

## **NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, 28 July 2009**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Chaudhury (Deputy Chair, in the Chair); Councillors Collins (In place of Garlick), J Conroy, Davies, Edwards and Mildren

#### **1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies had been received from Councillors Duncan, Clarke, Matthews and Garlick.

#### **2. MINUTES**

These were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

#### **3. DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES**

There were none.

#### **4. MATTERS OF URGENCY WHICH BY REASON OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES THE CHAIR IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED**

There were none.

#### **5. IMPROVING ATTENDANCE AT WORK**

The report was presented to the Committee. Trade Unions had been consulted on the policy and had requested that any formal warning be kept on an employees file for three months rather than the 12 as set out in the document on Page 9.

Cllr Davies was happy that the Trade Unions had been consulted but considered that the 12-month period for retaining records of a formal warning was appropriate. He then queried the representation that an employee was entitled to, as referred to in point 2 on page 8, suggesting that the second paragraph be altered to reflect that a work colleague accompanying an employee to a formal procedure should be a person not in a position of supervision. It was pointed out that this was assumed and that any change in wording would have an impact on all similar policy documentation.

In response to questioning from Cllr Mildren, it was noted that absence records were held centrally on the HR system and that managers also had supervision files. Employees were entitled to access their own personal or supervision files. It was not known how many staff had had their employment terminated owing to ill health. It was also noted that constant, unpredictable short-term absence had a greater impact on business than a known long-term sickness. The policy was aiming to support people through the process and identify key concerns at home and at work that might contribute to absence. It was anticipated that the policy would help to reduce absence within the organisation. It was further made clear that the retrieval of overpayment of sick pay would be handled in a sensitive way.

#### **RESOLVED.**

That the revised Absence Policy be agreed with effect from 1 September 2009.

The meeting concluded at 18.17