

## Decision by Portfolio Holder



**Report reference: TSS-002-2017/18**  
**Date of report: 07 November 2017**

**Epping Forest  
District Council**

**Portfolio:** Technology and Support Services  
**Author:** Wendy Stump, HR Manager (Ext 4382) Democratic Services: J Leither  
**Subject:** Employee Probation Policy  
**Decision:** To agree the proposed probationary policy for all new Epping Forest District Council Employees

<b>ADVISORY NOTICE:</b> <i>A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a Pecuniary interest. A Portfolio Holder with a non-pecuniary interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.</i>	
I have read and approve/ <del>do not approve</del> (delete as appropriate) the above decision:	
Comments/further action required:	
Signed: Councillor A Lion	Date: 7 <sup>th</sup> November 2017
<i>Non-pecuniary interest declared by Portfolio Holder/ conflict of non-pecuniary interest declared by any other consulted Cabinet Member:</i>	<i>Dispensation granted by Standards Committee: Yes/No or n/a</i>
None	N/A
<b>Office use only:</b> Call-in period begins: 10 <sup>th</sup> November 2017	Expiry of Call-in period: 16 <sup>th</sup> November 2017

**After completion, one copy of this pro forma should be returned to  
Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY**

### Reason for decision:

The Council has not had a formal Probationary Period process in place for a considerable time, and relies on 3, 6 and 9 month reviews of targets and performance.

Probationary Periods are recognised as a valuable management tool to ensure that new employees perform well in their new roles through managers carrying out a robust induction and probationary process.

<b>Initialed as original copy by Portfolio Holder:</b>
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This Policy ensures that new employees are given every opportunity to meet the standards required by the Council, there is also an opportunity to managers to assess the suitability of the employee. Where necessary termination of the employment can be considered at a much earlier stage than our current practices.

**Options considered and rejected:**

Members could decide not to adopt the new Probationary Policy or suggest amendments.

**Background Report:**

1. The Council does not have formal probationary arrangements in place, instead managers carry out Review meetings at 3, 6 and 9 months to review the employee's performance and set objectives. However, there are no clear guidelines if performance/conduct does not meet the standards expected.
2. The Council's Leadership Team requested that a more structured and robust process be reintroduced to:
  - Shorten the review period
  - Apply a rigorous induction process
  - Include more opportunities for assessment and discussion
  - Consider fairly terminating employment at an early stage if the employee is wholly unsuitable for the role
3. For employees their induction and initial period of work with the Council will be more detailed and structured with additional opportunities to discuss objectives and training requirements at the start of their employment with the Council, along with a shorter, structured integration into the authority.
4. Further guidance and a Toolkit will be developed to assist managers implement the Policy.
5. The Joint Consultative Committee, 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017, agreed the proposal to adopt the Guidance.

**Resource Implications:**

There are no resource implications.

**Legal and Governance Implications:**

Employees subject to dismissal would be entitled to Appeal the decision in line with ACAS Guidance.

**Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:**

N/A

**Consultation Undertaken:**

Joint Consultative Committee – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2017

**Background Papers:**

N/A

**Impact Assessments:**

**Risk Management:**

The authority is at risk from employees who do not meet the standards expected of them through errors, poor customer service, conduct and performance issues. Through this Policy, managers will be required to put in place regular meetings setting out expectations, objectives, any barriers to fully integrating employees into the authority and to discuss training needs. Under the Policy, when standards are not met the authority can consider terminating employment fairly and lawfully at an early stage.

**Equality Analysis:**

The Policy will affect all the Council's new employees except for the statutory roles whereby the principles of the policy will apply.

We do not know who our new employees will be to consult and as it is a management tool it would not be appropriate to consult or engage with communities that are likely to be affected by this policy or decision.

This policy will apply to all new employees regardless of characteristic. The Policy directs managers to ensure that there are no health, disability or work related issues which may affect the employee's performance.

**Key Decision Reference (Y/N): No**