

WILTSHIRE COUNCIL

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE 23rd NOVEMBER 2011

Moving home allowance (new employee) policy

Purpose of Report

1. This report presents changes to the moving home allowance policy.

Background

2. The moving home allowance policy for new employees was amended and approved by Staffing Policy Committee in April 2009 as part of the unitary merger.
3. In June 2010 it was reformatted in line with the new HR policy format.
4. The recent economic downturn has led to a situation where an employee has been unable to achieve their relocation within the timescales specified by the policy due to factors outside of their control.
5. This scenario was not covered by the existing policy.
6. A new process has therefore been created, in conjunction with the section 151/monitoring officer and head of paid service, to ensure consistency of approach to repayment of relocation expenses in these situations.
7. The new procedure is presented within the highlighted section of the attached Moving Home Allowance policy.

Main Considerations for the Council

8. An employee who, despite their best efforts, has been unable to achieve their relocation within 24 months of commencing employment with Wiltshire Council can apply for an extension to these timescales, of up to 6 months, to the head of paid service.
9. During any agreed extension period the employee cannot claim any further lodging, travel or commuting expenses.
10. If, after this extension period, the employee is still unable to achieve their move they can apply to the head of paid service for those expenses already paid to them to be waived.

11. These expenses may include:
 - lodging (max over 24 months = £14,400) and travel (actual costs x 2 per month), or
 - commuting (max. £100 per week, possible maximum of £10,400 over 24 months)
12. Any application for repayment of expenses to be waived will be considered by the head of paid service in conjunction with the section 151 officer.
13. Each case will be reviewed on its own merits and a decision made and communicated to the employee within 14 days.
14. There will be no internal right of appeal against the decision of the head of paid service.

Consultation

15. The head of paid service and section 151 officer have agreed the new procedure and policy wording.
16. The unions have been informed of the new procedure and policy wording and have confirmed they have no concerns.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

17. None

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

18. No negative impacts have been identified.

Risk Assessment

19. None

Financial Implications

20. We only have one employee that we are aware of who is currently in this situation. Total expenses claimed by this employee over the 24 months period are £7,136.
21. Only a small number of employees claim under this policy each year (currently an average of 8 employees claiming each month across the council).

Recommendation

22. To recommend that Staffing Policy Committee approve the changes to the policy and procedure.

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The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report: None