

Agenda item 8

For approval – Updates to the Staff Handbook and Contract

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Summary

This report proposes some minor updates to the Staff Handbook and Staff Contract template.

Annual reviews of the Staff Handbook and Contract template are carried out by Ellis Whittam HR solicitors. This year's recommendations are detailed below, and Council Matters is asked to approve these.

Staff Contract

Ellis Whittam HR solicitors – our retained HR advisers - reviewed the Staff Contract template in July 2020. Based on the Government's Good Work Plan of 2018, a number of changes came into force on 6 April 2020. We propose to make the following amendments to the template. (highlighted blue in [Appendix 5](#)):

- **Hours of work:** One of the changes which has been introduced is a requirement for an employer to be specific as to the days and times that an employee will be required to work. In addition, it is necessary to set out whether or not such hours or days may be variable, and, if they may be, how they vary or how that variation is to be determined. Now included in the template are some optional clauses in this section so that we can select the text that best describes the individual employee's working pattern.
- **Benefits:** FTC needs to give details in the contract of any benefits other than pay that the employee / worker is entitled to, including non-monetary benefits. Now included in the template are some examples of Green Book benefits which FTC can edit/delete as appropriate. (The Green Book is the National agreement on pay and conditions produced by the Local Government Association. It is also known as the Single Status Agreement.)
- **Holiday pay:** the contract should now state how holiday pay is calculated.
- **Family Leave and Pay:** An employer must now state within the contract of employment whether employees are entitled to statutory basic legal entitlement to family leave such as maternity / paternity / adoption leave and pay or if the employer has any enhanced schemes in place and, if so, set out (or refer to) those terms. FTC's contract already states that Green Book enhanced maternity pay is paid.
- **Training:** FTC must state in the contract if the employee must undergo any training for the job, as well as pointing out if we will not be meeting the cost of this. Now included is a general training clause.

No other changes to the Staff Contract are proposed.

Staff Handbook

Ellis Whittam also reviewed the Staff Handbook in July 2020 ([Appendix 6](#)). As of 6 April 2020, parents are entitled to two weeks' leave and statutory bereavement pay if they lose a child under the age of 18 (including a still birth after 24 weeks of pregnancy). This has been included in the Staff Handbook as a new Parental Bereavement Policy on pages 97 & 98.

No other changes to the Staff Handbook are proposed although we shall be bringing to the next CM meeting a proposal to include in the Staff Handbook a policy on sabbaticals.

Recommendations:

1. Approve the revisions to the Staff Contract
2. Approve the revisions to the Staff Handbook