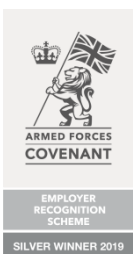


STAFF HANDBOOK

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Staff Handbook is to provide an employee with a guide to both the Council and the terms and conditions affecting their employment. This Handbook should be read in conjunction with your letter of appointment as they both form your terms and conditions of employment.

It is essential that all employees retain the Staff Handbook and letter of appointment for the duration of their employment. This Handbook may be updated in the future during your employment.

It comprises five main parts:

- Terms and Conditions
- Remuneration and Benefits
- Core Policies and Procedures
- Policies and Guidelines
- Career Development

There are a number of full policy documents available that relate to summaries contained in this Handbook. A list of dates in which policy documents were formally adopted is provided at the end of the Handbook. In addition, this Handbook supports the content of the Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees, a copy of which is available on request.

If you are just joining the Council, and are a permanent employee, you will have on your first day a brief induction with Human Resources in relation to your terms and conditions of employment.

Your own Department will also carry out a specific service induction for you. In the meantime, if you have any problems connected with your work or something you do not understand, please do not hesitate to raise the matter with your Manager.

ABOUT THE DISTRICT AND THE COUNCIL

The Tendring District is in the north-eastern part of the County of Essex. The major part of the perimeter has a water frontage extending from just above Manningtree on the South bank of the River Stour to Wivenhoe on the East bank of the River Colne, a distance of some 38 miles.

The area has a mix of characteristics from rural districts in the North West to the holiday resorts of Clacton, Frinton and Walton and the port of Harwich, each with its own individual characteristics. The population of the area is over 140,000 with nearly 30% of pensionable age.

Tendring District Council was formed in 1974 when five former authorities were combined. The Council has 48 Councillors and employs over 550 staff.

POLITICAL ARRANGEMENTS

Structure of the Council

Within the Council, Councillors can hold a number of positions of responsibility. The key positions of responsibility are explained below.

Leader of the Council - The Leader of the Council is elected by the Full Council. His/her role is to provide political leadership for the Council and chair meetings of the Cabinet. He/she leads on policy and budget matters and is the principal 'public face' of the Council. The Leader of the Council has to ensure frequent and effective dialogue with the Executive and other Councillors and provide strong political and community leadership.

Each year the Leader addresses the Full Council in a formal 'State of Tending' speech and he regularly makes statements and answers questions at each meeting of Full Council.

Portfolio Holder - At Tending there are *seven* Portfolio Holders who, together with the Executive Leader (see below) make up the Cabinet. The principal role of the Cabinet as a whole and the individual Portfolio Holder is making executive decisions on behalf of the Council. The Full Council sets the portfolios and individual Portfolio Holders are appointed to their Portfolio by the Leader.

The seven portfolios are:-

Corporate Finance and Governance

Environment and Public Space

Housing

Partnerships

Business & Economic Growth

Leisure and Tourism

Independent Living

A Portfolio Holder works, under the political guidance of the Leader, to implement the policies of the Council and is specifically responsible for policy development for specific issues which fall within a portfolio. He/she will

- act as the public focus/spokesperson for issues within his/her portfolio
- oversee and monitor the delivery of his/her portfolio through appropriate officers
- answer for the performance of that portfolio to fellow members and the community.

Members of the Executive have to listen to the views of all Members and local people and be honest and realistic in making their decisions in the best interests of the Council and

Community. This includes recognising that it might be necessary to explain to people why a particular decision has been made.

Overview and Scrutiny Committees: Tendring has two Overview and Scrutiny Committees who are responsible for supporting the development of Council policies. Both portfolio holders and overview and scrutiny committees monitor the performance of policies and services as a means of testing their effectiveness and appropriateness. Tendring has organised its overview and scrutiny function into:

- **Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee** – *This Committee looks at Council's external-facing relationships;*
- **Resources and Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee** – *This Committee looks at the Council's internal-facing management functions.*

Regulatory functions and ensuring probity - Separate from the executive and overview and scrutiny roles are the roles undertaken by members of the other committees of the Council. These include:

Audit Committee, which provides independent scrutiny of the financial, performance, governance and Corporate Risk aspects of running the Council; including the annual Statement of Accounts;

Planning Committee, which makes decisions on planning applications and comments on drafts of Local Development Planning documents;

Human Resources and Council Tax Committee, which makes decisions on key workforce and staffing issues at the Council and sets the Council Tax;

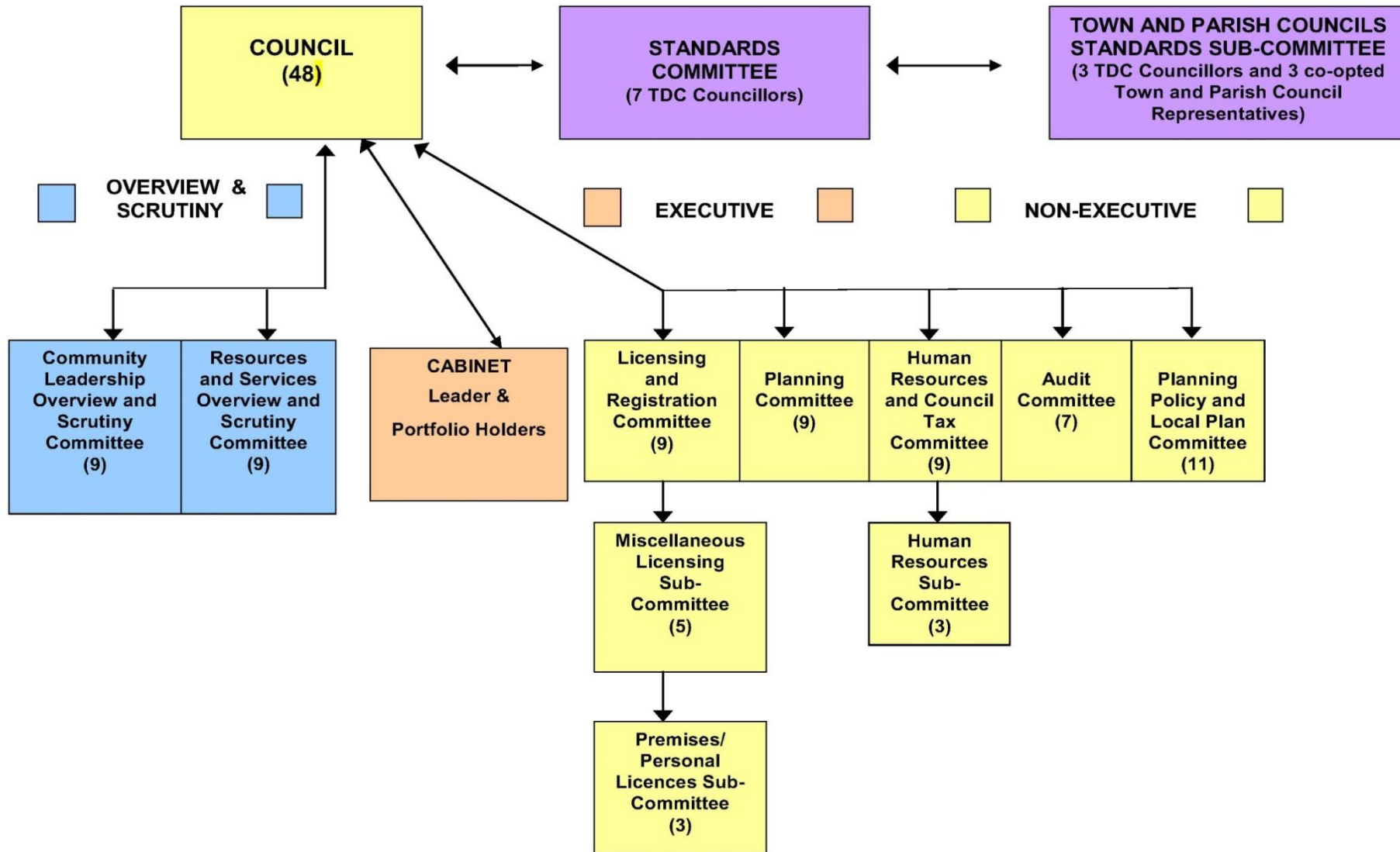
Licensing and Registration Committee and its Sub-Committee; which make decisions on licensing applications;

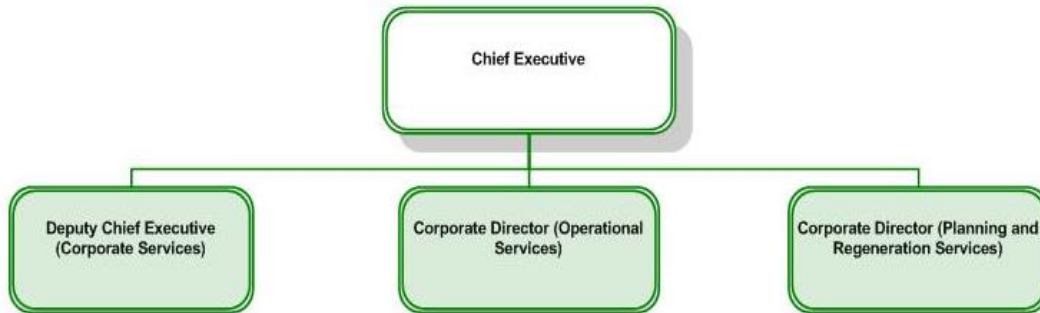
Standards Committee, which deals with the overall ethical framework for District and Parish Councillors and processes any alleged breaches by Members of the Code of Conduct.

Local Plan Committee, which exercises the Council's functions relating to overseeing the preparation of the Local Plan and ensures it, meets the National Planning Policy.

The political structure of the Council is set out diagrammatically below.

CABINET AND COMMITTEE STRUCTURE





MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

Chief Executive

- Statutory Head of the Paid Service
- Responsible for the Council's workforce.
- Management *Team* Chair
- Attends, together with the Executive Leader of the Council, meetings of the Tendring Local Strategic Partnership.
- Attends with the Executive Leader, meetings of the Essex Local Government Association.
- Works with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council on key civic events and often represents the Council at meetings and events organised by outside bodies.
- Attends meetings of the Essex Chief Executives' Association, representing Tendring.
- Council's Electoral Registration Officer and acts as Returning Officer at Local Government, County, European and Parliamentary Elections.

There are 3 Departments as follows:

- Corporate Services
- Operational Services
- *Planning and Regeneration Services*

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Terms and Conditions section of the Staff Handbook contains the contractual terms of employment for employees of the Council

1. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

All employees will receive with their appointment letter a Statement of Written Particulars confirming start date, name of the post, grade, salary, hours and general terms and conditions of employment.

The Conditions of Employment with Tendring District Council in the main conform to those established for local government generally by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (commonly known as the 'Green Book'). These may be supplemented by any Provincial or Local agreements reached with Trade Unions recognised by the Council and by the rules of the Council. If you require further information about the 'Green Book' local agreements or Human Resources Policies and Procedures please contact Human Resources, Town Hall, Clacton on Sea.

Specific details relevant to individual posts, or any other conditions of employment, will be set out in the Statement of Written Particulars.

2. PROBATIONARY PERIOD

Your employment is subject to an initial probationary period of six months during which time your performance, attendance, behaviour and suitability for the post will be assessed. This applies to all employees joining Tendring District Council regardless of former Local Government continuous service. The Council reserves the right to extend the probationary period where there are doubts as to the employees suitability.

The provisions of this contract apply equally to the probationary period except that the Grievance and Disciplinary procedures do not apply to decisions taken to extend the period of probation or to terminate your service. Any termination of contract of employment during this period will follow the statutory dismissal procedures as defined in the *Employment Act 2008*.

At any time during the period of probation, the Council may give one week's notice to terminate your employment, if it is felt that you are unsuitable for the post. The Council will, however, advise you if you are considered to be unsuitable, and you will be given a period of at least one week, in order to achieve a satisfactory standard. If you choose to leave the Council within your probationary period, you are required to give us one month's notice.

If you successfully complete your probationary period, your employment status with the Council will be confirmed in writing. Officers gaining internal appointments and who maintain their continuous service with the Council, are not required to complete a further probationary period.

3. HOURS OF WORK

Your contractual hours and hours of work each week are shown in the statement of written particulars attached to your letter of appointment. The Council reserves the right to review your working week from time to time and, to meet operational requirements, amend your hours of work. Full consultation will take place when any amendment is necessary. Standard office hours are as follows:

Monday to Thursday	08.45 – 17.15
Friday	08.45 – 16.45

Part time staff will work the hours agreed with their Manager on appointment and may be required to work additional hours by agreement. These additional hours will be paid at flat rate until 37 hours have been worked in a week.

The lunchtime period is between 1200 - 1400 hours and our services must continue during this time, therefore you may be required to vary the time of your lunch break to fulfil this requirement. You are required to take a lunch break in accordance with the requirements of the Working Time Regulations, where a working day exceeds 6 hours.

A Flexible Working Hours Scheme has been introduced subject to the requirements of individual services. This allows variations to standard working hours as follows:

Core Time is: 10.00 to 14.30

Flexible Time 07.30 to 10.00 and 14.30 to 18.30

Some staff will be undertaking shift rota work or part time work and hours will therefore be in accordance with the rota. If rest breaks are allocated they must be taken during the shift, not at the beginning or end of the shift.

Any flexi hours accrued must be taken before the end of employment with the authority. No payment for flexi time will be made.

A Copy of the Flexible Working Hours Scheme can be obtained from Human Resources or via the Council's Intranet.

3.1 Time Off In Lieu (TOIL)

From time to time staff may work additional hours that are outside of the hours covered by the flexible working scheme, this might include occasional evening or weekend work for which a payment is not received or they may choose to work additional hours when working from home.

In these circumstances, officers with the agreement of their manager, can claim TOIL. Hours worked for TOIL should be appropriately recorded, for example, by using the self-service holiday and leave calendar.

TOIL should be taken within eight weeks and no more than 16 hours should be accrued at any one time.

3.2 Overtime (Allowances)

For all details relating to overtime, standby and disturbance, including those covered by Emergency Planning, please see the Allowances Policy.

4. BASE OF EMPLOYMENT

On appointment, you will be allocated to a main base of employment. The Council, however, reserves the right to employ you in either a temporary or a permanent capacity *anywhere either inside or outside of the Tendring District in line with service demands.*

5. LEAVE ENTITLEMENT

The annual leave year is from 1 April to 31 March of the following year. Employees who start part of the way through a year are entitled to holidays in proportion to completed calendar months of service. If employees commence employment from the 15th of a month their annual leave entitlement will be calculated with effect from the beginning of the following month. On termination of employment, if you leave after the 15th of a month their annual leave will be calculated to the end of the month in which an employee is leaving.

The above method of appointment applies equally to staff appointed externally, and from within the Local Government Service, unless alternative arrangements are agreed at the time of appointment. Employees who leave the Council's employment are required to take any outstanding leave during their period of notice.

All leave must be properly requested *either via Self Service, or on a leave card, however,* the Council reserves the right to refuse applications for leave if the requested leave is at an inappropriate time. You can carry up to 3 days annual leave forward into the next leave year subject to agreement from your Corporate Director/Head of Department, and 5 days in exceptional circumstances. In all cases, employees must take a minimum of 20 days annual leave per leave year of the statutory minimum annual leave entitlement of 28 days exclusive of Bank/Public Holidays), as outlined in the Working Time Regulations. There are usually 8 statutory Bank Holidays in total.

Spinal Column Point	Holiday Entitlement	After 5 years Continuous Service as at 1 April
1-22	21 days	26 days
23-34	25 days	27 days
35-43	28 days	30 days
SCP 44 & Above	30 days	32 days

The Council's offices are closed between the Christmas and New Year period. As a result 2 days annual leave have been removed from employees leave entitlement. Service's where you have to work over the Christmas period e.g. Careline, Theatre, Leisure Services, employees will gain Time Off In Lieu, which may be taken at a later date in agreement with their manager, and this will need to be taken before the end of the financial year. The Council reserves the right to review this practice from time to time and vary this arrangement after consultation.

5.1 Time off for Dependants

This is a right allowing employees to take a reasonable amount of unpaid time off work to deal with certain unexpected or sudden emergencies and to make any necessary longer term arrangements.

The emergency must involve a dependant of the employee. This can include your husband, wife or partner, child or parent (or others who solely rely on you for help in an emergency may also qualify).

To provide assistance when a dependant dies, falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted or to attend to care of a dependant where no other care is immediately available and to make arrangements for alternative care.

Where arrangements for the care of a dependant have become unexpectedly disrupted or terminated or dealing with an incident which involves a child of the employee which occurs unexpectedly at a time when the child is in the care of an educational establishment which they attend.

Employees are entitled to this right from day one of employment.

However, where exceptional circumstances apply, managers should use their discretion when considering granting further time off, which would normally include a mix of flexi time, annual leave or unpaid leave for the duration of the absence.

5.2 Parental Leave

The right to parental leave entitles employees who have completed one year's continuous service to take a period of unpaid leave to care for each child born or adopted on or after the 15 December 1999 (on or after the 15 December 1981 in the case of a disabled child) up to the child's fifth birthday. The right applies to mothers and fathers and to a person who has obtained formal parental responsibility for a child under the Children Act or equivalent.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

5.3 Compassionate/Special Leave

From time to time, staff may require time off other than for the purpose of Annual Leave. This might be because of bereavement, illness and other domestic problems. If you have a problem of this nature, please talk to your

manager immediately and in certain circumstances compassionate leave may be granted at the discretion of your Corporate Director/Head of Department. See also Time Off for Dependants.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

6. NOTICE PERIODS

Staff who choose to end their employment with the Council must do so by putting this in writing to their Corporate Director/Head of Department and sending a copy to Human Resources. The letter should state the amount of notice given (which must not be less than the contractual notice required) and the date of their final working day. On leaving the Council's employment, staff are required to return their identification card, uniform and any other property belonging to the Council.

Minimum Notice Required From You

The minimum notice periods required from employees of the Council are outlined below:

- *Officers of Grade HOS1, SCP 56 and above* *12 weeks' notice*
- *Officers of Grade 6, SCP 23 up to Grade 14, SCP 55* *8 weeks' notice*
- *Officers from Grade 1B, SCP 1 up to Grade 6, SCP 22* *4 weeks' notice*

Minimum Notice to You:

All staff are entitled to the statutory minimum notice required by the Council to terminate their contract of employment.

- After an employee has been continuously employed for 1 month, they are entitled to receive 1 weeks' notice.
- After an employee has been continuously employed for 2 years or more, they are entitled to 1 weeks' notice for each complete year of continuous employment, up to a maximum of 12 weeks.

The Council is entitled to dismiss an employee without notice (summary dismissal) if there is a fundamental breach of contract, e.g. gross misconduct. Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

7. ILL HEALTH ABSENCE- RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Your terms and conditions of service are as determined under the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. Under this scheme there is an entitlement to sick pay if you fulfil certain conditions of qualification and notification. In outline, the scheme is a supplement to the Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) Scheme and State National Health Insurance Benefit and is designed to ensure that in accordance with the allowances set out below you will receive no more than your normal weekly pay during periods of absence.

7.1 Ill Health Allowances (*Occupational Sick Pay**)

In any twelve month period you will be entitled to receive sick pay depending on your length of service as follows: Length of Service	Full Pay	Half Pay
During the 1st year of service	1 month	2 months (after 4 months service)
During the 2nd year of service	2 months	2 months
During the 3rd year of service	4 months	4 months
During the 4th and 5th years of service	5 months	5 months
After 5 years of service	6 months	6 months

**For Occupational Sick Pay Entitlement “one month” shall be deemed to be equivalent to 26 workings, Saturday being reckoned in all cases as a working day.*

All employees are expected to attend the workplace unless they are unfit to do so. If you have to take time off due to sickness, you must follow the reporting procedure as outlined in the Council's Sickness Absence and Ill Health Policy and Procedures. Failure to follow this procedure may jeopardise your right to Occupational Sick Pay (OSP) or Statutory Sick Pay (SSP).

7.2 Ill Health Notification

The Council's Sickness Absence and Ill Health Policy and Procedures clearly outline what is expected from our employees if they are absent from the workplace due to ill health. It is essential that any absence is reported promptly to your Manager, and that communication is maintained during your absence from the work place. It is not acceptable to notify anyone other than your Manager, and emails, text messages and voicemails are not acceptable.

Employees are able to complete a Self-Certification form on their return to the workplace, if their sickness absence has been for 7 days or less, including weekends and Bank Holidays. Self-Certification forms are available on the Council's Intranet or from your Manager.

Should your period of sickness continue for more than seven days, you must visit your Doctor and submit Fit Notes to your Manager for the remainder of your absence. This is in addition to the requirement to complete a Self-Certification form upon your return.

Where an employee has been absent for three occasions in any three month period, has taken 10 or more days sickness absence in any 3 month period, or has a recurring absence pattern - you may be required to submit a Fit Note from the first day of any subsequent absence. The Council will pay for the certificate if a fee is charged.

7.3 Management of Ill Health Absence

All ill health related absence from the workplace is recorded on the Council's Absence Database. This information is closely monitored by Human Resources. Where appropriate, employees may be requested to attend a meeting with an Occupational Health Specialist to guide the Council further on how best to manage the employee's ill health issues. These appointments will take place during an employee's usual working time, and employees are therefore expected to fully co-operate with such requests. In addition, an *Employee Assistance Programme*, which includes access to a private counsellor, is available to those staff who feel this may be of benefit.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

8. CONTINUOUS SERVICE

The date from which continuous service is calculated is shown on the Statement of Particulars of Employment which is provided to each member of staff when they begin their employment with the Council.

For the purposes of unfair dismissal, your continuous service commences from the date you joined Tendring District Council. If you have previous continuous service with an organisation covered by the Redundancy Payments (Local Government Modification Orders which covers local authorities and related bodies) this will be included in calculating your entitlement to:

- A - A Redundancy Payment
- B - Sickness Allowance
- C - Annual Leave
- D - Notice Period

B, C and D above will also apply if, prior to joining the Council you were made redundant from an organisation covered by the above orders within the last two years. B and D above will apply if you left such an organisation for Maternity reasons within the last eight years and have not been in permanent full time paid employment since.

REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

9. SALARY

Employees are paid monthly by credit transfer, on the 20th day of each month (or nearest day available should this fall on a weekend), into a bank or building society account of their choice. The Council reserves the right to review the payment date from time to time and, if necessary, change the pay date.

How is a pro rata salary calculated?

Your pay is calculated based on the number of hours your work per week or the number of weeks you work per year.

For example, if your annual salary is £12,000 then your full monthly salary before tax etc. would be £1,000. However, if you work 22.50 hours per week you would work out your annual salary the following way:

$22.50/37(\text{full time hours}) \times \text{full time annual salary } £12,000 = £7297.29$ divide by the number of months in the year (12) = £608.10 gross monthly pay before any deductions i.e. tax

How is my pay calculated if I start part way through a month?

Your pay is calculated based on the date you started work and the number of days in the month.

For example, if your annual salary is £12,000 then your full monthly salary before tax etc. would be £1,000. However, if you started work on 15th of January then you would only be due seventeen days' pay for the period 15th - 31st January.

Your first month's pay in this example would be calculated as £1,000 divided by 31 days in January multiplied by 17 days in employment = £548.39.

(Please note that your salary is NOT calculated on the number of hours you work multiplied by your hourly rate.)

There may be a requirement to work additional hours from time to time to cover holidays, sickness and other planned additional work. There is no entitlement to overtime payments for staff paid from spinal column point 44 upwards.

For information on all working arrangements outside of standard working hours, including, On-Call and Standby arrangements, please see Allowances Policy.

The Council reserves the right to review any allowances paid from time to time and make changes as appropriate. Full consultation will take place before any changes are made. Should there be any overpayment of salary; the Council also reserves the right to recoup the overpayment by reasonable deductions. Additionally, any monies owing to the Council at the time of termination may in the first instance be deducted from salary, provided notification takes place prior to any deduction being made. For example, annual leave taken in excess of entitlement, car lease or relocation expenses.

Your salary and any conditions attached to this are as detailed in your letter of appointment that accompanies this Handbook. A copy of the Council's current Salary Scales are available on the Council's Intranet or from Human Resources. In addition, each year Local Government Officers receive a National Pay Award which is effective from each April. This increase is paid to

staff when it is nationally agreed each year, and our Salary Scales are updated accordingly.

How is my pay calculated if I finish work part way through a month?

Your pay is calculated based on the date you finished work and the number of days in the month.

For example, if your annual salary was £12,000 then your full monthly salary before tax etc. would be £1,000. However, if you finished work on 6th March then you would only be due six days pay for the period 1st - 6th March.

Your final month's pay in this example would be calculated as £1000 divided by 31 days in March multiplied by 6 days worked = £193.55.

For any salary related queries, please contact Payroll and Payments.

10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

Subject to there being no declared medical disqualification, employees aged over 16, with contracted hours, will be automatically enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Following the introduction of auto-enrolment, you may be qualify, to be auto-enrolled, in which case Payroll & Payments will write to you in this regard.

Your contribution rate depends on how much you are paid, but it will be between 5.5% and 12.5% of your pensionable pay. The rate you pay depends on which pay band you fall into.

Membership and Contributions

If you work part-time or term time, your rate is based on the actual rate of pay for your job, so you only pay contributions on the pay you actually earn.

The band which you are in will be reviewed each year at 1st April to take account of changes such as pay awards, increments and the annual RPI changes.

11. JOB EVALUATION

The Council will ensure, that all appropriate posts within the Council have been evaluated in accordance with the National Single Status Job Evaluation Scheme. Each Job Evaluation Panel consists of an independent officer, Human Resources and a Unison Representative. Only officers who have undergone Job Evaluation Training are permitted to join a panel.

12. REDUNDANCY

The Council endeavours to avoid redundancy situations, however, circumstances may arise where changes in the Council's scheme, technology or organisational requirements necessitate the need for a reduction in staff. The Council has in place a comprehensive Redundancy Policy and Procedure

which sets out how redundancies will be addressed. Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

13. CAR ALLOWANCES

The Council will reimburse employee for authorised mileage undertaken for work purposes at the Inland Revenue rate, which is currently 45p per mile.

Claims for mileage should be submitted to the Corporate Director/Head of Service for payment the following month in order to assist effective budgetary control and ensure proper treatment within the correct tax year (in compliance with HMRC requirements). Under normal circumstances, claims not submitted in accordance with the above, within three months of the period to which they relate will not be paid.

All employers have Health & Safety responsibilities in relation to staff that are paid mileage allowances for using their personal vehicles whilst undertaking their duties for that employer. Whilst mileage claims contain a certification by the claimant that a valid driving licence, 'current' insurance and MOT's are held by the employee, each department should have in place arrangements to ensure that random checks (to examine driving licences, and insurance and MOT certificates) are made during the course of each year and in this respect the Council reserves the right to ask staff to provide copies of their insurance and MOT certificates from time to time. An appropriate record of the checks undertaken by each department should be maintained.

14. CAR PARKING

Car parking permits are issued to staff in accordance with their location, position and requirement to use a car for business. Permits can be obtained from Parking Services (Public Realm) in Operational Services. Your manager will advise you whether you may have a permit and of where you are eligible to park. The Council reserves the right to review, change and terminate parking arrangements from time to time.

15. UNIFORM

Where uniform is provided it must be worn and bear a Tendring District Council logo. The Authority has a dispensation from the Tax Office stating that a tax liability will not arise on condition that all provided work-wear has a logo. If uniform is provided but does not have a logo then the Tax Office will deem that it is a taxable benefit and you will receive a tax bill. The logo must be sewn on to each item of uniform and be visible. It is not sufficient to wear a detachable badge.

16. CHILDCARE VOUCHERS

The Council offers a salary sacrifice scheme for employees to access childcare vouchers from a chosen provider. This scheme entitles staff that are eligible to receive vouchers which can be redeemed for qualifying childcare providers, and for this amount of their salary to be tax exempt. For further information, please contact Exchequer Services or Human Resources, who will advise you regarding the current scheme available.

NB: Childcare vouchers closed to new entrants on the 4th October 2018.

17. EYE EXAMINATIONS

In line with the legal duty placed on all employers by the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 and the Health & Safety (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2002, the Council offers free eyesight tests and glasses to employees. Only those staff defined as 'users' of display screen equipment, and who are required to wear glasses specifically for display screen use are eligible.

For further information please contact the Corporate Health and Safety Advisor, Corporate Services.

18. SUBSISTENCE

There is no general entitlement for staff to claim subsistence when travelling within the Tendring District. In exceptional circumstances and by agreement with the appropriate Corporate Director/Head of Department, staff may claim subsistence when travelling outside of the District for training or to undertake Council business.

Under normal circumstances, claims not submitted within three months of the period to which they relate will not be paid. Current rates for subsistence can be obtained from Human Resources or via the [Gov.uk website](http://www.gov.uk).

19. LOYALTY AND LONG SERVICE AWARDS

The Council recognises and rewards those staff who have demonstrated a long period of continuous service with the Council, and also when an employee retires from the organisation. Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

20. DISTURBANCE TRAVEL

If the Council has compulsorily changed your main base of employment and as a result of this you incur additional mileage from home to work, protection arrangements are applicable for a three-year period. Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

CORE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

21. DISCIPLINARY POLICY

It is necessary to ensure that disciplinary matters are dealt with fairly and systematically in order to enforce the standards of conduct which are expected within the Council. Any breaches of these rules and standards of conduct may result in various forms of disciplinary action which can, in extreme cases, result in termination of employment.

All employees have access to a copy of these disciplinary rules and, therefore, will be aware of the circumstances in which disciplinary action can

be taken against them. In any disciplinary action not only will these disciplinary rules be considered, but also the reasonableness of the disciplinary action, taking all known circumstances into account following an investigation of the case. While it is recognised that incapability and discipline are normally two separate issues, when an employee's capability or performance fails to reach the expected standard it may be necessary to use the stages within the disciplinary procedure to deal with the matter.

The disciplinary action that may be taken by the Council is specified in the Council's "Disciplinary Policy, Rules and Procedures" and any action so taken will depend on the seriousness of the breach of Disciplinary Rules. Generally, such incidents can be classified as follows, but they are by no means exhaustive.

Minor Misconduct

Minor misconduct is conduct which is likely to justify a letter of expectation or written warning. Acts of minor misconduct, which are persistent, will nevertheless lead to eventual dismissal. Such action will normally be taken where employees by their actions are negligent in performing the duties for which they are employed.

Serious Misconduct

There may be acts of misconduct that, while more serious than minor misconduct, could not be defined as Gross Misconduct, and in such circumstances it would be appropriate to issue a final warning to an employee.

Gross Misconduct

Gross Misconduct is conduct of such a kind that in the light of the employee's action, the Council is justified in no longer tolerating the continued presence at the place of work of the employee who commits the offence.

For offences of suspected or alleged Gross Misconduct, immediate suspension may apply, followed by dismissal without notice if the offence is established and there are no exceptional mitigating circumstances acceptable to the Council.

Such dismissals are usually by their very nature dismissals where no previous warning has been given, however they can also arise where warnings have already been issued and a further act of misconduct has taken place.

Employees have a right of appeal against any formal disciplinary decision. The appeals procedure is part of the Disciplinary Policy, Rules and Procedures.

The Disciplinary Policy, Rules and Procedures have been issued by the Council to all its employees, further copies are available from Human Resources.

22. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Where an employee is aggrieved on any matter, discussion with the immediate manager is expected in the first instance. A formal grievance should be submitted in writing and a response should be provided within 10 working days.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the reply, or receives no reply within 10 days, he/she or his/her staff/trade union representative may then raise the matter with the appropriate Corporate Director/Head of Department who should reply in writing to the complaint as soon as possible and in any case within 10 working days. In the case of second tier managers lodging a complaint, this will be to the relevant Management Team member.

If the complainant is dissatisfied with the reply he/she or his/her staff/trade union representative may report the grievance to their Corporate Director/Head of Department in writing accompanied by any previous responses. The Corporate Director/Head of Department will invite the employee to attend a meeting to discuss the grievance. The Corporate Director/Head of Department should normally respond within 10 working days of hearing the case.

Where an employee remains aggrieved a further appeal may be submitted in writing within 28 days of formal notification of the previous appeal decision, to the Human Resources & Business Manager and copied to the employee's Corporate Director/Head of Department. A Grievance Appeal Hearing will be arranged to hear the grievance, in accordance with the Appeal Policy.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

23. CAPABILITY POLICY

Where an employee's work performance is considered unsatisfactory, it may be more appropriate for issues to be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Capability Policy rather than the disciplinary route.

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a fair method of addressing performance issues and to encourage the employee to improve his/her performance to an acceptable level.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

24. HARASSMENT POLICY

Harassment is unwelcome and unwanted behaviour that a person finds objectionable or offensive and which makes him/her feel threatened or uncomfortable leading to a loss of dignity and self-respect. The Council deplores all forms of harassment at work and welcomes the support of recognised Trade Unions in seeking to eradicate harassment from the workplace. Harassment is a specified offence under the Council's Disciplinary Policy, Rules and Procedure. It is also a disciplinary offence to victimise a person bringing a 'harassment at work' complaint or to make a malicious complaint of harassment.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

25. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY POLICY (Employment)

Tendring District Council is committed to a policy of equality of opportunity and to encourage diversity among its workforce.

The Council takes positive steps to ensure that all current and prospective employees and service users are not discriminated against, either directly or indirectly, on the grounds of gender, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, belief, ethnic or national origin. We value the differences, needs and contributions a diverse workforce represents.

The Council extends this positive attitude in respect of equality and diversity to our contractors, service users and the community. We are aware that in order to retain the confidence of the community it is important to reflect the make-up of our community within our workforce.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

26. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The Council has set in place rules, regulations, quality standards and procedures to ensure that high standards of conduct and commitment to service are observed, but it recognises that malpractice can occur. Employees are often the first to realise that there may be something wrong. However, they may not wish to express their concerns because they feel that speaking up would be disloyal to their colleagues, the Council or for fear of recrimination.

The Whistle-blowing Policy makes it clear that employees can do so without fear of victimisation, subsequent discrimination or disadvantage. It is intended to encourage and enable employees to raise serious concerns within the Council rather than overlooking the problem or “blowing the whistle” outside.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

27. MATERNITY POLICY

As a TDC employee you are entitled to the following:

- Maternity Leave
- Maternity Pay (depending on length of service and earnings)
- Adoption Leave
- Adoption Pay (depending on length of service and earnings)
- Time off for antenatal care/fertility treatment
- Protection against unfair dismissal on maternity related grounds
- The right to request to work flexible hours on your return to work

All employees, except casual workers, regardless of the number of hours worked per week or length of service are covered by this guidance.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

SHARED PARENTAL LEAVE

The Shared Parental Leave regulations provide an opportunity for parents to take advantage of additional flexibility in the way they choose to care for a new arrival to the family. This policy is written to help eligible employees decide whether they will benefit from Shared Parental Leave and how it can be used alongside, or instead of, Maternity or Adoption leave.

Shared Parental Leave (SPL) is a legal entitlement for eligible parents of babies due, or children placed for adoption, on or after 5 April 2015. It provides flexibility when making arrangements to care for their child during the child's first year

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

28. ADOPTION LEAVE AND PAY

Adoption leave and pay is available to individuals who adopt, or to one member of a couple where a couple adopt jointly (the couple must decide which partner takes adoption leave).

To qualify for adoption leave, an employee must:

- be newly matched with a child for adoption by an adoption agency
- have worked continuously for 26 weeks ending with the week in which they were notified of being matched with a child for adoption.

Tendring District Council's arrangements for adoption leave and pay mirror the maternity and paternity provisions. There are no special provisions for leave or pay for those providing foster care.

Entitlement to adoption leave/pay is included in the Maternity Policy; further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

29. PATERNITY LEAVE AND PAY

Paternity leave allows an employee to take paid leave to care for the child or support the mother. To qualify for paternity leave, employees will need to satisfy both of the following conditions:

- Have or expect to have responsibility for the child's upbringing
- Be the biological father of the child or the mother's husband or partner (male/female)

Employees who meet both of these criteria will be entitled to one week's paternity leave paid at full pay (offset by Statutory Paternity Pay).

In addition, employees who have 26 weeks continuous service with Tendring District at the beginning of the 15th week before the Expected Week of Confinement (EWC) will be entitled to a second week's paternity leave. This

will be paid at the current rate of Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP), or 90% of the employee's average weekly earnings, whichever is the lowest.

Entitlement to paternity leave is included in the Maternity Policy; further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

30. CORPORATE DATA PROTECTION POLICY

The *Data Protection Act 2018* and the Council's policy apply to all data relating to any identifiable living person, held by this Council, on computer or in manual filing systems.

The Council requires all of its Members and employees to comply with this policy, the Council's Computer Security Policy and the Data Protection Act and to co-operate with all measures to ensure compliance.

Human Resources may provide your manager with your contact details, if there is a need for them to speak to you *whilst you are away from the workplace. You will be notified beforehand if this is the case.*

31. HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

The Council regards the promotion of health, safety and hygiene within the organisation as being an essential part of its responsibilities. Furthermore, it regards the promotion of health and safety matters as a mutual objective of management and employees. It is the Council's policy to do all that is reasonably practical to prevent personal injury and damage to property and to protect everyone from foreseeable work hazards, including the public insofar as they come into contact with the Council.

For your own safety, you must follow any instruction in relation to health and safety and in particular, for any machinery you are required to use. Do not interfere with air conditioning, heating, electrical appliances, machinery, etc. unless you are specifically authorised and trained.

Qualified first aiders *and Mental Health First Aiders* are employed within each building. Posters should be displayed indicating where the first aid box is kept within each building and who the nominated first aiders are.

Full details of the Council's Safety Policies are available via the Council's Intranet and on request from Health and Safety.

31.1 Risk Assessments

TDC has a statutory requirement to ensure the safety of its employees by assessing the risk to Health and Safety of both employees and others not employed by the organisation.

This requirement is met by carrying out Risk Assessments. The risk assessment should identify potential causes of harm and assess the likelihood of harm occurring with the existing arrangements in place. The employer has to ensure that effective measures are in place to plan, control, monitor and review those measures put in place to control the risks identified.

The risk assessments for the workplace are available to all staff within that area of work. Staff should ensure that they are aware of any risks within the workplace and should any new risks arise they have a duty to inform their manager/supervisor as they become aware of the risk.

31.2 Fire Regulations

Fire Regulations for all the Council's buildings must be strictly observed and failure to comply will result in disciplinary action. Fire Marshalls and Wardens are nominated and trained within each department to help in the emergency evacuation from Council premises. For your own safety, you must know the procedures for evacuating the building, be aware of the location of fire exits and fire alarm call points. Never block fire exits or the routes leading to them for any reason.

31.3 Accidents

The Council has a duty to record and investigate all accidents, incidents and potential accidents/incidents, plus any injuries caused by acts of violence, either involving staff or members of the public. You must tell your manager straight away about accidents or injuries no matter how minor they are. Your first aider should also be of assistance. All incidents must be recorded on an Accident Report form held in your Department.

Human Resources can arrange counselling after a confrontation or violent incident. Always observe safety regulations and make sure that neither you, your colleagues, nor members of the public are in danger.

Serious injuries sustained at work will be investigated by Health and Safety who will be responsible for determining entitlement to extended sickness payments in the event of any absence from work, arising from injury. In all cases an accident form must be completed.

31.4 Personal Protective Equipment

You must wear suitable clothing and footwear for the jobs you do. Any clothing or footwear that compromises the safety of an individual must not be worn. It is a requirement that employees wear any personal protective clothing provided at the appropriate times in accordance with the recommendations set out in your department risk assessments, e.g. protective footwear, safety/sun hats.

31.5 Working with Display Screen Equipment (VDU's)

The Council wants to safeguard employees who spend a large amount of their normal work time using a computer. Risk assessments are carried out within each Department to ensure that the equipment used meets Health and Safety regulations. If you regularly use a computer, you may be entitled to financial assistance for an eye test and glasses.

A [guidance booklet](#) is available from Health and Safety – Corporate Services.

31.6 Lone Working Procedure

A lone worker is someone who, during the course of their duties, may have to work by themselves, and/or without close supervision, immediate support and the normal accompanying facilities.

The Lone Working Policy outlines the Council's commitment to protect the safety of employees and is supported by guidance, documentation and other instructions and information.

Full details of the Council's Violence at Work Policy are available on the Council's intranet.

31.7 Mobile Phone Use Whilst Driving

The amended Road Vehicle (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986, bans mobile phone use whilst driving. Employees must not use hand-held mobile phones whilst driving at work. All mobile phones must be switched off, with the message facility activated, whilst employees are driving to prevent distraction from in-coming calls/text messages. You must only use the mobile phone to check messages/make calls etc. when the vehicle is safely stopped and parked and the engine turned off.

31.8 Stress Management

The Council has demonstrated its pro-active approach to stress management through the introduction of a Stress Management Policy and Guidance for Managers which is available via the intranet. This is one of a number of initiatives that have been introduced as part of the commitment to a stress management strategy.

31.9 Violence at Work

The Council acknowledges the risk of violence or aggression towards employees in the course of employment and affirms that such violence and aggression or verbal abuse is totally unacceptable. The Council will ensure that employees are provided with full support and positive action where employees are subjected to violence and aggression or threats of such.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

32. CHANGE OF PERSONAL DETAILS

It is important that the Council knows where to contact you or your next of kin in case of an emergency. If changes occur to your address, telephone number, name, marital status or next of kin please *update Self Service as soon as possible; or notify Human Resources if you do not have access to Self Service*. Forms for this purpose are available on the Intranet or from Human Resources.

33. REFERENCES

The Council does not produce employees' testimonials when employees leave however, if you give the Council's name as a referee a standard written reference will be provided to future employers on their request.

34. MEMBERSHIP OF A TRADE UNION

The Council, as your employer, supports the system of collective bargaining and believes in the principle of solving industrial relations problems by discussion and agreement. For practical purposes this can only be conducted by representatives of the employers and the employees. If collective bargaining of this kind is to continue and improve for the benefit of both, employee organisations should be fully representative. The Council is associated with other Local Authorities represented on the National and Provincial Councils dealing with Local Authorities' services.

The Trade Union recognised by the Council for local collective bargaining is UNISON. You have the right to choose to join a Trade Union and take part in its activities. If you belong to a Trade Union and need to attend meetings during office hours, you must seek permission from your Manager. Trade Union representatives will be allowed reasonable time off from their normal duties to fulfil their trade union duties.

Details of the Trade Unions recognised locally for negotiating purposes are available from Human Resources and via the Council's Intranet.

35. PUBLIC DUTIES

Staff who are involved with the local community will be provided with reasonable time off for public duties subject to prior written agreement of their Corporate Director/Head of Department e.g. Justice of the Peace, School Governor.

36. ELECTION DUTIES

The Council regard Election Duties as a Public Duty and as such allow employees the day off with full pay. Employees may also receive an allowance and expenses for carrying out these duties, which they are allowed to retain.

Employees who undertake an election count during a normal working day are also allowed that day as time off with full pay. If a count is undertaken at night there is no entitlement to have the day following as additional leave and employees should arrange to request this as annual leave.

37. TIME OFF FOR COURT ATTENDANCE/JURY SERVICE

In cases where an employee is requested to attend Court as a witness for either the prosecution or defence, employees are entitled to take time out of the workplace provided:-

- You submit your request to be absent from the workplace to your Corporate Director/Head of Department/manager as soon as you are advised that there is a requirement for you to attend Court. This request must be supported by evidence of your requirement to attend providing date, time, duration of absence, etc.
- The Court will provide you with a form to complete in order for you to claim back the loss of salary incurred during your attendance, you must submit this to Payroll and Payments for completion and take it to the Court with you.
- When your Court attendance is complete you must submit a claim to the Court for loss of earnings and they will provide you with a cheque/BACs payment. Please note there is a limit to the sum you can claim for reimbursement set by the Courts.
- On your return to work you must send a copy of the remittance to Payroll and Payments and the amount that has been paid for loss of earnings will then be deducted from your salary at your next pay date.
- If you fail to claim re-imburement for loss of earnings from the Court, you must take annual leave or flexi time (where applicable) for the time you are absent from the workplace.

The above applies to those employees who are requested to attend Court on jury service, as a witness or as a defendant (if proven not guilty). This also applies to witnesses attending Employment Tribunals.

38. USE OF TELEPHONES FOR PRIVATE PURPOSES

All Tendring District Council telephone lines and mobile phones are provided for the purpose of making and receiving calls in respect of your work for the Council.

Private calls either on Council telephones/mobiles should not be made other than in exceptional circumstances and only with the permission of your manager. Where appropriate, such calls should be made during recognised breaks. The activity on Council telephones is monitored periodically.

All private calls made on Council mobile phones must be paid for and this can be done by paying the exact amount for calls/texts from the quarterly statement to your designated administrator.

Employees must not use picture mobile phones to take pictures of colleagues or customers, without their prior consent. This is an infringement of privacy under the Human Rights Act 1998 and will be treated seriously. Disciplinary action could be taken against any member of staff who makes an unacceptable level of unauthorised calls or takes pictures without permission. Permission to make private calls will not be unreasonably withheld.

39. TIMEKEEPING

All employees will have a set working pattern. In most cases this will be the Council's Standard office hours of 8.45am start, and 5.15pm finish - 4.45pm on Fridays. At the discretion of the Corporate Director/Head of Department, and in line with the Council's Flexible Working Hours Scheme, these working times can be varied to meet the demands of the department.

However, whether varied or standard, employees must ensure they are punctual in arriving at the workplace and returning from their rest or lunch breaks. Where repeated failure to attend the workplace at their agreed working time occurs, the employee may find themselves subject to disciplinary action.

40. DRESS AT WORK

It is important that the Council conveys a professional image to the public and therefore whilst the Council does not wish to impose unreasonable obligations on employees, you must look smart at work. The Council also has a health and safety responsibility to ensure that employees dress does not put an individual or others at risk.

Where a uniform is provided e.g. Leisure Centres, Horticultural Services, it must be worn. Non-office based employees should seek guidance from Managers as to what is appropriate for their specific role. However, office based staff should be smart, ideally wearing a suit or jacket and trousers/skirt/dress. *In the summer months, tailored shorts only are acceptable (no sports shorts/jeans/non tailored chinos etc).* Unacceptable dress also includes vest tops, very short skirts, sports clothes, military/army dress (unless prior agreement is sought), denim, leggings.

Some employees may also be provided with Personal Protective Equipment, see requirements under Personal Protective Equipment

41. NO SMOKING POLICY

In accordance with the Health Act 2006, all enclosed and substantially enclosed public and work places must be smoke free. This also ensures the Council meets its duties under Section 2(2) of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, which places a duty on employers to provide and maintain a safe working environment without risks to health and adequate for their welfare.

Smoking is therefore not permitted in any part of the Councils work premises or grounds (curtilage), including offices, corridors, toilets, and car parks of any Council work site by any person regardless of their status or business with the Council.

A copy of the Council's No-Smoking Policy can be obtained from the Council's Intranet.

42. ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

The Council expects employees to promote a responsible attitude to alcohol and acceptable standards of conduct. The Council recognises alcohol and drug misuse or dependency as primarily a health and social problem that requires specialist counselling or treatment. The purpose of the policy is to safeguard and promote the physical and mental health, safety and welfare of the Councils employees in a constructive and sympathetic manner.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

43. CONFLICT OF PERSONAL INTEREST

It is not always possible to ensure that staff are assigned work which does not in some way affect their own personal lives and dealings. Where there could be any embarrassment or a conflict of interest, you must report the situation to your manager immediately – this could include having to transact an issue or deal with a problem relating to a work colleague, friend, family member or neighbour.

Each department is responsible for maintaining a register of declarations of interest. All personal circumstances where a conflict of personal interest might apply should be recorded in this register (see Officer Code of Conduct). That register should record the name of the officer concerned, the circumstances that create the concern regarding a personal potential conflict and the relationship / reason why the officer has declared a potential conflict plus any other information the department in question considers necessary. This is for your own protection and to avoid any suspicion or compromise.

Any breaches to these guidelines will be treated very seriously and could result in dismissal.

44. ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS AND HOSPITALITY

As a general rule staff should tactfully refuse the acceptance of any offer of hospitality or gifts from individuals or organisations that do, or might, provide work, goods or services to the Council or who are dependent upon or require some decision from the Council (e.g. a Planning Approval).

The only exception to this rule should be modest gifts, generally of a promotional nature, such as calendars, diaries, office items, small gifts offered. Such items should have a personal token value of less than £25.

Each department is responsible for maintaining a register of hospitality and gifts. Officers should record the receipt of all hospitality or gifts in this register (see Officer Code of Conduct). The register should show the individual or organisation supplying the hospitality or gift, the precise nature of the actual hospitality or gift and its estimated value and any other information the service in question considers necessary.

On no account should any monetary gift be accepted and any such offers should be reported to your line manager immediately.

45. I.T. POLICIES

E-mail, Intranet and Internet are available to all staff and Members who are registered as users of the computer network.

The Council is committed to monitoring the use of electronic communications, which includes e-mail, internet access, telephone and mobile phones to ensure that the Council meets its obligations for employees health and safety and to ensure that technology is used appropriately in the workplace.

Employees must not at any time bring the Council into disrepute by use of social internet sites, chat rooms or forums. Conduct of this nature may be subject to disciplinary action.

The IT suite of policies, which can be found on the Council's intranet, will guide you further.

46. OFFICIAL CONDUCT

The public is entitled to demand of a Local Government employee of any grade the highest standard of integrity, ability and commitment to the ethics of public service and the interest of all members of the community.

These standards must be upheld and be seen to be upheld. Public confidence would be shaken should the least suspicion, however ill founded, arise that the person could in any way be influenced by improper motives. An employee's off-duty hours are his/her personal concern, but he/she should not subordinate their duty to private interests, or put themselves in a position where their duty and the private interest conflict.

Employees will be expected, without fear of recrimination, to bring to the attention of the relevant level of management any deficiency in the provision of service. Employees should also report to the appropriate manager any impropriety or breach in procedures, which comes to their attention.

47. CUSTOMER SERVICES STANDARDS

All staff must comply with the Corporate Customer Services Standards and the guidance outlined within it. *The Corporate Standards set out that customers can expect a minimum standard of service from the Council and clear timeframes for responding to queries and staff must ensure these deadlines are met.*

Alongside the Corporate Standards and service improvement initiatives, some services have reviewed their commitments to the customer and developed individual service specific standards.

A copy of the Council's Customer Service Standards is available on the Intranet.

48. LOCAL GOVERNMENT HOUSING ACT 1989 - POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 made amendments to the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 in respect of identifying posts which are politically restricted by removing the duty to maintain a list of posts earning above a nominated salary. Instead a genuine political restriction is to be established by virtue of the duties that the post holder actually performs.

In summary, restricted political activity includes the following:

- Becoming a Councillor, an MP or a MEP
- Announcing candidature for election to a local authority, the House of Commons or the European Parliament
- Being an Officer of a political party
- Canvassing on behalf of a political party or on behalf of a person seeking election
- Acting as an election agent or sub-agent for an individual
- Speaking in public where there is an intention to affect public support for a political party
- To publish work which appears to be intended to affect public support for a political party

Specified posts which are restricted within Tendring District Council include the following:

- Chief Executive
- The Statutory Chief Officers (Section 151 LGA 1972)
- The Monitoring Officer
- Member Officers/Assistants
- Officers in 'sensitive' posts e.g. giving advice on a regular basis to the authority itself, to any committee or sub-committee of the authority or speaking on behalf of the authority to journalists or broadcasters

49. DISCLOSURE

The Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) was set up under the Police Act 1997 to administer Disclosure arrangements. These arrangements enable employers and other bodies to run criminal record checks on people seeking to work with children, vulnerable adults and certain other professional posts.

Tendring District Council is a registered user of the Disclosure and Barring Service. As part of our registration we have drawn up guidance on good practice in relation to the use of the Bureau and the recruitment and retention of staff with criminal records.

The Council is committed to the fair treatment of its staff, potential staff or users of its services, regardless of race, gender, religion, belief, sexual orientation, responsibilities for dependants, age, physical/mental disability or offending background. We actively promote equality of opportunity for all and welcome applications from a wide range of candidates, including those with criminal records. We select all candidates for interview based on their skills, qualifications and experience.

A Disclosure is only requested after a thorough risk assessment has indicated that one is both proportionate and relevant to the position concerned. For those positions where a Disclosure is required, our recruitment information will

contain a statement that a Disclosure will be requested in the event of the individual being offered the position.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

50. PUBLIC STATEMENTS

All officers employed by the Council are representatives of the authority to our customers and the community we serve. From time to time we may find ourselves being asked our opinion regarding a service, function or activity within the Council. Employees must not speak on behalf of the Council without first discussing the matter with the Communications Manager, based within Corporate Services.

This includes providing statements on behalf of the Council, and writing for the Media - including internet based social pages. At no time must an employee bring the Council's reputation into disrepute.

51. MEDICAL AND DENTAL APPOINTMENTS

The Council will view sympathetically time off for such appointments where it is not possible for them to be arranged outside working hours. You are asked to arrange appointments in such a way as to cause minimum disruption to normal working, e.g., at the beginning or end of a working day, lunchtime. The Council reserves the right to ask staff to make this time up. You should where possible, utilise the Flexible Working Hours Scheme for such appointments and arrange appointments outside of core time.

52. OTHER PAID EMPLOYMENT

What you do during your off duty hours is your personal concern but you should not put yourself in a position where your duties and private interests conflict. You should not undertake outside work if your official duties overlap in a way which would cause a conflict of interest or if the outside work is likely to affect adversely the performance of your contract with the District Council. No outside work of any sort should be undertaken on District Council premises. Correspondence and incoming phone calls related to outside work are not permissible. You may not engage in any other business or take up any other additional employment without the express consent, in writing, of your Corporate Director or Head of Service or as specified in your letter of appointment.

Any such employment must not, in the view of the Council, conflict with or react detrimentally to the Council's interests, or in any other way weaken public confidence or the performance of the Officer's duties. All employees of the Council are forbidden to submit tenders for Council work unless prior written approval has been sought and obtained.

53. WORKING TIME REGULATIONS

The Working Time Regulations limit the amount of working time and regulate the way working time is organised. Total hours of work should not exceed 48 hours a week over a 17 week period - this includes other paid employment

outside of the Council. In addition there are restrictions on the number of breaks that must be taken in any given time. Staff are expected to manage their working time responsibly, by not exceeding the 48 hour week and ensuring minimum rest breaks. The Council have fully entered into the spirit of this directive in all areas of its staffing.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

54. CHILD PROTECTION

In your day to day duties, you may find that your role brings you into direct or indirect contact with children and young people. It is essential that children and young people have the right to access the Council's services safely. The Council will ensure its normal functions are discharged having regard to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

55. VULNERABLE ADULTS

In your day to day duties, you may find that your role brings you into direct or indirect contact with vulnerable adults. The Council has a responsibility to have guidance and procedures in place that will enable it to work effectively with other agencies in preventing the abuse of vulnerable adults or, where such abuse is suspected, for the effective reporting of incidents to the appropriate lead agency.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

56. FLEXIBLE WORKING

In order to assist with the work life balance of our employees, all permanent employees have the right to request to work flexibly provided they meet certain criteria. An application can be made to an employee's Head of Department to undertake a flexible working arrangement, which will be considered properly and in accordance with the Council's set procedure.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

57. EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY (AGE)

The Council is committed to equality of opportunity and ensuring that all employees, and potential employees, are given the right opportunities regardless of age. The Employment Equality (Age) regulations make it unlawful to discriminate against workers, employees, job seekers and trainees because of their age.

58. IDENTITY CARDS/SWIPE CARDS

All employees and Members will be issued with an identity card, which must be worn while on Council business unless your Corporate Director/Head of Department has agreed an exemption for reasons of safety. In some cases these cards will also act as swipe cards to enable you to gain access to Council offices (*in addition to access fob's*). These are available from Facilities Management, Operational Services. You must advise Facilities Management

immediately if your card is lost or stolen. If your card is lost out of working hours please contact Careline.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

59. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance Management is a continuous personal performance and development system which:

- Ensures that members of staff have a clear understanding of their own goals and objectives and how these relate to team, department and corporate goals.
- Ensures agreement and updating of these personal objectives via written commitments in successive Personal Performance Plans.
- Provides the mechanism for assessing requirements for key personal skills, knowledge and abilities essential for achieving the objectives in the Personal Performance Plan and developing longer term potential.
- Ensures specific action to address gaps in key skills, knowledge and abilities via written commitments in successive Personal Development Plans.
- Ensuring continuous improvement and exploitation of new opportunities via regular, systematic joint review of these matters by respective managers/team leaders and staff on a one to one basis.

The fundamental aim is that everyone has a clear idea of what the Council is trying to achieve, the importance of the work of one's Service and team, where we each fit in, why our work is relevant and how we intend to achieve service excellence.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

60. QUALIFICATION SPONSORSHIP

Tendring District Council operates a training sponsorship scheme in order to support the development of employees to undertake their roles and provide the Council with increasing capability to achieve its objectives. The support available is generally limited to paid time off to attend classes and examinations and the payment of course fees. Books, printing, travel and subsistence along with hard work are the employee's contribution.

The scheme is discretionary in nature and any offer of support is conditional on the employee providing 2 years' service after successful completion or repayment of the Council's costs.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

61. SECONDMENT POLICY

In order to develop strong corporate teams as required, as well as responding independently to individual services circumstances a voluntary secondment arrangement is possible, subject to the agreement of all concerned. Secondments are normally for up to one year and the job evaluated grade of

the employee's current role and associated terms and conditions will remain unchanged.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.

62. ACTING UP

A policy is in place to offer, at Corporate Directors/Head of Department discretion, recompense to all officers undertaking additional duties above and beyond what is expected on an officers current grade.

Further procedural guidance is available from Human Resources.