|  |
| --- |
| LEAVER SUPPORT SCHEME |

*(Approved by Personnel Committee on 7 October 1997 and updated in March 2023)*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The 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 and 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 Chief Officer - People and Organisational Development, in consultation with the appropriate Chief Officer, 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 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 Employees 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). Clusters 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 Chief Officer, 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 their circumstances and any developments within the Council.

3.0 INFORMATION ON VACANCIES

3.1 When a person indicates their desire to return to work, they may apply for Council vacancies advertised on the MyJobScotland website. They should be advised that they 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 Chief Officer - People and Organisational Development will be responsible for the interpretation of this scheme.

4.2 Clusters will:

(a) Maintain an appropriate register of persons electing to be on the scheme.

(b) Keep those persons registered informed of Council and Cluster events.

(c) Confirm annually with the individual that they wish to remain registered on the scheme and write to advise them when the 5-year period has expired.

(d) Inform employees 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 register.

(f) Provide full details to the Chief Officer - People and Organisational Development on the implementation of the Scheme so that it may be monitored on a corporate basis.