

Personnel Committee – 06 December 2021

Injury Allowance Policy

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To gain Personnel Committee approval for the revised Injury Allowance Policy (Appendix 1) endorsed by CMT at their meeting of 07 October 2021.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 Personnel Committee is recommended to approve the Injury Allowance Policy (Appendix 1) endorsed by CMT (07 October 2021).

3. Background Information

Aim

- 3.1 This report details the revision of an existing employment policy – Injury Allowance Scheme, which was last updated in June 2010 and therefore requires alignment with other HR policies that have already been updated to reflect our PROUD new ways of working and the Behaviour and Standards Framework.
- 3.2 The aim of this policy is to set out fair and equitable principles for the award of injury allowances and to provide a transparent and clear framework for making and dealing with injury allowance claims.

Know

- 3.3 The revised policy (Appendix 1) has been re-formatted and redesigned to reflect the following:
- An up to date and fit for purpose employment policy that is aligned to PROUD and the council's vision, values and priorities and that reinforces the councils standards and behavioural framework;
 - Clear identification of accountabilities in line with the councils standards and behaviours;
 - Clear, consistent and concise policy containing easily identifiable principles and procedure;
- 3.4 There are no major changes proposed to the operation of the injury allowance scheme in this policy revision. The main changes focus on simplification and clarity of the process (supporting the Council's inclusion agenda) and the responsibilities of those involved (including a simple process flowchart and the requirement to inform the Council's Insurance and Loss Control Service to avoid any duplication of payment).

3.5 A summary of the minor changes/revisions to the policy (in addition to reformatting/modernising) are set out below;

- Clarity on who this policy applies to;
- Clarity regarding eligibility and the circumstances that will not qualify for consideration of injury allowance;
- Further clarity regarding the two types of injury allowance and when they apply;
- Confirmation of the application of an extension of injury allowance – only in exceptional circumstances on case by case consideration by the panel and for a maximum of 12 months;
- Changes to the permanent injury allowance regarding when the payment on the grounds of ill-health will cease – changed to cease at the individuals state retirement age and not age 65 as previous policy/retirement age;
- Confirmation of injury allowance panel members and responsibilities/process;
- Clarity regarding who can attend injury allowance panel meetings;
- Additional process included to ensure the Council's Insurance and Loss Control Service are informed of any injury allowance claims and the outcome to avoid any duplication of payments;
- Easy to understand flowchart to simplify the process (aligns to ED&I action plan);
- Removal of a previous caveat which resulted in those with pre-existing health conditions receiving a 50% reduction in their award allowance. This caveat has been removed to ensure no discriminatory rules are automatically applied to people with disabilities (aligns to ED&I action plan).

Council corporate plan priorities

3.6 These policy reviews are directly aligned to the internal focus priority within the Corporate Plan, delivering services that are efficient and effective.

Response

3.7 Subject to approval, HR/Payroll will finalise all associated guidance/forms (where applicable) and prepare a workforce communications and implementation plan ready for publication.

Review

3.8 Employment policies will usually be reviewed on a three yearly cycle, unless legislation or internal organisational need prompt a review earlier.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications associated with the revision of this policy as detailed in Appendix 1. Any injury allowance payments would be funded from the service area's existing budgets.

5. Legal Considerations

5.1 There are no legal issues arising from this report.

6. Risk Management

6.1 An equality impact assessment is attached (Appendix 2).

7. People

7.1 The policy applies to all council employees including Directors, Executive Directors and the Chief Executive.

7.2 There is no direct impact on our citizens as a result of this policy. The policy is however, part of the employment framework that helps to ensure that residents of Walsall get the best possible services from council employees.

8. Consultation

8.1 The policy has been consulted upon with senior managers and trade union colleagues across the council between 6 August and 20 August 2021. Consultation with payroll and insurance colleagues has been ongoing throughout to ensure the draft policy and associated forms meet key stakeholders requirements.

8.2 Trade union colleagues raised one main issue with a previous iteration of the draft revision, regarding the removal of the option to extend the allowance, which has since been subsequently re-inserted and is now in the current draft revision. There were no further specific issues or concerns raised by the trade unions with the revised policy.

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