

Committee: **Council**

Date of Meeting: **12th December, 2019**

Report Subject: **Time Off For Reservists Policy**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor Nigel Daniels, Leader of the Council / Executive Member Corporate Services**

Report Author: **Rebecca Morris, HR Business Partner**

Report Submitted by: **Andrea J. Prosser – Head of Organisational Development**

Reporting Pathway <i>Dates of meetings must be included in the reporting pathway below</i>									
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder	Committee Chair*	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee Corporate Overview	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
X	X						X	X	

1. **Purpose of the Report**
 - 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek ratification from Council to introduce a new policy for the Authority for Time off for Reservists (Appendix 1).
2. **Scope and Background**
 - 2.1 The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) encourages employers to support defence and inspire others to do the same. The scheme encompasses bronze, silver and gold awards for employer organisations that pledge, demonstrate or advocate support to defence and the armed forces community, and align their values with the Armed Forces Covenant.
 - 2.2 Providing support for reservists, including leave for training is an important element of the Silver Award - the Council does currently make provision for this in its Schedule of Leave of Absence. The Council has been granted silver award status pending the formal introduction of the proposed policy.
 - 2.3 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (BGCBC) is a signatory to the Armed Forces Covenant, launched in 2011 by the UK government, to promote and support the Armed Forces Community.
 - 2.4 BGCBC is also the lead organisation in delivering on the Armed Forces Covenant at a local level. The Armed Forces Steering Group is the delivery body. Administrative support comes via the Policy and Partnerships team. The Steering group is chaired by Cllr Brian Thomas, Armed Forces Champion.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

3.1 The Corporate Leadership Team has reviewed the proposed policy and comments/suggestions have been reflected in the report and policy.

3.2 The Executive Committee considered this report and the proposed policy on the 13th November 2019 and endorsed the Policy for ratification by Council.

4. **Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 The other four Gwent authorities have all already achieved the Silver Award (as have many other Welsh local authorities and other public bodies) and Newport and Caerphilly have now achieved the Gold Award in 2019.

5. **Implications Against Each Option**

5.1 **Impact on Budget**

Each department will need to consider any time off for Reservists and the costs of any cover arrangements. BGCBC currently has 1 member of staff registered as a reservist. Therefore, current cost implications are limited.

5.2 **Risk**

Failure to implement the attached policy will prevent BGCBC from achieving the Silver Award

5.3 **Legal**

This information is contained within the attached policy.

5.4 **Human Resources**

Benefits of Reservist Training:

- World-Class transferrable training – paid for by Department for Defence
- Employees gain accredited, transferable skills
- Enhanced recruitment and employee retention

Reservist training leave has to be formally requested as far in advance as possible, the council will try to allow leave wherever service needs allow. There is currently one member of staff who acts as a reservist.

6. **Supporting Evidence**

6.1 **Performance Information and Data**

This information is contained within the attached policy.

6.2 **Expected outcome for the public**

This information is contained within the attached policy.

- 6.3 **Involvement** (consultation, engagement, participation)
Meetings have taken place with the Regional Armed Forces Coordinator who has confirmed the policy is in line with the vision of the Gwent and South Wales Authorities.
- 6.4 **Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)**
This information is contained within the report.
- 6.5 **Preventative focus**
N/A
- 6.6 **Collaboration / partnership working**
N/A
- 6.7 **Integration (across service areas)**
N/A
- 6.8 **EqIA** (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed) (Service reviews and policy developments etc should consider if any changes will have a negative impact on the protected characteristics, if so, these will need to be stated and a full EqIA needs to be undertaken and attached to the report in the Background Document section).
7. **Monitoring Arrangements**
- 7.1 Managers will be required to monitor all Reservist arrangements when either deployed or required to attend training.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

Appendix 1 –Time Off for Reservists Policy



Time off for
Reservists Policy.doc