

**SUBJECT: HR POLICIES (REDUNDANCY, PENSION AND MARS)**

**DIRECTORATE: CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**REPORT AUTHOR: ALI THACKER (HR AND PAYROLL TEAM LEADER)**

## **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Executive, to implement the proposed changes to the Councils Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS Policy), and to provide an update on further changes following the revocation of the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020.

## **2. Executive Summary**

- 2.1 This report provides an overview of the changes the Council is proposing to make to the MARS policy and provides an update on the amendments made to the Redundancy and Pension policies.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 A recent review of our Redundancy policy, Pension policy, and Mutually Agreed Resignation Scheme (MARS) were undertaken following the implementation for the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020.

The changes to the Councils Redundancy and Pension Policies were previously agreed by the Executive in January, however the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments regulations have now been revoked by the Government, and any changes which were made to our policies in relation to these regulations are now obsolete, therefore based upon this we have reverted our Redundancy and Pension policies back to their original versions (noting the revocation).

In addition, the Council have now removed any reference or provisions associated with those regulations from our MARS Policy. This report however provides an overview of the additional changes which were proposed as part of the MARS policy review.

- 3.2 Enclosed to this report is the updated Mutually Agreed Resignation Policy (MARS).

The proposed changes are as follows:

In section 2.6 the wording has been amended to read:

Although managers must not directly approach individual employees to elicit an application for this scheme, the Chief Executive reserves the right to (internally) publicise time limited opportunities where employees may apply for MARS.

Section 4.4 added in to read:

In certain circumstances, the Chief Executive has the discretion to review and amend the severance payment provisions offered as part of this policy. If such changes would be adverse to the workforce (as they detract from the standard MARS policy) then the usual consultation process will take place with unions on the proposed changes and would be signed off by JCC. Any proposed short duration enhancements to the MARS policy will be signed off by the CX after discussing with the unions in advance, but with no requirement to go to JCC.

- 3.3 The proposed amendments to the MARS Policy were initially presented to JCC in December 2020, however following the comments raised at the meeting, a further amendment was proposed. The proposed further amendment was presented to JCC in January 2021 and it was recommended that the changes should be referred to Executive for formal approval. (Please note these comments did not relate to the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020.)

#### **4. Organisational Impacts**

- 4.1 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules  
As outlined in the report

- 4.2 Human Resources  
The HR team are required to continually review the Council's policies and procedures as and when required to ensure they are clear, cohesive, and fit for purpose. The proposed changes have been discussed with the Trade Unions.

#### **5. Recommendation**

- 5.1 1) That the Executive note the content of the report in relation to the revocation of the Restriction of Public Sector Exit Payments Regulations 2020 and the subsequent policy amendments.
- 2) That the Executive agree to the proposed MARS policy changes.

**Is this a key decision?** No

**Do the exempt information categories apply?** No

**Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?** No

**How many appendices does the report contain?** 1

**List of Background Papers:** None

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