

# EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK



**PLYMOUTH**  
CITY COUNCIL

Human Resources and  
Organisational Development

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## SECTION I HELLO AND WELCOME TO OUR WORLD

I am incredibly proud of the achievements we are making as a Council and it is the contribution of every employee which is making all the difference.

Life is challenging enough, so we have made a commitment to keep our procedures as simple and as straight forward as possible. Your handbook gives you a summary of the key work policies and procedures we would like you to be aware of and gives you links to additional information - if you need it.

We feel privileged that you have selected us as your employer and in return you can benefit from the range of opportunities we can offer.

Whatever your job, we all play a critical role in ensuring our customers and visitors get the best service we can provide. We have an exciting future ahead of us. Thank you for being part of our team.



**Mark Grimley**  
Assistant Director for  
Human Resources  
and Organisational  
Development

## **SECTION 2 WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WORK FOR YOUR LOCAL COUNCIL?**

### **ABOUT THE COUNCIL**

Every aspect of life in Plymouth is touched by the work of the City Council. It provides the 256,700 residents in Plymouth with more than 300 services, ranging from looking after public parks, looking after children and adults who require social care to lending books and running swimming pools.

The Council is a unitary authority, which means it is responsible for all local services in Plymouth including transport, social care and education.

Around 10,000 employees see residents through the good times at register offices for weddings, licensing for nightclubs and sports facilities and the difficult times such as helping the homeless and dealing with child welfare issues.

### **CONSTITUTION**

The Constitution provides a framework for the democratic processes of the Council and you may find some sections of the constitution very useful.



#### PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

### **POLITICAL MATTERS**

Councillors are elected by the people of Plymouth to represent each of the city's 19 wards, make decisions about the policies of the Council, its budget and how services are run.

Elections are held for three years out of four, with a third of the 57 seats being up for re-election each year.

The political group with the majority of seats on the Council select a leader who is then formally elected as Council Leader by the Full Council.

A Cabinet is selected by the ruling group. The Cabinet meets in public every four weeks to make key decisions. Each Cabinet member has a special area of responsibility or 'portfolio'. Cabinet members are also given the authority to make detailed decisions that affect their area of responsibility.

The Leader and Cabinet make most of the key decisions about how the Council is run and how the budget is allocated.

Plymouth City Council has a Labour administration following the local elections on 3 May 2012.

Councillors are not to be distracted from their political duties by becoming involved in staffing issues. Please do not therefore approach elected Councillors on any employment matters or assist Councillors with any personal or party political matters. You must also declare to your manager any relationship with a Councillor which might be seen as influencing your work. If you are uncertain of how to deal with a matter which involves a Councillor, please ask your line manager.



## DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE BOOKLET



## SECTION 3 YOUR JOB

### CONTRACTS AND TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Employees of Plymouth City Council can belong to different national negotiating bodies, depending on their role, and therefore have different terms and conditions.

We have both national and local terms and conditions. Our local terms and conditions are called 'The Plymouth Book', which apply to the majority of employees. Employees on Soulbury or JNC Craft terms and conditions may have different entitlements.

All employees receive a Principal Statement (contract of employment) which sets out the contractual entitlements of your employment e.g. details about your pay, hours of work, annual leave, notice period and other rights and benefits that you might receive.

From time to time we may look to change some aspects of your terms and conditions. This is usually done using a process called Collective Bargaining. This is where we consult with relevant parties and then meet with trade unions on behalf of the workforce to negotiate changes. When negotiations have concluded and we have reached an agreement, everyone's contract of employment will change and we notify employees.

The trade unions negotiate on behalf of all the staff and collective agreements within the workplace cover both union and non-union staff.



THE PLYMOUTH BOOK

### CONVICTIONS, CAUTIONS AND REPRIMANDS

You must inform your line manager if you are given a caution, reprimand or criminal conviction whilst employed with us. Failure to do so would be a breach of your contract.

### EXTRA EMPLOYMENT

If you plan to take additional work (paid or voluntary), in or outside the Council, you must get written permission from your line manager. Your line manager needs to be confident that there will be no conflict of interest on your time, focus or commitment.

If additional employment is approved and at a later date that employment is



deemed to be having a negative impact on your ability to undertake your role your line manager can request that you resign from your additional employment.

## **GRADE**

All positions have been graded in a process called job evaluation. Job evaluation measures the job, not the job holder's performance. It is used to grade new roles or existing roles which have significantly changed.

After the job has been evaluated, jobs are given the appropriate grade and each grade has a pay band. Each point in the pay band is called a spinal column point (SCP). Employees can progress up the spinal column points to the maximum of their grade subject to meeting expectations at appraisal.



## **PAY SCALES**

## **JOB TITLE AND ROLE PROFILE**

Everyone has a job title and yours is stated on your offer letter, Principal Statement and payslip. You will also have a role profile which sets out the duties relevant to your job. From time to time we may ask you to take on alternative or additional duties at your existing grade to support team working and achieve service objectives.

## **PAY**

Most of us get paid on the last working day of each month. Employees on the teaching payroll get paid on the 25th of the month. We all get paid by bank transfer so if your bank details change, please remember to tell us! You can do this by completing the change of personal details form.



## **CHANGE OF PERSONAL DETAILS FORM**

Your pay is subject to statutory deductions of income tax and employee National Insurance contributions and any other deductions that we may be obliged to take. You will receive a monthly pay statement (payslip) detailing gross pay and deductions. Annual increments are paid on 1 October each year, subject to entitlement.

Employees on Teachers and Soulbury terms and conditions receive increments in September (if applicable).

Each year we will issue you with a P60 certificate which states your total earnings and deductions for the tax year ending 5 April.

If you claiming for expenses (e.g. mileage allowances) you should submit claims on a monthly basis.



## CLAIM FORMS

### **PAY ERRORS**

If we make a mistake in your pay it is your responsibility to tell us about the error. For overpayments, we will draw up a repayment schedule, taking into account your personal circumstances.

We will make deductions from your salary or from any other monies due to you equivalent to the overpayment. This includes, but is not limited to, any overpayment of salary, other benefits, or leave taken in excess of your holiday entitlement

### **SAFEGUARDING AND CRIMINAL RECORD BUREAU CHECKS**

As part of our commitment to ensure the safeguarding of vulnerable people in our community, we check the criminal records of people who work in certain job types. Some employees will therefore have to undergo a criminal records check.



## OUR SAFER WORKING BOOKLET BOOKLET

### **STAFF CONSULTATION AND TRADE UNIONS**

Consulting with the workforce helps us to ensure employees are committed to our goals.

We recognise trade unions and if you wish to join a trade union, please contact the local representatives. We support and engage in full and effective consultation with all employees and trade union representatives and our formal consultative body is known as the Employment Liaison Committee.

## TRAVELLING EXPENSES

If you use your private vehicle on council business you may be entitled to claim a mileage allowance, subject to the production of VAT receipts.

You will also have to provide evidence to your line manager that you have a current driving licence, your vehicle insurance covers business mileage and have a valid MOT.

You are responsible for paying any fixed penalty fines and/or excess parking charges incurred whilst on council business. We recommend you read our driver safety guidance.

Other allowances for travel and subsistence can be found in the Plymouth Book.



INSURANCE DECLARATION FORM



DRIVER SAFETY GUIDANCE



THE PLYMOUTH BOOK

## YOUR DATA

Don't forget to tell us when your personal details change. We may need to write to you, or contact your 'emergency contact' in the highly unlikely event that you have a mishap at work.

The data we hold about you is protected under the Data Protection Act and only authorised people have access to your personal data.

Under the Data Protection Act you can request access to personal data held about you. Read our access to personal files policy for more information about this.



CHANGE TO PERSONAL DETAILS FORM



ACCESS TO PERSONAL FILES POLICY

## WHERE YOU WORK

Your Principal Statement will confirm your work location, however if at any point your work location changes on either a permanent or temporary basis we will consult with you.

We want our working environment to be as comfortable as possible, so we ensure our workplace is kept clear of clutter and paperwork is kept to a minimum or filed away. Where rooms are allocated for people to eat their lunch, we request that you do not eat at your desk.

See our ways of working induction booklet for more information about our offices.



OUR WAYS OF WORKING BOOKLET



## SECTION 4 OUR EXPECTATIONS OF YOU

### BEHAVIOURS

We want you to enjoy coming to work. To ensure we have a great working environment, your behaviour and attitude makes all the difference. In fact, behaviours are so important we built a behavioural appraisal process. You will get feedback on your behaviours from your line manager and may also invite members of your team or other colleagues to provide their views on your behaviour.

The behaviours we like and love to see can be found in our Competency Framework Guide. We all have a responsibility to encourage and promote these behaviours and create a positive working environment.



#### COMPETANCY FRAMEWORK

### CODE OF CONDUCT

Without question, each of us plays a critical role in the Council therefore, when we are at work all of our working time must be devoted to carrying out our duties. We support each other to achieve goals and don't unnecessarily distract other colleagues.

Please become familiar with the Code of Conduct as it tells you about our expectations.



#### CODE OF CONDUCT

### CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

You should be aware that in the course of your employment you might have access to and be entrusted with information in respect of the business and financing of the Authority, which is or may be confidential. You must not, unless it is in the proper course of your duties, divulge to anyone or use confidential information concerning the business or finances of the Council and/or customers.

All notes and memoranda of any confidential information concerning the business of the Council or any suppliers, agents, distributors or customers, received or made by you is the property of the Council and should be returned by you upon termination of your employment.



## DATA PROTECTION POLICY

### **DRESS CODE**

We have no desire to impose a strict dress code. Our workforce are from a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, ages and tastes, and you may wish to exercise your choice in the way you dress; however there will be certain standards appropriate to your service area.

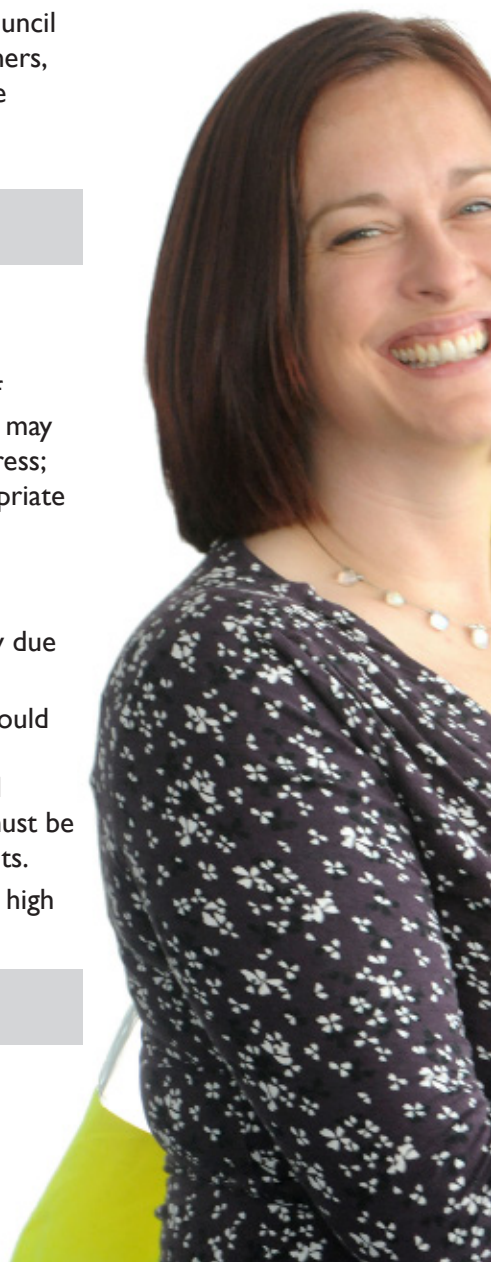
Your appearance impacts on our image so consideration should always be given to public perception. Adjustments may also be necessary due to health and safety or other reasons.

If you have been provided with a uniform, it should be worn at all times when you are at work, or representing the Council. All forms of personal protective equipment and/or clothing issued must be worn in line with health and safety requirements.

It almost goes without saying that we expect a high standard of cleanliness and personal hygiene.



## DRESS CODE POLICY





## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

It is highly unlikely that we will ever have to deal with a real emergency; however you still need to know the emergency procedures for your working location. Please speak to your line manager for details.

**First aid** – all locations have a nominated first aider who can administer basic first aid. In serious cases the emergency services will be contacted.

**Fire and evacuation** – Fire procedures are laid down in a local safety document in all of our workplaces. These can be found on notice boards or visible walls.

## EXCELLENT SERVICE

Delivering an excellent service is our most important goal.

The public expects high standards so we each have a responsibility to build public confidence in our services and protect the reputation of the Council. This is why delivering an excellent service is something we should all be striving for.

So what is an excellent service? It is:

- Keeping our promises by delivering what we say, we will deliver when we say we will deliver it.
- Providing honest and clear information in a professional manner by staff who show a positive attitude and who are committed to the goals of the Council.

## **ID CARDS**

If you have an ID card it should be worn visibly at all times, unless this has been agreed as inappropriate by your line manager. ID cards must not be given or lent to anyone. If you lose your ID card, contact security to see if it's been handed in. If not, please contact the Recruitment Team to have the card cancelled and arrange for a new one.

ID cards are issued by the Recruitment Team.



ACCESS/ID CARD REQUEST FORM

## **MEDIA**

All media enquiries should be forwarded to Corporate Communications in the first instance, even if you are on the list of officers authorised to speak to the media. Corporate Communications will contact the appropriate person to agree a response or to carry out an interview.

## **MOBILE PHONES**

If you have a work mobile phone, please read the code of practice for mobile phone use.

If you have a personal mobile phone, we ask you to be reasonable about when you use it and to make sure that you don't misuse work time.

Some departments have a local policy on not allowing the use of mobile phones at all, especially in areas where this could be distracting to our customers. You will be advised by your line manager if this is the case.



MOBILE PHONE USE CODE OF PRACTICE



## **OWNERSHIP OF WORK PRODUCED**

The work you produce is owned by Plymouth City Council and you have no rights, interest or claims, either during your employment or after the termination of your employment, to any such intellectual property. You cannot use such intellectual property other than during your employment with us and for the purposes of the Council.

## **PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS**

Many employees meet their partners and friends at work, or work with members of their family. If you meet and start a relationship with a work colleague, or work with your best friends or relatives, please let your line manager know so that they can decide whether there are any conflicts of interest. We will ensure that relatives or partners are not in a position to make important decisions regarding the person they have a relationship with e.g. appraisals, promotions or retention.

## **PERSONAL PROPERTY**

You are responsible for the safety of your personal property that you bring into work. We recommend that you take precautions to ensure that your possessions are either safely stored or kept with you at all times. Please don't bring into work valuable personal property, as we cannot absolutely guarantee the safety of your belongings.

## **RECEIVING GIFTS**

Our employees regularly go the extra mile to deliver excellent customer service. This can result in the customer offering a gift as a way of thanks. Gifts in most cases can be accepted, but we cannot accept a gift, service or hospitality on a scale that might be considered to affect our judgement.

If you are offered a gift or reward for doing or not doing anything in your work capacity, please include the details in your department's hospitality book.

## **REFERENCES**

We will provide references for members of staff or former employees when we receive the request in writing. Only managers can provide a work related reference.

If you are asked to provide a personal reference you must ensure that the reference is issued on plain paper and not on the Council's headed paper. You must also make it clear that the reference you are giving is in a personal capacity not a professional one.

## **RESIGNATION**

If you wish to terminate your employment you need to give us a period of notice. The amount of notice is determined by your grade and contract. Employees on Grade A to Grade G need to give four weeks' notice. Employees on Grade H and above need to give 12 weeks' notice.

Your resignation must be in writing and addressed to your line manager. Careful consideration should be given before submitting your notice as there is no automatic right to retain your job if you change your mind and want to continue working for us.

Before you leave us your manager will make the following arrangements; handover of on-going work, the return of our property, e.g. mobile telephone, keys, lap-top computers, identity card and clothing and ensure that all contact information is correct. You will also be given the opportunity to have an exit interview.

## **RETIREMENT**

There is no contractual retirement age so when you plan to retire please follow the resignation procedure detailed above.

## **PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

Many people now use social media to communicate with friends and family e.g. Facebook, Twitter etc.

Whether or not you choose to create / participate in online social networking (or similar) is your own concern and the views and opinions you express are your own. However it is important to be aware that posting information, pictures or views about the Council, your work colleagues or customers cannot be isolated from your working life.

You have the right to freedom of expression and we equally have the right to protect our reputation. We also have the responsibility to protect our employees, customers and contractors' information so please carefully consider what you say.

When using social media in a personal capacity remember the following:

- In social media the boundaries between professional and personal can sometimes become blurred - so it's important to be particularly careful and do not disclose Council business.
- Social media is a public forum and the same rules apply as if you were speaking in public about the Council or writing something for publication e.g. a newspaper article.
- When you post something on the internet it is very difficult to have it removed.
- Use common sense and if you are unsure about a particular post/comment/picture and how it will affect you at work don't post it.

Remember you are personally responsible for any content you publish. Posting anything that is considered inappropriate may result in disciplinary action.

## TEAM WORK

What's unique about you? We believe your mix of knowledge, skills and experiences are an important contribution to the team you work in. We also have a competency called 'Works with Others' which focuses on team work. Teams usually consist of people doing a wide variety of roles working together sharing ideas, experiences and talents. Having people working together with a range of different skills makes for better results.



### COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

## USE OF THE INTERNET, INTRANET AND EMAIL

We have an intranet site called Staff Room which is our main communication channel contains details of all our policies and procedures. You can also access this site from your home computer if you don't have a computer at work.

If you do have a computer at work, it is for business use, however, limited personal use of email and internet facilities is fine in certain circumstances e.g. use it in your own time (lunch times, before or after work). If we have reason to believe that this privilege is being abused we will conduct an audit on the employee's use of our PC equipment.

The personal use of the internet must not incur additional expense to the Council, and must not interfere with employee productivity. The playing of internet computer games or watching TV programmes via the internet is not allowed.



[WWW.PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK/STAFFROOM](http://WWW.PLYMOUTH.GOV.UK/STAFFROOM)



### ICT INTERNET POLICY



## **USE OF TELEPHONES**

Personal use of council phones and council mobile phones is permitted in emergency situations only or if the call has been agreed by your line manager. Incoming personal calls on council phones are permitted, but again, only in emergency situations.



## SECTION 5 OUR SUPPORT TO YOU

### WHEN YOU JOIN US

#### Induction

Induction is the first stage of your personal development with us. We would like all of our staff to fully engage in the induction programme as it will help you achieve a positive start to your new role and future career with us.



#### INDUCTION

#### Probation for new staff

Probation lasts for the first six months of joining the Council and is an opportunity for both you and your line manager to determine whether you have the necessary skills, knowledge and abilities to meet the minimum requirements of the job.



#### PROBATION POLICY

### DURING YOUR EMPLOYMENT

#### Appraisals

Time flies, but twice a year we stop the clock so you can spend time with your line manager to discuss your achievements. This is called your appraisal. During your appraisal you will agree objectives, and discuss development opportunities. The appraisal process is important as you can only receive an incremental pay increase if you have met or exceeded expectations.

#### Health safety and wellbeing

You are our most valuable resource. Your health, safety and wellbeing is very important to us and risks to the health and safety of our employees and visitors will be identified and effectively controlled.



#### HEALTH AND SAFETY

## **Occupational health**

Occupational health aims to protect, promote and enhance the health of employees at work. Occupational health is professional, confidential and impartial. Our Occupational health provider, IMASS, provides advice on the prevention of work related health problems including advice on reasonable adjustments to help staff stay well at work.

## **Resilience**

We believe that employees work best when they are working at a level which is appropriate for their talents and skills.

If you believe that you are suffering from stress-related ill health, please let us know as soon as possible so we can do all we can to help you. We will conduct a stress risk assessment to determine the cause of the stress and where possible, put in place control measures.

## **Sickness or injury**

Contact us as early as possible, at least 20 minutes before your normal start time to explain why you cannot attend work.

If you are off sick we will continue to pay your contractual pay for a limited period of time, depending on your length of service.

Attendance is monitored and all sickness absence is pro-actively reviewed by line managers, offering support where relevant. Absences of five days or more triggers the employee having a wellbeing meeting with their line manager to determine what support (if any) can be offered to support the employee.

The wellbeing of our employees is vitally important and we have an on-line Employee Assistance Programme called Workplace Options which offers practical information, resources, and counselling to help you balance your work, family and personal life. A user name and password is required to access this service which can be obtained by emailing: [healthandsafety@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@plymouth.gov.uk)



[WWW.WORKPLACEOPTIONS.CO.UK](http://WWW.WORKPLACEOPTIONS.CO.UK)

## **Lone working**

If you work alone without direct supervision we will undertake a risk assessment to establish if there are any risks to you. If risks are identified, control measures will be put in place to minimise those risks.

Any employee who believes themselves to be in serious and/or imminent danger should immediately cease or postpone the work activity and remove themselves to a place of safety.

If it is likely you will be working alone please familiarise yourself with our lone working guide.



### LONE WORKING GUIDE

## **BENEFITS**

### **Career development**

There are excellent opportunities in the Council for career development as we have such a wide variety of roles. We will encourage you to share your skills, talents and aspirations as this helps us to work with you to identify a suitable career path.

Responsibility for your development is shared between you and your line manager. By working together you can identify your strengths and development needs.

We learn in different ways so development options are varied and flexible.

### **Confidential personal support**

A professionally qualified counselling service is available through the Employee Assistance Programme. Or, if an occupational health doctor/adviser recommends that you would benefit from speaking to a counsellor face to face, they will speak to your line manager to make arrangements. Alternatively, line managers can contact occupational health to arrange counselling on behalf of their employee.



### WORKPLACE OPTIONS GUIDE



## **Employee benefits discount scheme**

We know that you work hard and care about the work that you do – delivering services with pride, passion, pace and professionalism – and we want to say thanks for a job well done.

iCHOOSE is an exciting employee benefits discount scheme that has been designed to make your money go further, offering you significant savings on everyday goods and services including weekly shopping, leisure, entertainment, holidays, motoring, clothing, eating out and much, much more.

You can enjoy discounts of up to 20 per cent at online and high street stores including Sainsbury's, Morrison's, Marks & Spencer, Apple, Boots, Thomas Cook, Debenhams and Comet to name a few. There are also specially negotiated discounts with local businesses and retailers making the scheme even more beneficial to both you and the local economy.

Access to the scheme is on a self-service basis from your work or home PC or alternatively over the telephone.



iCHOOSE GUIDE

## **Flexi time – time back**

Your line manager will advise you of the working hours for your department and the level of flexibility that is permitted around those hours. The time back scheme gives some employees flexibility when they work and accrued hours can be taken back at another time.

All staff working more than six hours a day must record a minimum period of 30 minutes for a meal break (which is unpaid).



FLEXI-SCHEME/TIME BACK SCHEME

## Holidays

A significant benefit of working here is the excellent annual leave entitlement, which increases the longer you work for us. When you join us you are entitled to 25 days. After five years service this increases to 30 days (based on full time entitlements).

In addition, you also benefit from bank holidays. Annual leave, including public holidays are always pro-rata for part time employees. Please remember that all leave must be approved by your line manager.

You can also bank leave to save up time for an extended holiday. The maximum you can bank is up to ten days over two years. This will allow you to take up to 20 days, plus your annual leave entitlement, when you go on your travels. You need to get your manager's approval to bank leave.

## Pension

It's important to start saving for retirement, and we have a very generous pension scheme which is a significant benefit to all our employees.

You will be advised on which pension scheme is appropriate to your role and will be automatically enrolled. Most people will be on the Local Government Pension Scheme, and some are eligible to join the Teachers Pensions Scheme.

If you leave our employment and you have been a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme you will have several options in relation to your accrued pension rights. Depending on the length of scheme membership, this could include a refund of contributions, preserved benefits or transferring your benefits to another scheme. Alternatively, if you are at the relevant age, payment of pension benefits may be available.



[WWW.DEVON.GOV.UK/PENSIONS](http://WWW.DEVON.GOV.UK/PENSIONS)



[WWW.TEACHERSPENSIONS.CO.UK](http://WWW.TEACHERSPENSIONS.CO.UK)

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We will never accept discriminatory behaviour. Everyone within the Council is expected to know, understand and comply with equality standards.

Our Equality and Diversity Policy is our commitment to reducing inequalities. We will work hard to keep this promise even when we face challenges. We will respond to any concerns or complaints, and do our best to put things right.



### EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY



## SECTION 6 OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

From time to time we need to ensure that staff have received particular policies and procedures. To do this we may ask you to sign a declaration that you have seen, read and understood the information you have been given.

### ABSENCES FROM WORK

**Public duties** – Paid time off will be given for some public duties. Please refer The Plymouth Book for more information.

**Bad weather** – if you can't get to work, or have to leave early due to bad weather lost time can be counted against the time back scheme or annual leave. You may also be able to work from home if your role is suitable for home working. Read our policy on attendance at work during bad weather for more information.



THE PLYMOUTH BOOK



ATTENDANCE AT WORK DURING BAD WEATHER POLICY

### ALCOHOL AND DRUGS AT WORK

The misuse of alcohol, drugs and other substances can have serious consequences when it impairs safety critical work activities or the professional ability of employees.

If you become dependent on either drugs or alcohol, or you would like support/help in reducing your use of drugs or alcohol, please discuss with your line manager to determine what help is available.



DRUGS AND ALCOHOL AT WORK POLICY

### CAPABILITY

We will offer you appropriate support and training to achieve your objectives, however if your performance does not meet our expectations, or you have high sickness absence which prevents you from fulfilling your role, we will use the Capability Policy to manage the situation.

Please let your manager know at the earliest opportunity if you have a personal situation or medical condition which is affecting your performance at work. Your wellbeing is important to us and we will do all that we can to offer support and assistance.

## **DISCIPLINARY**

If during your employment you do not behave to the standards we expect, we will use our Disciplinary Policy to address the situation.



### DISCIPLINARY POLICY

## **FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICIES**

We all have a life outside of work and we have a wide range of policies to support you if you need to take leave from work to attend to matters in your personal life such as maternity leave and time off for dependents care.



### LEAVE AND TIME OFF

## **FORMAL EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES**

Formal procedures are normally used to deal with capability, disciplinary and grievance cases where informal attempts have not resolved the issue. These procedures all follow a three step approach as follows:

### **Investigation**

An appropriate manager will conduct an investigation. At the end of the investigation, a report of the findings will be produced which is shared with relevant parties prior to a formal hearing.

### **Formal hearing**

A hearing is very similar to a meeting, in that it is usually held in one of our meeting rooms and everyone sits around the table to discuss the matter. At the hearing there will be a chairperson (manager) who is in charge. At the end of the hearing the chairperson will make the decision on what action is to be taken.

## **Appeal**

Employees have the right to appeal the decision. Appeals must be specific in detail and clear on the grounds of the appeal. An appeal hearing is a similar procedure to the first hearing. The chairperson makes their decision, which is final, and there is no opportunity to appeal again.

Our procedures are designed to be fair and transparent. If you are involved in any of these formal procedures, we encourage you to be honest and open so that management can make appropriate decisions.

## **GRIEVANCES**

If during your employment you feel that we have not behaved appropriately towards you please let us know so we can discuss your concerns informally. If you feel it cannot be informally resolved you can raise a grievance using our Grievance Policy.



### **GRIEVANCE POLICY**

## **MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS**

You will be given unpaid leave to attend medical, dental or optician appointments. If you to leave work to attend these appointments you will need to make up the time.

If you are pregnant we will give you paid time to attend ante-natal appointments. Partners/fathers are eligible to receive paid time off to attend up to three ante-natal appointments.

## **NO SMOKING**

Smoking is not permitted in any council building and workplace, or in the majority of grounds associated with our buildings. You can't smoke when you are contracted to work, and you cannot use the flexi/time back scheme for short smoking breaks.

The only exception is during your unpaid meal break, but again you can't smoke on or near our premises.



### **SMOKEFREE POLICY**

## **SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL**

Employees are encouraged to use sustainable methods of transport to travel to and from work, and between meetings. This may include public transport, walking, cycling or other low carbon-emission options. Where individual's private cars are the only available option, car sharing should also be considered.

In limited cases parking is available at the employee's work location however; there is no contractual right for an employee to receive parking. If you have to use your car to attend a meeting on Council business and you incur parking costs (for the duration of that meeting), this can be reclaimed in line with mileage expenses. Employees are expected to manage their diaries, as far as possible, to minimise parking costs. You will need to have parking receipts if you are claiming reimbursement of parking expenses.

## **TIME OFF FOR TRADE UNION DUTIES**

If you carry out trade union duties, you will be given paid or unpaid time in accordance with our Trade Union Facilities Agreement.



### **TRADE UNION FACILITIES AGREEMENT**

## **WHISTLEBLOWING**

We encourage employees to raise any serious concerns they have regarding fraud, corruption and health and safety issues. If you have any concerns, please notify us by using the Whistleblowing Policy.



### **WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY**

Employee Handbook  
June 2012

**CONTACT**

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