

Meeting: Council

Date: 11th June 2003

MANAGEMENT OF STAFF SICKNESS

(Chief Executive's Department)

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1 PURPOSE

To seek a delegation to the Chief Executive to deal with all matters relating to the management of staff sickness, and to allocate responsibility for that as appropriate.

2 BACKGROUND

Members will be aware that arrangements for the management of staff sickness and attendance generally is an important task for managers in ensuring that the Council has the maximum staff resources available to it. The officers are currently engaged on improving these arrangements, which include an Employee Assistance Programme, an improved Occupational Health Service and revised procedures for managing sickness absence.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

The measures referred to above include revised procedures to ensure that employees' sickness is carefully monitored, that meetings are held with employees to discuss their sickness absence and, that in appropriate cases, decisions are made about employees' future employment with the Council, including any decisions about dismissal on health grounds. It is intended that these revised procedures, including any appeals/grievances against decisions made, would normally be conducted by Chief Officers, Heads of Service and Senior Managers as appropriate.

The procedures are currently the subject of consultation with the Trade Unions, but it is clearly important that following these consultations those procedures are put in place as soon as possible.

The matters involved have a bearing on employee terms and conditions of employment, and in particular on procedures for their dismissal, and as such they should not be determined by the Executive. However the determination of the procedures and, for the avoidance of doubt, the subsequent implementation and application of the procedures, are suitable matters for delegation from the Council to the Chief Executive. There is an existing delegation to officers but it is inadequate and it is therefore proposed that the Council now agree the delegation of these

matters, as set out in the recommendations at 5 below. The Executive Councillor for Personnel has been, and will be kept advised of the progress on the whole matter.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Policy Implications

The proposed processes and procedures accord with good practice in terms of managing sickness absence and are not in conflict with any Council policy.

4.2 Financial Implications

All the actions referred to in this report can be dealt with within existing budgetary provisions.

4.3 Staffing and Accommodation/Corporate Implications

The officers are currently considering a revised scheme of delegations to the officers, following the recent Ethics Audit. It is likely that will propose wider delegation of personnel matters to the Chief Executive.

4.4 Staffing Implications

The proposed arrangements are designed to assist employees to safeguard and maintain their health and well-being and to ensure that staff sickness is properly managed.

4.5 Planning, Environmental, Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Community Safety Implications

None.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 That the determination of all matters concerned with staff sickness, including the determination of all procedures and the subsequent consideration and determination of matters in accordance with such procedures, be delegated to the Chief Executive.

5.2 That the Chief Executive be authorised to empower other Chief Officers, Heads of Service and Senior Managers to take action in accordance with such procedures.