

Summary Table for HR Committee March 2024

Key: **Blue** means a change to the existing previously agreed former SCC policy requiring approval by HR Committee.

Yellow means we have flagged for information / awareness as there is a change to one or more of the former District Councils.

Policy	Points to Note	Suggested Approval Route
Homeworking	<p>The homeworking policy applies only to those who have their home as their contractual base. The homeworking allowance has been increased to reflect the current HMRC amount of £26 per month (the current policy quotes the out-of-date amount of £18 per month). While this has a financial implication, there are currently only three employees within Somerset Council who are in receipt of the homeworking allowance. This is because the allowance is only paid to those who Somerset Council, as the employer, require to work from home. Where an employee successfully requests to become a homeworker and have their contractual work base amended to reflect this, the allowance is not payable.</p> <p>This policy does not apply to the majority of staff who now work in a hybrid/dynamic manner and who are covered by the dynamic working strategy and associated guidance (& who retain their original work base as their contractual place of work).</p>	HR Committee to approve due to amendment in homeworking allowance to reflect current HMRC rates.
Volunteering	<p>We are proposing to maintain the former SCC policy of 2 days paid leave per annum (pro rata) offered to all employees with managers' discretion for a further 3 days (total 5) pro rata.</p> <p>MDC offered 3 days (although didn't have much take up) and SWT offered 1 day. Please see below for data showing the number of days taken at SCC pre vesting day, and the number taken at Somerset Council between 1st April & 30th June 2023</p>	Flagged for information as a favourable change to one or more of the former District Council policies.

	<p>Volunteer Leave</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Paid (days)</th> <th>Unpaid (days)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>19/20</td> <td>118</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>20/21</td> <td>23.3</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>21/22</td> <td>118</td> <td>0</td> </tr> <tr> <td>22/23</td> <td>136</td> <td>1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Apr-Jun 23</td> <td>33.2</td> <td>0</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Groups that SCC/SC Staff have volunteered with include (amongst many others); AONB's, Schools, Libraries, St Margarets Hospice, Taunton Flower Show, Royal Air Force Charity, Poppy Appeal, 2BU, Carymoor, Fostering Panels, RSPCA, Baby Bank, Armed Forces Day, Samaritans.</p>	Year	Paid (days)	Unpaid (days)	19/20	118	0	20/21	23.3	0	21/22	118	0	22/23	136	1	Apr-Jun 23	33.2	0	
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Reservists	SDC, SWT, SSDC, and SCC all had policies on this. The most favourable amount of paid leave offered was 2 weeks per year (pro rata) for those attending camps from SCC. Unpaid leave is also offered where training cannot be undertaken outside of work hours and is at manager discretion. This amount of leave is what is expected to gain the Gold Armed Forces Covenant Status that SC is currently working towards.	Flagged for information as a favourable change to one or more of the former District Council policies.																		
Career Breaks	MDC's former policy enabled staff to request a career break for a minimum period of three months, whereas the other 4 predecessor organisations permitted requests for a minimum period of six months. We have therefore included a reference in the policy advising staff that they can apply for unpaid leave for shorter periods of time should they wish to do so.	Flagged for information as although a potentially less favourable change for former MDC staff, it is replaced by a different process (requesting unpaid leave).																		
Relocation Allowance	We have proposed to level up to the former SCC and two of the four Districts' approach and offer a maximum of £8,000. This is funded by the service and at service discretion.	Flagged for information as a favourable change from two former District policies.																		

