Carer Positive Passport Guidance

1. Introduction

This guidance covers the agreed approach of the Council towards staff who have caring responsibilities through applying a fair and transparent process, whilst supporting employees who are primary carers to balance home and caring commitments.

2. Principles

It is agreed that:

- The Council recognises the implications of, and its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and this policy enhances the support and assistance available to employees who have a responsibility of caring for a dependant who is affected by long term illness, disability or addiction.
- The Council recognises that from time to time employees will need to try to balance work and caring responsibilities and seeks to provide this support for employees. The provisions within the Carer's Policy means that some employees may be able to remain in employment where they would otherwise have needed to resign to provide care to a dependant.
- A flexible working approach for carers can; attract and retain staff; reduce stress; Increase resilience and productivity; reduce sick leave; improve service delivery and increase staff morale.
- The Council is committed to raising awareness of the role and demands of carers in the workplace through the implementation of an Employee Carer Support network, awareness raising publications and training.

It is recognised that:

- employees increasingly have caring responsibilities which sometimes can be challenging and may impact their ability to balance their work and home life.
- For carers, work can often represent a lifeline, not only financially, but in providing a life outside of caring. However, juggling work and caring responsibilities can be extremely stressful.

We commit to:

- supporting employees who have caring responsibilities
- Provide support to help employees balance working and caring commitments
- Support the Council to identify and engage with employees who are carers to understand their daily challenges and seek to remove any barriers
- Raise awareness of support provisions available through the Council, for example, health and well-being and financial.

3. Carer Positive Passport

The Carer Positive passport is designed to provide a documented record of an individual's needs, which will allow them to function to their full potential in a supportive and encouraging environment.

Whenever an employee moves roles or changes line manager the Carer Positive passport can be used to ensure that new managers are aware of the employees caring responsibilities without the need to repeat potentially difficult conversations and situations.

Completion of the Carer Positive passport is voluntary, but it should be offered to every employee with Caring responsibilities.

The employee's Carer Positive passport will be 'owned' by the employee; they will decide who has a copy or can see it, although a signed copy of the passport should be held by both the employee and their manager, and, if appropriate, by HR.

It is also usual practice for the employee to consent to their line manager accessing their passport.

The passport should be reviewed by the employee and the manager every six months.

An employee may initiate an earlier review of the passport if:

➤ Their caring responsibilities change
➤ Their job requirements change
➤ They change post

Awareness of the passport is important. A passport should be available to all employees at any time during their employment and can be requested by the employee or proactively offered by the line manager.

Stigma and fear of discrimination may deter employees from disclosing their Caring responsibilities so it is important that line manager's provide an open and supportive environment in which employees will be treated with sensitivity, respect and confidentiality.

All requests for carers leave will be fully considered by the line manager and responded to within the timeline stated on the leave request form.

If the line manager refuses a request for an adjustment written reasons must be given within 5 working days.