decision without a GMB representative present. JM responded that this will be carried over to the next meeting to discuss.</p>	JM
	<p style="text-align: center;">Next meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday, 21st December 2022 10.30am</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Microsoft Teams meeting</p>	