

RAUNDS TOWN COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Minutes: 23 February 2016: Start Time 4.30pm

PRESENT

Cllr S Hughes (Chair), Cllr H Howell, Cllr N Beck, Cllr R Jeffs, Cllr Davidson-Jeffs.

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms Kate Houlihan, Town Clerk (Minutes)

588.15 To Receive Apologies For Absence.
None received.

589.15 Notification of requests from members of the public to address the meeting in compliance with adopted protocol.
None received.

590.15 Notification of members questions in compliance with the council's standing orders.
None received.

591.15 Declarations of Interest.

COUNCILLORS ARE REMINDED THAT IF THEY HAVE EITHER A DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST OR OTHER INTEREST IN ANY ITEM THEN THEY SHOULD DECLARE THE INTEREST AND LEAVE THE MEETING FOR THAT ITEM

592.15 Minutes: confirm the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held 3 November 2015.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held 3 November 2015 be confirmed as a true record.

593.15 Lone Worker Policy: To review the councils Lone Worker policy.

Members reviewed the lone worker policy as shown in Appendix 1 no amendments were proposed.

It was...

RESOLVED:

- a) that all staff members should be asked to confirm that they have read and understood the Lone Working Policy.
- b) That staff be asked to complete a medial questionnaire for their own safety and that staff understand that there is a duty upon them to update the information held if it changes.
- c) That Ellis Whittam be asked to review the policy and that subject to their approval it is...

RESOLVED to recommend to the Full Council that the policy be adopted as tabled.

594.15 Special Leave Policy: To review the councils special leave policy.

Members reviewed the special leave policy as shown in Appendix 2 amendments were proposed and these are highlighted in yellow.

It was...

RESOLVED that Ellis Whittam be asked to review the policy and that subject to their approval it is...

RESOLVED to recommend to the Full Council that the policy be adopted as tabled.

595.15 Time off in lieu Policy: To review the councils time off in lieu policy.

Members reviewed the time off in lieu policy as shown in Appendix 3 no amendments were proposed and it was...

RESOLVED that Ellis Whittam be asked to review the policy and that subject to their approval it is...

RESOLVED to recommend to the Full Council that the policy be adopted as tabled.

596.15 *The press and public will be excluded from the following agenda item due to the confidential nature of the business under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960*

597.15 To Receive a report on staffing matters

Members reviewed the report of the clerk and it was resolved that:

- a) The town mayor and chair of personel would carry out the clerks appraisal and report to a future meeting of the staffing committee.
- b) **CONFIDENTIAL TEXT HAS BEEN REMOVED.**
- c) **CONFIDENTIAL TEXT HAS BEEN REMOVED.**
- d) That the clerk will ensure that all eligible staff are paid the living wage from 1st April 2016.
- e) That all staff pay rates and scales will be reviewed in May 2016 in line with the introduction of the living wage in April 2016.
- f) That Ellis Whittam be asked to review all personnel polices over the next 12 months.
- g) That Ellis Whittam be asked to flag up relevant changes in employment legislation to the town clerk as and when they occur.

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 5.55pm

Approved: (Town Mayor)

Meeting date: 8 March 2016..... (Council)

Approved: (Chairman)

Meeting date: (Committee)

Appendix 1



RAUNDS TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, The Hall, Raunds, Wellingborough, Northampton. NN9 6LT

Telephone: (01933) 622 087, Fax: (01933) 622 622

E-mail:- info@raunds-tc.gov.uk, Website: www.raunds-tc.gov.uk

LONE WORKER POLICY

1. Policy Statement

From time to time some Council employees are expected to work alone, whilst for others, lone working is normal. Working alone is not necessarily unsafe but there are circumstances where lone working can increase the risks. An example where risk is increased would be electrical maintenance, where in the event of electrocution the lone worker would not be able to call for assistance. Another example would be an employee of the Council receiving a visitor when that person was known to have a history of violence.

There are no specific regulations regarding lone working, although the general provisions of Section 2(i) do apply and the risk assessment required under regulation 3 of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 would need to include a consideration of any extra risks to lone workers. The Health and Safety Executive have produced guidance for employers on ensuring safety for lone workers. Raunds Town Council recognises that there may be increased risks to staff who are required to work alone. The implementation of this policy should help to reduce these risks.

2. Organisation and Arrangements

In situations where out-of-hours lone working is expected, a log will be kept of persons known to be working alone in circumstances where they face increased risks. This may take the form of a book, board or other suitable means of recording information. The information to be recorded must include:

- name,
- working location or destination,
- contact phone number (or mobile number),
- time of departure,

- expected time of return.

Details should also be kept of any special instructions such as any checks to be made on the lone worker and frequency of call-ins to be made by the lone worker to base. Office staff will co-ordinate lone worker information and monitor the log to ensure that appropriate action is taken if someone is more than 30 minutes overdue (past their expected return time). In the event of becoming aware that a lone worker is overdue, designated office staff should take reasonable steps to determine the reason. Steps may include:

- ringing the missing person's telephone or mobile telephone,
- sending other staff to investigate,
- contacting the missing persons home number (but do not alarm relatives),
- notifying the police, as appropriate,
- ensure staff are aware of the existence of the scheme for recording, reporting and sharing information on lone workers.

Office Staff will check the log 30 minutes before the end of their day to ensure that all lone workers are accounted for.

3. Lone workers

Lone workers must:

- record details of their lone working spells in the office log.
- telephone the office at prearranged times (if any) and if they expect to exceed their expected time of return (recorded in office log).
- ensure that they carry any mobile telephone supplied for their use.
- take reasonable care not to put themselves at undue risk. Where employees feel that they would be at particular risk unless additional precautions are taken, they should discuss this with their line manager.
- report any potentially or actually unsafe incidents.
- in the event of an accident, complete an accident report form.

Ensure that you are properly trained and have the skills and knowledge to do your job safely and without risks to health. If you feel that you need extra training then discuss this with your line manager.

GUIDANCE FOR EMPLOYEES:

Ask yourself the following question if your gut feeling is that something is seriously wrong: "*Should I be here, is it safe to remain, should I seek assistance?*"

If you feel yourself to be in a serious and imminent dangerous situation, such as...

- working at height with no edge protection or safety harness,
- using machinery that is unsafe or inadequately guarded,
- or in danger of being physically assaulted,

...remove yourself to a place of safety, and inform your line manager of this and the reasons for taking such steps.

If in doubt, leave.

Advice and guidance for employees who work alone or in isolated conditions

When you are away from your normal base or alone, the consequences from work hazards can be more severe than the normal case. The intention is that lone workers should not be at more risk than other workers, and the Town Council will consider whether any extra risk control measures are needed through a risk assessment process.

You should make yourself aware of any risk assessments/safe systems of work (procedures) required for your particular activity, and any control measures introduced.

Make sure that you have information about any site you are visiting and any known problem person(s) you may encounter.

If you feel, before starting work, that there may be unacceptable risks present, you should inform your line manager and seek clarification or advice.

Safety when approaching or opening a workplace/site

When approaching the workplace, be alert. If you see a broken window, signs of forced entry, or insecure door assume that someone is on the premises.

Go to a safe place and telephone the police immediately.

Inform your line manager if necessary.

Do not go into the workplace to use the telephone.

On site visits, be aware of any hidden dangers such as dogs roaming free.

Safety when leaving or closing a workplace

Check the premises are secure before you leave.

Look outside to check that no one is hanging around.

If you see someone prowling or lurking outside, do not go out alone to check, stay inside and telephone the police.

If you are usually collected by car, wait until it arrives before going out.

Similarly, if you are travelling by public transport, do not leave the workplace so early that you have to wait a long time for the bus or train.

Try to support any colleague who has to close up a building, for example after a public meeting, by staying with them until you can leave together.

When leaving premises following a visit, ensure that your exit is clear.

Practical points in dealing with possible conflict situations:

Park your car so that it can be driven away easily.

Park in a well lit area near other vehicles if possible.

Stay alert, and assess the situation and mood of people.

Note any objects/items that could be used as a defensive measure.

On site visits, stand/sit nearest to the exit.

Avoid being hemmed in by people or furniture.

If the situation changes and you feel threatened, make an excuse and leave.

Back away rather than turning your back on the person.

If physically threatened, try to use a barrier such as a table/chair (not as a weapon, but as a defensive measure).

Adopted 1st September 2008. Reaffirmed February 2016, To be reviewed bi-annually.

Appendix 2



RAUNDS TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, The Hall, Raunds, Wellingborough, Northampton. NN9 6LT
Telephone: (01933) 622 087, Fax: (01933) 622 622
E-mail:- info@raunds-tc.gov.uk, Website: www.raunds-tc.gov.uk

SPECIAL LEAVE POLICY

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Council has adopted this policy document to enable a corporate approach to requests for special leave from employees of the Council. The policy is intended to clarify situations for which special leave may be granted and give guidance in respect of the amount of leave which will be allowed.

1.2 This policy document will form part of employees' contracts of employment.

1.3 The Council takes a compassionate and supportive approach in situations where employees are faced with difficulties outside work, often of a personal or family nature and has agreed to adopt principles based around the value of employees and their contribution to the Council. The policy reflects the need for a Work/Life balance in order to discharge the Council's duty towards the welfare of its employees.

1.4 Council employees are entitled to take a reasonable amount of time off during their normal working hours to deal with unexpected personal events and this document sets out the Council's policy in respect of arrangements for compassionate and special leave for family and other domestic reasons.

1.5 In all cases where an employee requests special leave, the Council reserves the right to request proof of eligibility.

1.6 All special leave must be agreed with the Clerk to the Council prior to the absence, or in the case of the Clerk leave should be agreed with the Town Mayor.

2.0 Compassionate Leave

2.1 A common need for special leave is that requested on compassionate grounds, which is usually associated with the most traumatic experiences in life such as bereavement or serious illness of a member of the family, the break-up of a marriage or other close personal relationship.

2.2 The Council will normally grant up to three days compassionate leave with full pay in instances of an employee's close family bereavement. Close family members are determined as husband, wife, partner, parent, parent-in-law, son, daughter, brother, sister. If the deceased is a member of the extended

family defined as grandchild, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or is a direct dependant of the employee, the Clerk to the Council has the discretion to allow compassionate leave of up to two days. The Clerk to the Council also has the discretion to extend the period of compassionate leave to five days.

2.3 An employee who wishes to attend a family funeral can be granted up to one days paid leave at the discretion of the Clerk to the Council.

2.4 Employees wishing to attend funerals of non-family members will be required to take annual leave.

2.5 In exceptional circumstances, employees may qualify for compassionate leave of up to three days paid leave and up to 10 days unpaid leave which will require to be authorised by the Clerk to the Council. In exceptional cases the Clerk to the Council may authorise additional paid leave at their discretion.

3.0 **Family Domestic Crises**

3.1 It is recognised that there are occasions when employees may require additional time off to resolve a domestic situation and any reasonable request will be considered by the Clerk to the Council. Special leave may be granted of up to two days paid leave. A further three days unpaid leave can be granted at the discretion of the Clerk to the Council.

3.2 The Employment Relations Act 1999 introduced a new right to employees to a reasonable (see 3.6 below) amount of time off during working hours for dependants who are defined as a spouse, a child, a parent or someone who cohabits with the person claiming the time off, but is not his or her employee, tenant, lodger or boarder.

3.3 Reasons for granting special leave may include the following:

- To provide assistance when a dependent falls ill, gives birth, is injured or assaulted.
- To make arrangements for the provision of care for a dependent who is ill or injured.
- To attend to the care of a dependant due to the unexpected disruption or termination of arrangements or care for that individual.
- To deal with an incident involving a child of an employee occurring during normal school/college hours.
- The Council will also consider requests for special leave for emergencies not relating directly to a dependent, for example, to deal with household disasters, e.g. burglary, house fire, burst water pipes resulting in extensive flooding.

3.4 It is recognised that in many instances it will be necessary to consider requests at short notice and it will be at the Clerk to the Council's discretion whether special leave is granted.

3.5 Special leave will not be granted to employees for reasons such as domestic appliance maintenance or repair, and employees will be required to give a suitable notice period and take annual leave or make up time if no annual leave is available. Consideration will also be given to allow employees to work from home, for the duration of the difficulty, if this proves to be more practicable and acceptable than granting special leave.

3.6 The Employment Relations Act 1999 stipulates that the employee's request must be reasonable and be for necessary action (e.g. time required to make alternative arrangements for child care). When the request is made the employee must tell the employer the reason for, and the expected period of, absence as soon as reasonably practicable. The Clerk to the Council will require to be satisfied that no alternative arrangements can be made before granting special leave.

3.7 In exceptional circumstances the Clerk to the Council may authorise additional paid leave at his discretion.

4.0 Community Activities

4.1 Paid leave of absence will be granted for employees undertaking public duties or serving on public bodies. (See National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service)

4.2 Employees who have prior agreement from the Council to undertake duties as Justice of the Peace may be granted unpaid time off.

4.3 Employees wishing to undertake other duties such as the retained fire service or territorial-army are required to obtain prior approval from the Council. Individual cases will be assessed on their merits and unpaid leave will be granted where loss of earnings can be claimed back by the employee.

5.0 Medical Matters

5.1 General doctor's and dentist appointments should, whenever possible, be taken at the beginning or end of the working day and time off will be granted for this purpose but the employee will be expected to use annual leave or make up the time lost.

5.2 It is recognised that hospital appointments and outpatient treatment and care cannot always be requested to coincide with the beginning and end of the working day and time off will be granted for such appointments but the employee will be expected to use annual leave or make up the time lost.

6.0 Court Appearances

6.1 Under the provisions of the Juries Act 1974 all men and women aged between 18 and 70 are liable to be summoned to attend for jury service. The Council has an obligation to release employees to attend for jury service and employees will initially be paid as normal by the Council. The Court will provide a salary and expenses claim form for the employee and the Clerk to the Council will complete the section in relation to earnings. Earnings claimed back from the Court by individuals will be deducted from their salary.

6.2 Requests for special leave from employees who are called as witnesses, or plaintiffs will be individually assessed by the Clerk to the Council and in cases where the employee is compelled to attend court paid time off will be granted at the discretion of the Clerk to the Council.

6.3 Regarding requests for special leave from employees who are compelled to attend court as defendants, a maximum of two-days paid time off will be granted at the discretion of the Clerk to the Council.

7.0 **Study-Leave**

7.1 Employees who study towards a work related qualification approved by the Council will be entitled to paid time off for revision and examination preparation, up to a maximum of one day per week.

7.2 A further allowance of one day paid time off, per examination paper, will be granted in order to sit the examination at a registered examination centre, e.g. School, College, University, in addition to the time spent travelling to and from the centre.

8.0 **Parental Leave**

8.1 Parental Leave of 13-weeks will be granted to employees either having or expecting to have parental responsibility for a child and an additional 5 weeks will be given to those with a responsibility for a child for whom a Disability Living Allowance has been awarded.

8.2 Parental Leave will be available to those who have parental responsibility but do not fall into the legal definition which may include foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents or step parents.

8.3 Leave will be granted for the purpose of caring for a child up to the age of eight or for eight years following placement for adoption or up to the age of 18, whichever is the soonest, or up to the age of 18 for children for whom a Disability Living Allowance has been awarded.

8.4 To qualify for parental leave the employee must have one year's continuous service at the date on which the application is made.

8.5 Employees should give as much notice as possible with a minimum of 7 days notice in writing being required. Parental Leave may be granted to employees who have not given the required notice in exceptional circumstances.

8.6 Parental Leave may be taken:

- As a single block of up to 13 weeks (18 weeks for a disabled child)
- As a number of shorter periods of a minimum of a half a day
- In patterns which provide a part time or reduced hours working arrangement for a period of time equivalent to taking 13 weeks leave.

8.7 There is no entitlement to pay during periods of parental leave.

8.8 Parental leave is not Maternity Leave. There is a separate policy governing Maternity Leave.

9.0 **Union Activities**

9.1 In accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement on Pay and Conditions or Service the Council

will provide the recognised trade unions with facilities necessary to carry out their functions, including paid leave of absence for employees to attend meetings concerned with the NJC and Provincial Councils.

9.2 Trade union representatives have the right to paid time off for training relevant to their duties at the workplace. To qualify for paid time off, the Trades Union Congress or union must approve the training.

10.0 **Election Duties**

10.1 Employees wishing to undertake election duties for another local authority will be expected to take annual leave.

11.0 **Miscellaneous Time Off**

11.1 Religious Celebrations: employees wishing to take time off for the purposes of religious celebration will be expected to use annual leave for this purpose.

11.2 House Moves: employees who relocate for the benefit of the Council will be entitled to one day's paid leave for the purpose of a house move.

11.3 Job Interviews: employees attending interviews for internal vacancies with the Council will receive their normal salary for the duration of the interview and employees wishing to search for alternative employment will be required to do so in their own time.

11.4 Fertility Treatment: requests for time off for the purpose of fertility treatment will be considered on an individual basis. Employees making such a request will be expected to give details of expected absences and duration of treatment.

12.0 **Recording Special Leave**

12.1 All special leave will be recorded on an individuals leave sheet and be authorised by the Clerk to the Council. Current procedures for the reporting of absences will also apply.

12.2 Where in this policy reference is made to the granting of special leave which is 'unpaid' the Clerk to the Council shall request the deduction of appropriate amounts from the employee's salary, unless there is scope for using annual leave, or the employee making up the time, e.g. extended working hours over an agreed period in which case details of any time made up by the employee shall be recorded.

*Adopted 1st October 2009. Updated February 2010. Updated February 2016,
To be reviewed bi-annually.*

Appendix 3



RAUNDS TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, The Hall, Raunds, Wellingborough, Northampton. NN9 6LT
Telephone: (01933) 622 087, Fax: (01933) 622 622
E-mail:- info@raunds-tc.gov.uk, Website: www.raunds-tc.gov.uk

TOIL (Time off In Lieu) POLICY

It is accepted by many employers within our society that *time off in lieu*, widely known by the acronym TOIL, is advantageous both to employers and employees.

The basic concept is that hours worked over and above normal hours may be saved and subtracted from standard working hours at a later date.

This may prove beneficial to employers in times of work pressure, and to employees in managing their home life and social relationships, and the widespread move towards more flexible working hours has led to it being a part of some work environments.

In addition to reductions in organisational efficiency, the appropriate and reasonable use of TOIL can create a positive and flexible working environment. However, there is a need for guidelines in order to ensure that this option is not misused or otherwise abused on either side.

Where an employee works additional hours over and above their normal contracted hours they may, subject to these conditions, elect to be granted an equal amount of TOIL.

Employees must record TOIL that they have worked on their timesheet. Completed timesheets are held on file by The Clerk.

The maximum amount of TOIL which can be accrued by full time staff is 24 hours. This will apply on a pro-rata basis for part time staff.

TOIL should be taken within three calendar months of being accrued.

Where operational requirements make it impracticable for it to be taken within three calendar months, a maximum of six months can be allowed for the TOIL to be taken.

In exceptional circumstances the Clerk, with the written approval of the Town Mayor, may agree to vary these conditions.

TOIL should be taken at times agreeable to the employee, provided this does not have a detrimental effect on the workings of the Council offices or Saxon Hall staffing arrangements. Such arrangements to be managed by the Clerk and in the case of the Clerk to be managed by the Mayor.

Adopted October 2008. Reaffirmed February 2016. To be reviewed Tri-annually.