



LEAVER SUPPORT SCHEME

(Approved by Personnel Committee on 7 October 1997)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The City Council, as an equal opportunities employer, seeks to enable those employees who leave their employment to care for a young child, dependant relative or to undergo a period of voluntary service, to maintain work-related contact with the Council for a period of 5 years, with the opportunity to return to work for a minimum of two weeks in each of these years.

1.2 The scheme allows employees, in their period of absence from work, to be informed of developments in their particular area of work and also allows the Council to retain the skills knowledge of trained and experienced employees.

2.0 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

2.1 Employees leaving the Council to care for a young child, or other dependant relative, will be invited to register with the scheme. The scheme is open to full and part-time employees.

2.2 Those employees who opt to undergo a period of voluntary service or undertake a period of further education may also be placed on the register at the discretion of the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development, in consultation with the appropriate head of department, and dependent upon individual circumstances.

2.3 The maximum period for any one period of absence whilst on the register will be 5 years, although in exceptional circumstances the period may be extended.

2.4 The period of 5 years will commence on the date of termination of employment. In the case of female employees who decide to join the scheme whilst on maternity leave, the period will commence on the date of birth of the child.

2.5 Persons wishing to join the scheme must have at least one year's continuous service prior to the date of termination of service.

2.6 The Council will endeavour to offer persons on the register a MINIMUM of two weeks employment per year in a job similar to their original job or other suitable employment or refresher training on full pay or another job at the same grade for that job (which could include covering for staffing absence periods, e.g. annual leave of staff). Services may however, have to review the situation in light of any budgetary constraints.

2.7 It is a condition of the scheme that the person agrees to return for at least 2 weeks each year, though this requirement may be waived or deferred at the request of the person on the register or by the head of service, where there is an acceptable reason why the person cannot return to work, eg V.S.O. work.

2.8 On returning to work, other "refresher" training would be given as necessary.

2.9 Persons on the register may be invited annually to discuss with an appropriate departmental officer their circumstances and any developments within the Council may also be discussed.

2.10 Expenses incurred as a result of attending an annual interview will be reimbursed according to the Council's current arrangements for re-imbusement of approved expenses for job applicants.

3.0 INFORMATION ON VACANCIES

3.1 When a person indicates his/her desire to return to work, he/she will be provided with a copy of the weekly vacancy bulletin and should be advised that he/she can only apply for vacancies as an external applicant.

3.2 Persons on the register cannot be given priority for interview.

3.3 The selection of a successful candidate for a vacancy for which a person on the register has applied, will be based on the same criteria used for other vacancies, ie the qualifications, skills and experience of the applicants from the register will be assessed on the same basis as for other applicants.

4.0 OPERATION OF SCHEME

4.1 The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development will be responsible for the interpretation of this scheme.

4.2 Departments will:

- (a) Maintain an appropriate register of persons electing to avail themselves of this facility.
- (b) Keep those persons registered informed of Council and departmental events.
- (c) Confirm annually with individual that he/she wishes to remain registered on the scheme and write to advise him/her when the 5 year period has expired.
- (d) Inform women prior to their taking maternity leave (or other employees known to be leaving their employment to care for a dependant) of the existence of the Leaver Support Scheme and offer them the opportunity to join the register.
- (e) Arrange the work, training periods and update information provisions for all individuals on the department register.
- (f) Provide full details to the Head of Human Resources and Organisational development on the implementation of the Scheme so that it may be monitored on a corporate basis and to enable annual updated reports to be placed before the Finance and Resources Committee.