

MENOPAUSE SUPPORT POLICY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Mid Ulster District Council is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for everyone who works here. Menopause is a natural part of every woman's life, and for many can be positively managed through lifestyle adjustments however, it is **not** always an easy transition. With the right support, it can be much better. Whilst not every woman experiences symptoms, supporting those who do will improve their experience at work.

Menopause should not be taboo or 'hidden'. We want everyone to understand what menopause is, and to be able to talk about it openly, without embarrassment. This is not just an issue for women, men should be aware too. The changing age of the UK's workforce means that between 75% and 80% of menopausal women are in work and self-managing their symptoms whilst at work. Research shows that the majority of women are unwilling to discuss menopause-related health problems with their line manager, nor ask for the support or adjustments that they may need.

The Council recognises that perimenopause and menopause are workplace issues and Council will seek to provide appropriate support to employees.

This policy sets out the guidelines for members of staff and managers on providing appropriate support to manage menopausal symptoms at work. A similar positive approach will be adopted by managers, to staff experiencing menstrual symptoms during their working career, to support the health and wellbeing of staff.

2.0 CONTEXT

This policy cover types of menopause, symptoms of menopause, roles and responsibilities of Council, Management and staff, guidance for Managers dealing with staff who are experiencing menopause symptoms and sources of support.

3.0 OBJECTIVE

The aim of this policy is to:

- Foster an environment in which colleagues can openly and comfortably engage in conversations about menopause.
- Ensure everyone understands what menopause is and are clear on the organisation's policy and practices, supported by Human Resources and/or Occupational Health if required.

- Educate and inform managers about the potential symptoms of menopause, and how they can support women at work.
- Ensure that women experiencing menopause symptoms feel confident to discuss it, and ask for support and any reasonable adjustments so they can remain at work and continue to be successful in their roles.
- Reduce absenteeism due to menopausal symptoms.
- Assist staff to fulfil their potential within Mid Ulster District Council, retaining valuable skills and experience within the organisation.
- Assure women that we are a responsible employer, committed to supporting their needs during menopause.
- Provide a safe and inclusive work environment for staff in accordance with Council's Dignity at Work & Equal Opportunities Policies and not subject an employee to harassment or abuse relating to the menopause.
- Comply with the following legislation:-
Health and Safety at Work Order (NI) 1978 (Amended 1998)
Sex Discrimination (NI) Order 1976
Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995
Employment Equality (Age) Regulations (NI) 2006
Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998
Data Protection Act 2018

4.0 SCOPE OF PROCEDURE

This policy applies to all staff and managers. It is aimed at supporting all women working for Mid Ulster District Council although it is understood that others may experience menopause type symptoms, such as trans-men and non-binary people. While the words woman/she/her are used throughout this document, this support is designed for all work colleagues. The Council will support all colleagues experiencing perimenopause and menopause transition and they should be encouraged to ask for help if they need it.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

Natural Menopause is defined as a biological stage in a woman's life that occurs when she stops menstruating, and reaches the end of her natural reproductive life. Usually, it is defined as having occurred when a woman has not had a period for twelve consecutive months (for women reaching menopause naturally). The average age for a woman to reach menopause is 51, however, it can be earlier or later than this due to surgery, illness or other reasons.

Premature ovarian insufficiency (premature menopause) – Approximately 1 in 100 affected people will experience menopause before 40 years of age (naturally or as an effect of a medical condition or treatment).

Perimenopause is the time leading up to menopause when a woman may experience changes, such as irregular periods or other menopausal symptoms. This can be years before menopause. They may still have regular periods when they first start to get

symptoms, many did not realise that they are experiencing peri-menopause and may not understand what is causing their symptoms.

Post-menopause is the time after menopause has occurred, starting when a woman has not had a period for twelve consecutive months.

Medical or surgical menopause can occur suddenly at any age when the ovaries are damaged by specific treatments such as chemotherapy, radiotherapy or surgery.

6.0 EMPLOYEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

All employees are responsible for:

- Taking a personal responsibility to look after their health;
- Being open and honest in conversations with managers/HR and Occupational Health;
- If a member of staff is unable to speak to their line manager, or if their line manager is not supporting them, they can speak to Human Resources, their Union, or a member of the staff Health & Wellbeing committee (see Appendix xx)
- Contributing to a respectful and productive working environment;
- Being willing to help and support their colleagues;
- Understanding any necessary adjustments their colleagues are receiving is as a result of their menopausal symptoms.
- Educating themselves about menopause and become familiar with the terms of this policy.

7.0 LINE MANAGERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Line Managers (see Appendix 1 for Managers' Guidance)

All Line Managers should:

- Familiarise themselves with the Menopause Policy and Guidance and take part in any mandatory menopause awareness training provided by the Council;
- Be ready and willing to have open discussions about menopause, appreciating the personal nature of the conversation, and treating the discussion sensitively and professionally; recognise sickness absence related to the menopause/peri-menopause as a potential long term and fluctuating health condition.
- Use the guidance in Appendix 1, signposting and reviewing together, before agreeing with the individual how best they can be supported, and any adjustments required;
- Look at suitability of and discuss all adjustments which may assist the staff member to manage their symptoms whilst carrying out their job e.g.:- flexible working, temporary change of hours/start/finish times, hybrid working etc.

- Record adjustments agreed, and actions to be implemented;
- Ensure ongoing dialogue and review dates;
- Ensure that all agreed adjustments are adhered to.
- Ensure all members of their Team are aware of the policies, where to find information and seek support:- e.g. Westfield Health, Occupational Health, Human Resources
- Being alert to unacceptable behaviour and take appropriate action to stop it.
- Conduct Risk Assessments in consultation with Health & Safety to minimise/remove workplace risks for women experiencing menopausal symptoms.

Where adjustments are unsuccessful, or if symptoms are proving more problematic, the Line Manager, in conjunction with the Human Resources Department, may:

- Discuss a referral to Occupational Health for further advice;
- Refer the employee to Occupational Health;
- Review Occupational Health advice, and implement any recommendations, where reasonably practical;
- Review and make further adjustments if required.

8.0 HUMAN RESOURCES RESPONSIBILITIES

- Offer guidance to managers via Policy Briefing sessions so they are better equipped to sensitively conduct helpful conversations, and provide the right support.
- Attend training sessions and provide awareness on policy to staff.
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our strategies and interventions to assist staff affected by menopause in respect of related absence levels and performance.
- Arrange for a risk assessment, which considers the specific requirements of menopausal women, and ensure that the working environment is suitable and will not make women's symptoms worse.
- Review Managing Attendance Policy – to include guidance to staff and managers with respect to menopause/peri-menopause symptoms (see Appendix 1) which recognises sickness absence related to the menopause/peri-menopause as a potential long term and fluctuating health condition.
- Consider impact of menopause when implementing relevant policies and procedures e.g. managing attendance, performance management, discipline & grievance.

9.0 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH RESPONSIBILITIES

- Provide support and information to employees who are referred to the service to discuss health related issues as a result of menopause.
- Provide support and advice to employees, managers, and Human Resources in relation to workplace adjustments, if required.
- Signpost to appropriate sources of help and advice.

10. SYMPTOMS

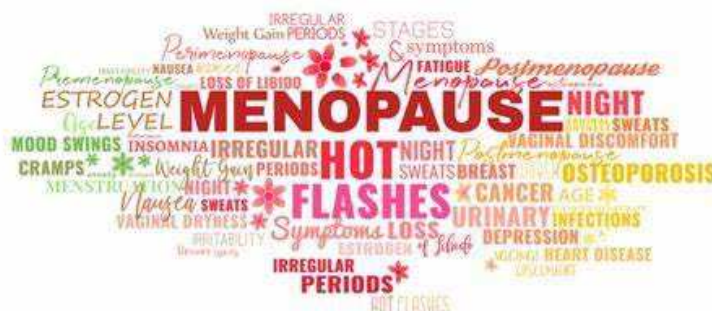
- 10.1** It is important to note that not every woman will notice every symptom, or even need help or support. However, 75% of women do experience some symptoms and 25% could be classed as severe.

During the time of perimenopause women may begin to experience symptoms due to changes in their hormone levels. The severity of these symptoms may vary in different individuals.

Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically including, but not exclusively, hot flushes, poor concentration, headaches, panic attacks, heavy/light periods, anxiety and loss of confidence.

Other symptoms include:

- Difficulty sleeping
- Fatigue
- Skin irritation
- Dry eyes
- Urinary problems
- Hair Loss
- Mood Swings
- Vaginal discomfort
- Changes to periods
- Memory Problems



Line Managers should refer to Appendix 1 – Symptom Support re: considering reasonable adjustments for their employees.

11. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years by Council and, if necessary, revised in consultation with recognised Trade unions in light of changing employment legislation and relevant case law and best practice.

12. Equality Screening & Impact

This policy has been subject to equality screening in accordance with the Council's screening process. This policy has been screened out.

The Equality Commission (NI), Irish Congress of Trade Unions and Labour Relations Agency has recently produced joint guidance entitled "Promoting Equality in Employment for Women Affected by Menopause".

This guidance recognises that while statutory equality legislation does not expressly provide protection for menopause or perimenopause, those who suffer discrimination in employment, that is related directly or indirectly to them having menopausal symptoms may be able to seek legal remedies if alleging that they have suffered unlawful discrimination or harassment on the grounds of sex, disability or age.

13. Rural Needs Impact

This policy and the sources of support within are accessible to the rural community listing online and telephone support sources for further information.

14. Learning & Development

Training on this policy; (to include symptoms and signposting & support measures) will be provided to relevant staff and managers including Trade Union Representatives.

APPENDIX 1 - Manager's Guidance for Colleague Discussions

MUDC recognise that every woman is different, and it is, therefore, not feasible to set out a structured set of specific guidelines. Regular, informal conversations between



Manager and employee can enable discussions about issues related to menopause. One of the most valuable things a Manager can do is listen and respond sympathetically if issues relating to menopause are reported. These conversations can assist to identify support at work, which can make a real difference with how employees cope with

menopause. This may enable them to continue working well, productively and to remain at work. This policy is a guide for Managers and the reasonable adjustments guidance will also support Managers in managing menopause within their team.

If an employee wishes to speak about their symptoms, or just to talk about how they are feeling (they may not recognise themselves that they are symptomatic), or if a male employee wishes to speak about a family member, please ensure that you:

- Allow adequate time to have the conversation;
- Find an appropriate room to preserve confidentiality;
- Encourage them to speak openly and honestly;
- Suggest ways in which they can be supported (see symptoms below)
- Agree actions, and how to implement them (you should use the appendix 1a to record meeting, so that all parties agree what has been discussed, and the next steps, before the meeting ends). Ensure that this record is treated as confidential, and is stored securely.
- Agree if other members of the team should be informed, and by whom;

- Ensure that designated time is allowed for a follow up meeting. Do not rely on quick queries during chance encounters in the corridor or break room.

Council's Managing Attendance Policy (Section 3.5) notes that in exceptional circumstances of a sensitive nature an employee may request that a return to work interview is conducted by another line manager, for example a line manager of the same gender as the employee.

SYMPTOMS SUPPORT

Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically, including, but not exhaustively or exclusively; support for women should be considered, if practical, as detailed below:

Hot Flushes

- Request temperature control for their work area, such as a fan on their desk (where possible a USB connected desk fan to ensure environmentally friendly) or moving near a window, or away from a heat source;
- Access to drinking water
- Be allowed to adapt prescribed uniforms, such as removing a jacket:
- For staff not required to wear a uniform recommend loose fitting layers and cotton fabrics rather than manmade fibres
- Have access to a rest room for breaks if their work involves long periods of standing or sitting, or a quiet area if they need to manage a severe hot flush.
- Turning cameras off when on Teams calls.
- Heavy/light periods
- Have permanent access to washroom facilities
- Request an extra uniform
- Ensure sanitary products are available in washrooms

Headaches

- Have ease of access to drinking water;
- Offer a quiet space to work
- Offer noise-reducing headphones to wear in open offices
- Have time out to take medication if needed.

Difficulty Sleeping/Night sweats

- Ask to be considered for flexible working, particularly if experiencing lack of sleep.

Low Mood

- Agree time out from others, when required, without asking permission.
- Encourage to visit GP to discuss symptoms (advise of Doctor Line 24/7 GP Service available through Westfield Health for members – 0345 612 3861 or from a mobile +44 (0) 203 88 9094)
- Identify a 'time out space' to be able to go 'clear their head'.

- Contact one of Council's Mental Health First Aiders and Support Resources; (See Appendix 2 & 4) – who could signpost sources of support.

Loss of Confidence

- Ensure there are regular Personal Development discussions;
- Have regular protected/blocked time with their Manager to discuss issues – agree a regular time to meet.
- Agree protected time/blocked time to catch up with tasks/work.

Poor Concentration/Memory Problems

- Discuss if there are times of the day when concentration is better/worse and adjust the working pattern/practice temporarily accordingly
- Review task allocation and workload;
- Provide books for lists, action boards or other memory-assisting equipment
- Offer a quiet space to work if possible.
- Offer noise-reducing headphones in open offices.
- Agree protected/blocked time in an open office that an individual is having 'protected time' so they are not disturbed or to catch up with works/tasks..

Anxiety/Panic Attacks

- Promote counselling services offered through Westfield Health, the Council EAP on 0800 092 0987.
- Contact a Mental Health First Aider (See Appendix 4) – who could signpost sources of support.
- Provide opportunities to discuss openly any concerns/difficulties.
- Regular supervision/review with Manager for additional support if required.
- Access to a quiet area for a short break if required
- Encourage to visit GP to discuss symptoms (advise of Doctor Line 24/7 GP Service available through Westfield Health for members – 0345 612 3861 or from a mobile +44 (0) 203 88 9094)

Bone/Joint Problems

- A woman's bones can lose strength at a faster rate after the menopause; this is because levels of oestrogen decrease. A DXA Scan (a special x-ray) can detect osteopenia (if an individual has a lower bone density than the average adult of their age, bone strength naturally declines from the late thirties) or osteoporosis, to identify any necessary treatment to help to prevent bone density loss or fractures.

An individual can take positive steps throughout their life, prior to the menopause, to protect their bone health with a nutritional diet, safe exposure to vitamin D in sunlight / use of vitamin D supplements, if necessary and undertake regular weight bearing exercise to help keep bones strong. See Self Help Advice below.

- Risk assessments and moving and handling assessment – contact Health and Safety
- Consider temporary adjustments or modifications to work task

There may also be occasions when a referral to Occupational Health to give specific advice regarding the workplace will be considered.

The above suggested adjustments by symptom type are merely a guide for Managers to assist their staff with the symptoms of menopause. If a Manager has concerns about menopause related absence, the Manager should contact Human Resources for further information and advice.

Self Help Advice

There is a lot of advice to women highlighting the importance of lifestyle choices (see Appendix 2 Signposting and Support for further information) before, during and after the menopause and the benefits of:

1. Eat healthy – research has shown that a balanced diet can help alleviate some symptoms and help keep bones healthy.
2. Eating regularly
3. Drinking plenty of water, some women find chilled water helps.
4. Exercising regularly – exercise can help to reduce hot flushes and improve sleep. It can also boost mood and maintain strong bones.
5. If using Display Screen Equipment or undertaking work of a sedentary nature, take regular breaks to stand/ move around and limit time of use to ideally 20 minutes at a time to reduce musco-skeletal problems occurring; (complete DSE module on 'e' learning platform) See further information in the below hyperlink <http://ergo.human.cornell.edu/hedges3Ss.JPG>
6. Consulting your GP on the management of menopause and to ensure that any symptoms are not due to other causes.
7. Not smoking.
8. Cutting down caffeine, alcohol and spicy food.
9. Having access to natural light.
10. Getting adequate rest and relaxation.

Appendix 1a

Confidential Colleague Discussion – Template *(this form should be signed off by Employee & the Line Manager & copy retained by Line Manager, in accordance with Council's Data Protection Policy & current Data Protection legislation).*

Member of staff details:			
Name		Job Title	
Department/Service		Location	

Present at meeting (line manager name and position)

Agreed Actions/Adjustments:

- **Examples:-**
- Start Time – change start time if staff are experiencing disturbed sleep
- Work from home – Hybrid Working Procedure
- Ensure staff have access to cold water whilst working
- Easy access to toilets
- Ensure temperature is comfortable – e.g. provision of fan or access to fresh air
- Adjust staff uniform requirements, provide more items of uniform
- Provide extra space for storage of additional/change of clothes during day
- Grant time off to attend medical appointments

Date

Summary of Discussion:

Date of next review meeting

Signed (Member of staff)

Signed (Manager)

Appendix 2 Signposting and Support

- All colleagues can access **counselling** by contacting Westfield Health on 0800 092 0987
- The Daisy Network – www.daisynetwork.org.uk
- Healthtalk.org
www.healthtalk.org/peoples-experiences/older-life/menopause/topics
- **National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines.** These explain how your GP will determine what types of treatments and interventions they can offer you. You can find out more information by using the following link <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/About-this-information>.
- The **National Health Service** provides an overview of menopause. You can find more at <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/Menopause/Pages/Introduction.aspx>.
- **Menopause information.** The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists offer further information in a dedicated area of their website at: <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/menopause/>.
- **Premature Ovarian Insufficiency (POI)** information and support on very early menopause. You can find out more at <https://www.daisynetwork.org.uk>.
- **Information on hysterectomy.** This provides an insight into surgically induced menopause as a result of having a hysterectomy. Further details can be found at <https://www.hysterectomy-association.org.uk>.
- A **Government Report**, researched by the University of Leicester's School of Business has been published. Read more here [Menopause transition: effects on women's economic participation](#).
- **Menopause Matters**
further information at: <https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/>



- **Menopause Cafes** – online conversations about menopause
- **Menopause Café** – Bangor

<https://www.menopausecafe.net/events-calendar/>

<https://www.menopausecafe.net/events/menopause-cafe-bangor-uk/>

- Henpicked

<https://henpicked.net/>

Appendix 3 Health & Wellbeing Committee Members

Anne-Marie Campbell – Leisure and Outdoor Recreation

Sheila Loughran – Business Support Manager

Clare McNulty – Human Resources

Marita McGirr – Human Resources

Garry McCreesh – Environment and Property

Brian Holmes – Environment and Property

Seamus McElroy – Environment and Property

Alastair McGuckin – Outdoor Recreation

Elizabeth McLaughlin – Leisure -Greenvale

Jean Connolly - Planning

Fiona Duffin – Health and Safety

Mary Quinn-Ryan- Finance

Catherine McKenna - Environmental Health

Appendix 4 Mental Health First Aiders (as at 28/9/21- to be updated)

Mental Health First Aiders	Directorate	Department	Contact Details
Anne-Marie Campbell	Leisure		annemarie.campbell@midulstercouncil.org Internal Extension: 23700
Clare McAnulty	Organisational Development	HR	clare.mcanulty@midulstercouncil.org Mobile: 07827 991 902 Internal extension: 24333
Linda Carson	Organisational Development	HR	linda.carson@midulstercouncil.org Mobile: 07760 762 180 Internal extension: 22053
Marita McGirr	Organisational Development	HR	marita.mcgirr@midulstercouncil.org Mobile: 07827 991 910 Internal Extension: 24340
Sheila Loughran	Leisure and Outdoor Recreation	Organisational Development	sheila.loughran@midulstercouncil.org Internal extension: 24409
Liz McLaughlin	Leisure and Outdoor Recreation	Leisure	elizabeth.mclaughlin@midulstercouncil.org Internal Extension: 25095
Jill Gilliland	Leisure and Outdoor Recreation	Leisure	jill.gilliland@midulstercouncil.org Internal extension: 24804
Seamus McElroy	Environment and Property	Property Services	Contact Property Services
Brian Holmes	Environment and Property	Property Services	Contact Property Services
Melanie Patterson	Public Health and Infrastructure	Environmental Health	melanie.patterson@midulstercouncil.org Mobile: 07766 740 916 Internal extension: 24117
Fiona Duffin	Public Health and Infrastructure	Health and Safety	fiona.duffin@midulstercouncil.org Internal extension: 23120
Andrew Carson	Leisure and Outdoor Recreation	Leisure	andrew.carson@midulstercouncil.org . Internal extension: 24804
Anthony Carey	Leisure and Outdoor Recreation	Leisure	anthony.carey@midulstercouncil.org Internal extension: 23829

Payment of Subscriptions To Professional Bodies Policy

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document sets out Mid Ulster District Council's approach to eligibility of payment of subscriptions for individual membership by officers of professional bodies.

2.0 CONTEXT

Some positions and roles fulfilled by employees may require memberships of a Professional Body to permit them to exercise their duties. Where it is considered necessary, membership of a professional body must be specified as an 'essential' criterion in the person specification for the job role. Professional membership fees will only be paid to one professional body at any one given time even if the employee has multiple employment contracts.

Payment of subscriptions to permit an Officer to be a member of a professional body should be prescribed at the outset by the Director in the Vacancy Authorisation form. All memberships will be reviewed by SMT at each January meeting and additional professional bodies may be added in line with changes in legislation, requests from employees as per Appendix B form of this policy, continuous professional development as per the Learning & Development Policy where there is a justified business need.

3.0 OBJECTIVE

Council will pay for subscriptions to ensure that employees required to maintain professional or other membership of relevant bodies in order to effectively discharge their duties and/or conditions of employment. This is to ensure that employees are appropriately financially supported by the Council in an affordable and equitable manner.

4.0 POLICY SCOPE

This policy applies to all Mid Ulster Council employees who are employed in a contract of employment, for a minimum period of six months. This policy does not apply to former NICS Planning staff who transferred to the employment of Mid Ulster District Council on 1 April 2015 and are currently employed by Council in accordance with the terms and conditions of employment contained within NICS Staff Handbook; (Section 5.03 refers to Subscriptions to Professional Bodies).

Corporate Membership by the Council of a particular body/association, which relates to common local government interests; (e.g. PPMA, NILGA etc.) is not dealt with under this policy. This will be dealt with separately in the name of Mid Ulster District Council as a corporate body and paid by invoice by the relevant department e.g. O.D for membership of PPMA etc.

5.0 PROCEDURES & IMPLEMENTATION

The Human Resources Department will hold sufficient budget to meet the approved expenditure of relevant professional body membership fees of Council staff.

Human Resources Department will make 100% payment of professional memberships fees directly to the professional body where membership is deemed 'essential' in the job specification for the employee's current job role.

Employee Request for Payment of Membership Fees of relevant Professional Body

It is the responsibility of staff seeking payment for 'membership of a professional body' which is deemed 'essential' for their job role, to follow Council's procurement procedures by forwarding details of address etc. to the Corporate Learning & Development Manager so requisition order can be raised to the professional body to enable an invoice to be paid by Council in a timely manner.

On receipt of the invoice, the H.R. Department will check details against the 'Membership of Professional Bodies' folder on the 'k' drive and also at Appendix A of this policy to process an order etc. so that payment can be made directly to the relevant professional body.

Career Break/Secondments

If an employee goes on a career break or takes up a seconded post outside Council where there is no 'Essential' requirement for membership of a professional body, the employee will be expected to maintain their membership at their own expense during any such period. Upon return to their substantive role, if eligibility criteria is still being met, the invoice from the professional body will be processed for payment purposes at the next renewal date.

New Professional Bodies

Written requests for membership of a new professional body should be made using Appendix B form, outlining justification for this payment and the business need. A request will be considered initially by the Director or Chief Executive as applicable, who if in agreement, will forward the Appendix B form via the Corporate Learning & Development Manager for consideration to SMT at its January review meeting.

SMT will review all Appendix B request forms at its January meeting and subsequently make provision for any new professional body membership approvals in the HR budget for the following financial year.

New Professional Body – Essential Criteria

If deemed 'Essential' the new professional body will be added to Appendix A of this policy. When completing future Vacancy Authorisation Forms, Directors and Managers should refer to Appendix A of this policy with respect to the vacant post's job duties and identify any associated or new relevant professional, body membership required, for the effective discharge of duties.

New Professional Body - Desirable Criteria

If after consideration, SMT decide that membership of the professional body is 'desirable' but not an essential requisite for the post, up to a maximum of £200 may be re-claimed by the employee who will submit their paid receipt through the 'expenses' field on the CoreHR system to be reimbursed via their salary.

6.0 SUPPORT & ADVICE

For further information about the policy please contact the Corporate Learning & Development Manager.

7.0 COMMUNICATION

The policy information will be communicated internally through planned 'Policy Briefing' sessions for managers and will be posted on the Council's staff intranet and will also be available in hard copy in Policy folder in each service area/directorate.

The policy will also form part of the induction process for all new staff.

10.0 EQUALITY SCREENING & IMPACT

This policy has been subject to equality screening in accordance with the Council's screening process. The policy has been 'screened out' and no equality issues arose and the policy is not subject to an equality impact assessment.

11.0 REVIEW

Implementation of this policy will be routinely monitored and 'eligible memberships of professional bodies' will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team at its January meeting. A formal review will be undertaken every 4 years from its effective date in line with Council policy.

APPENDIX A

LIST OF JOB TITLES & APPROVED PROFESSIONAL BODIES WHICH ARE DEEMED 'ESSENTIAL' IN JOB SPECIFICATIONS

Department & Job Title	Professional Body	As per Job Spec Essential Yes/No
<u>Chief Executive's</u>		
Council Solicitor	Law Society of N Ireland	Essential
Temp Solicitor	" "	"
<u>Finance</u>		
Director of Finance	Institute of Chartered Accountants Ireland	Essential
Head of Finance	" "	"
Finance Manager	" "	"
Accountant	ACCA	"
Internal Audit Manager	Chartered Institute of Internal Auditors or equivalent	"
<u>Organisational Development</u>		
Director of O.D.	Chartered Institute of Personnel & Devlpt	Essential
Head of H.R.	" "	"
HR Manager	" "	"
Corporate L&D Manager	" "	"
Bus Transformational Manager	" "	"
HR Business Partner	" "	"
HR Graduate	" "	"

<u>Public Health Infrastructure</u>		
<u>Environmental Health</u>	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	Essential
Head of Service	“ “	Relevant
Principal EHO	“ “	Qn held
Senior EHO	“ “	entitles Corp
District EHO		membshp of CIEH
<u>Building Control</u>		
Building Surveyor	Chartered Institute of Building or Chartered Association of Building Engineers or other appropriate professional building related institution or association	Essential
		“
<u>Health & Safety</u>		
Health & Safety Manager	Institute of Safety & Health (I.O.S.H) or equivalent body	Essential
Health & Safety Officer	“ “	
<u>Planning</u>		
Planning Manager	Royal Town Planning Institute (R.T.P.I) or IPI (Irish Planning Institute)	Yes
Principal Planning Tech Officer	“ “ “	Yes
Senior Planning Tech Officer	“ “ “	Yes
Higher Planning Tech Officer	“ “ “	Yes
Planning Officer	“ “ “	Yes

**This list is not exhaustive & will be kept under review by SMT each January & may be amended.*

APPENDIX B

Request for Payment of Subscription to Professional Body (where not prescribed as 'Essential' in Job Specification for the current post)

Name _____ Department _____ Date _____

Professional Body (personal membership):-

Demonstrate the business need to Council for your membership to the professional body

Name of Professional Body:

Business Need to Council:

I, _____ (Director) recommend/do not recommend* that the request be granted for payment. (* delete as appropriate). Date: _____

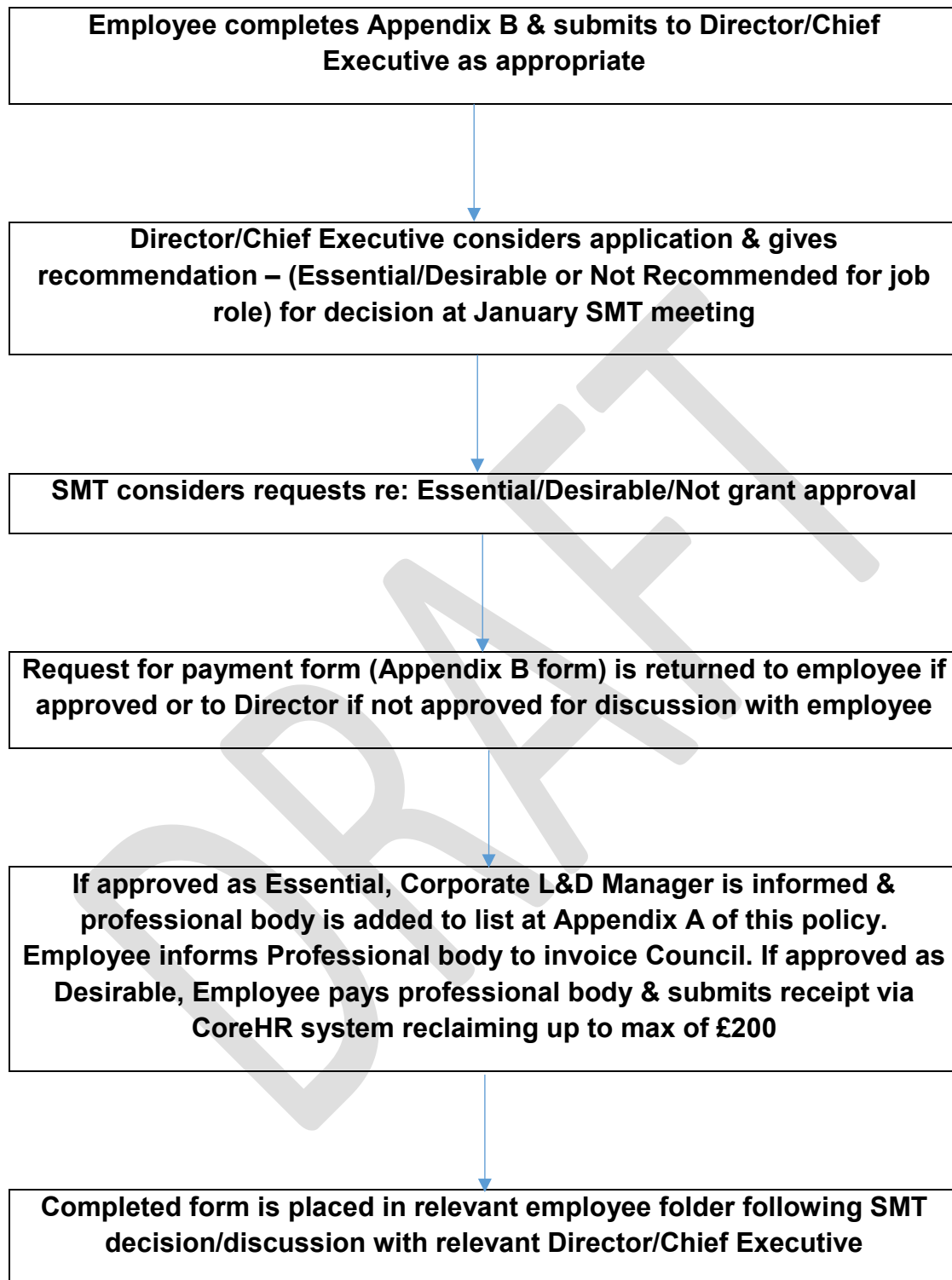
If recommended, Director will bring request to the January meeting of SMT for consideration

If not approved, please outline reason for decision:-

Date Employee notified of decision _____

**If approved, please forward to employee & retain copy on employee's record within H.R.*

PROCESS FOR APPROVAL (for Professional Bodies not already deemed as 'Essential' as per Person Specification)



Addendum – Flexible Working Arrangements Policy – Term Time Working Procedure

1. Introduction & Scope

1.1 This document outlines Council's term-time working arrangements, which are available to employees. Although term-time working is typically viewed as a form of flexible working which promotes work-life balance, to enable parents/guardians with school aged children to spend more time with their children over the school holidays, **all** eligible employees, not only parents/guardians, may apply for term-time working under the Council's Flexible Working Arrangements Policy. This is in accordance with The Employment Rights Act 1996, The Work and Families NI Order 2006, The Work and Families Act (NI) 2015 and The Flexible Working Regulations (NI) 2015.

Employers for Childcare NI Childcare Survey in 2020 reported that 67% of parents, who took part in the survey in Tyrone and 90% of parents participating in the survey in Fermanagh, reported that there was not sufficient childcare available in their area. The lack of suitable available childcare was generally greater in rural areas compared to availability in urban areas. Overall the survey reported that, spend on childcare was an average of £135 per week (or £540 per month) in 2020, with childcare expenditure accounting for the largest monthly household outgoing for a third of families, ahead of mortgage or rent payments. An updated Childcare Strategy is expected to be developed by NI Executive during 2021/2022. This Childcare Strategy with the appropriate financial investment will support child development, parental employment, workforce development, social inclusion and the local economy.

1.2 National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJCLGS) is currently completing a Review of Term Time Working Advice and NJCLGS has recently issued advice to Councils on term time working on 28 June 2021. Further associated guidance is expected in due course. Council's Term Time Working Arrangements may therefore be subject to further review, on receipt of any updated advice from NJCLGS and any emerging relevant case law and or legislative changes in this area. These Term Time Working Arrangements do not apply to Planning Staff that transferred from NICS to Mid Ulster District Council on 1 April 2015 (RPA) and who remain on the terms and conditions of service of NICS as per Section 3.10 of NICS Employee Handbook.

1.3 The Council will consult with trade unions and staff in respect of these Term Time Working Arrangements. Term Time Working will complement existing policies such as Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and support the implementation of Council's legislative responsibilities under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 including the promotion of equal opportunities to those with dependents and persons without and The Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016 which seeks to improve outcomes for rural residents. Term Time working will support a range of other flexible working arrangements currently available to employees, including flexi-time, career break and carer's leave etc.

2. General Principles

2.1 As term-time working is a form of flexible working, the same general principles for implementing the policy apply — in other words, Council will aim:-

- a. to accommodate the request where feasible, and
- b. ensure that, while it is recognised that there may be circumstances when it is not possible to approve a request, such decisions are justified based on specified business grounds as per Article 112G – Employment Rights (NI) Order 1996 as amended.

2.2 The decision whether or not to approve an application for term-time working

will be based, on business need. That means that approval should be granted provided there is no adverse impact on service delivery.

2.4 If the number of term time working applications within a Team exceeds the number that can be accommodated, but there is capacity for *some* term-time working, applications will be assessed on date of application received/ any extenuating personal/business needs identified. Where possible, requests that cannot be accommodated for a particular school/academic year may be accommodated the following year/s as per service needs.

2.5 A member of staff may apply to have any school holiday period covered by Term-time working and must outline this in his/her application, the periods during which they wish to be absent from work (preferably in blocks of complete weeks). An absence may start on any day of the working week. Only in exceptional circumstances can the dates of absence be changed after the term-time working arrangement has been formally accepted.

2.6 Term-time working applications will be approved for one annual leave/financial year only; therefore, staff who wish to avail of term-time working for more than one year must reapply each year. The employee's terms and conditions of employment will be revised on an annual basis, in accordance with the financial/annual leave year timescale 1 April to 31 March.

The Department of Education (NI) has outlined that the school year consists of 200 days. School holidays may differ between individual schools and not all schools will take the same holidays. Schools can also use up to 10 days for staff training and development purposes.

The Department of Education (NI) has listed the following potential dates for school holidays in 2022 school year, as noted below. These dates may be subject to change if government advice in respect of Covid 19 changes during the period.

Event	Date(s)	Total day (Mon-Fri)
Easter – Term 2	14- 22 April 2022	7
May Day – Term 3	2 May 2022	1
Late Spring Bank Holiday/ Platinum Jubilee Bank Holiday – Term 3	2 & 3 June 2022	2
Summer Holidays	1 July 2022- 31 August 2022 approx.	44
Halloween – Term 1	29 & 31 October 2022	2
Christmas – Term 1	27 Dec 2022– 5 Jan 2023	8
Mid Term – Term 2	17 & 18 February 2023	2
St Patrick's Day – Term 2	17 March 2023	1

2.7 Term Time working typically consists of 39 weeks or approximately 195 days for a term time employee working 5 days per week. A member of staff may also apply for a variation to his/her normal working pattern for the duration of the term-time working year, for example if a member of staff normally works five full days per week, he/she may wish to work five mornings or five afternoons for the duration of the term-time working arrangement. Staff should note, however, that, if this request is approved, the change will be temporary and will be effective for one school year only. If an employee is seeking such a variation to apply on a permanent basis this should be clearly stated by the employee on the term time working application form. It should also be noted that requests for changes to the normal work pattern, under this section, would normally be considered when the application for term-time working is made.

3. Calculation of Pay and Leave for Term Time Working Employees

3.1 If a term-time working application request is approved for an employee, basic salary will be reduced to correspond with the number of weeks' absence and paid over 12 equal monthly instalments (for a monthly paid employee) and approximately 52 equal weekly instalments (for a weekly paid employee). If an employee who is working on a Term Time only basis has a contractual change of hours and/ or pay partway through the term time year, it will be necessary for the employee's pay to be re-calculated, from the date of the effective change. All pay related calculations must comply with Working Time Regulations (NI) 2016, Part-time Workers Regulations (NI) 2000, Equal Pay Act (NI) 1970 as amended, Pensions (NI) Order 1995 as amended. A decision in respect of Harpur Trust v Brazel (2019) is expected to be made by the Supreme Court later in 2021. This case relates to the calculation of annual leave for a part-year worker. Further guidance may subsequently be issued by NJCLGS after this decision is issued. A copy of the advisory model pay and leave calculations are provided in Part 4.12 NJCLGS Guidance Section 6 (issued 28 June 2021). A copy of this guidance will be displayed on Council's staff intranet for staff information purposes.

An example is provided below for **illustration purposes only** based on Part 4.12 NJCLGS Guidance referred to above, for the purpose of calculating total leave and pay for a term time employee. (Please note that this example may be subject to change with reference to the above noted employment case, which was previously heard at the Court of Appeal).

(a) Full time Employee monthly paid working throughout the year for five days a week with 5+ years' continuous employment service. The total number of paid days available annually is $365/7 \times 5 = 260.71$ days

Less

Annual Leave	25 days
Public/Bank Holidays	12 days
Total leave	37 days

Available working days in the year = 260.71 days - 37 days total leave = 223.71 available working days for a full-time employee working 37 hrs. pw. (working all year round and with 5+ years' recognised continuous employment service)

223.71 available working days produces a total leave entitlement of 37 days for a full-time employee (with 5+ years' recognised employment service)

1 actual working day for full time employee with 5+ years' employment service working all year round, produces 0.1653926 days of paid leave for this full time employee.

The above ratio of actual working days and the corresponding paid leave entitlement for a full time employee must be proportionally applied in the annual leave and pay calculation for a term time only employee, as detailed below.

(b) Term Time Employee (37 hrs. pw) – calculation of leave and pay applicable. Assume the term time employee works five days a week for 39 weeks and the employee has 5+ years continuous employment service. The number of available days available annually is $39 \times 5 = 195$ days

1 actual working day for a full-time employee with 5+ years' continuous employment service equates to 0.1653926 days paid leave (as noted in (a) above)

195 working days for a Term Time employee will produce 32.2515 days of total leave for a Term Time employee.

The total number of paid days (days worked + paid leave) for Term Time employee = 195 days + 32.2515 days leave = 227.25135 days per year, compared with 260.71 days paid days for a full-time employee working all year round.

The Term Time employee working 37 hrs.pw will be paid the equivalent proportion of $227.25135/260.71$ or 87.16641% of the working days of a full time equivalent employee.

If e.g. the full time equivalent employee is paid a salary of £24,000, per annum gross, the term time employee working 37 hrs. pw for 39 weeks on the equivalent salary scale point will be £20,920 approx. gross pay per annum (£24,000 p.a. x 87.16641%) or £1,743.33 per month gross pay over a period of 12 months.

227.25135 total paid days of the term time employee is equivalent to 45.45 total paid weeks (approx.) of the term time employee working 37 hrs. pw.

However if the term time employee works less than 37 hours per week a further adjustment will be required to pay and leave as detailed in (c) below.

(c)Term Time Employee working < 37 hours per week

If the term time employee works e.g. 14.8 hours per week, the salary of the term time employee will need a pro-rata calculation to be applied on the following basis

Paid working hours of full time employee (all year round)

Total days paid 260.71 days for full time employee with 5+ years' continuous service equates to 1929.254 paid hours (7.4 hrs. per day) (as per (a) above)

Paid working hours of Term time employee (37 hrs. pw)

227.25135 total paid days of term time employee 37 hrs. pw with 5+ years' continuous service = 1,681 total hours of term time employee (as per (b) above)

Pro –rata pay for term time employee working 14.8/37 hours per week x1, 681 total hours of term time employee working 37 hrs. pw= 672.4 hours to be paid to term time employee

As a proportion of full time employee's paid working hours $672.4/1929.254$ this term time employee will be paid 34.84% of the total hours of full time equivalent employee working all year round.

Based on full time equivalent employee's salary of £24,000 per annum (gross), term time employee's salary is £8,363.44 gross per annum approx. based on working 14.8 hours per week term time only. (34.84% of £24,000 pa)

The annual leave entitlement of term time employee working 14.8 hrs. pw will be calculated as noted below.

1 actual working day for a full-time employee with 5+ years' service (working year round) equates to 0.1653926 day's leave as per (a) above

If a term time employee works 2 days per week (14.8 hrs. pw) for 39 weeks = 78 working days for the term time employee.

78 working days will produce a total leave entitlement of 12.90 days approx. rounded up to 13 days leave for term time employee (including public/bank holidays) ($78 \times 0.1653926 = 12.9$ days total leave)

Total paid days of term time employee = 91 days (78 working days+13 days total leave)

4. Pensions

4.1 An employee who is a member of the NILGOSC pension scheme will continue to have his/her employment service calculated for pension membership purposes.

4.2 It is important to note, however, that any member of staff considering 'term time' arrangements, should seek advice from NILGOSC for detailed information on how any proposed term time working arrangement will affect his/her pension benefits.

4.3 A copy of Council's Pension Contributions Banding Policy is available on the staff intranet for reference purposes.

5. Annual Leave and Public Holidays

5.1 Staff should be aware that a successful application for term-time working would result in an adjusted leave entitlement to that of a full time employee as previously noted in Section 3 above. This scaling adjustment to his/her annual leave allowance and public holiday entitlement will be made for the period covered by the term time working arrangement as per Part 4.12 of the relevant Guidance issued by NJCLGS on 28 June 2021. All full time employee working year round will currently receive a total minimum leave entitlement of 34 days leave (i.e. 6.8 weeks) per year (including 22 days annual leave and normally a total of 12 public and bank holidays in the leave year) which exceeds the minimum leave entitlement under the Working Time (NI) Regulations 2016 of 5.6 weeks' leave.

The Council will consider adopting a system that designates when a term time employee actually takes their leave. NJCLGS notes that this is likely to have implications relating to sickness absence and NJCLGS plans to issue further guidance in due course. NJCLGS notes that employees on term time only contracts will normally be contractually obliged to take leave they accrue outside of school term time.

Term Time employees will be entitled to public and bank holidays that occur during the leave year as per calculations illustrated in Section 3 above. This entitlement is unaffected by whether the public holiday occurs on a normal working day for the employee. This will be accounted for in the employee's total paid leave calculation, which the employee will be notified of in advance of the term time working arrangement commencing.

If Government announces an additional public holiday, a term time employee's paid leave should reflect the additional public holiday or an additional period of paid leave during the term time would be granted.

The leave year for term time employees will run from 1 April to 31 March.

A term time employee's line manager will be expected to provide relevant communication updates to a term time employee in the school holiday period, or any relevant work developments/ team changes, in advance of the employee's planned return to work.

6. Sickness Absence

6.1 The normal provisions for paid sickness absence will continue to apply if staff are unable to attend work due to illness, and any such payments will be calculated on the employee's earnings, as applicable to the relevant term time working arrangements. Further advice is expected from NJCLGS with respect to eligibility for occupational sick pay during a period when a term time employee is not contracted to work. NJCLGS has noted in June 2021 that it plans to issue further guidance to Councils in respect of sickness absence and sick pay relating to term time only employees.

7. Maternity Leave and Pay

7.1 Employees will continue to be entitled to paid maternity leave as per the relevant qualifying conditions (noted in Part 2 Section 11 of NJCLGS Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service). NJCLGS has advised in June 2021 that it plans to issue further guidance, in due course to Councils, on a range of issues including maternity, parental leave, shared parental leave and adoption leave and this Addendum will be updated accordingly thereafter.

8. Application Process — Timetable

8.1 The following is a list of the key dates in the application process for term-time working.

a. January — H.R. Department will notify all staff to the availability of term-time working and provide advice on how to access relevant guidance and application forms. The closing date for applications will be the final Friday in January or as near as possible to this time. Applicants must complete the relevant application form and forward the completed form to their line manager with a copy of the completed form sent to human.resources@midulstercouncil.org. HR will maintain a written record of all flexible working requests made by an employee and a record of all decision outcomes, for the purpose of monitoring and reporting on the effectiveness of Council's Flexible Working Arrangements Policy.

b. February — A meeting will be arranged with employee and the relevant line manager to discuss term time working arrangements request. Employee has the right to be accompanied at this meeting by a trade union representative or a work colleague of the employee's choice.

c. March — H.R. department will notify the applicant of decision in writing and copy this to the relevant Director, following inclusion of the applicant's term time working request in SMT /P&R Reports in February/ March of the particular year of application. HR will send employee an outline of the proposed terms and conditions of service not later than 15 March, where the application has been approved. Alternatively, HR will send the employee written notification of the reason(s) for the refusal not later than 15 March and forward a copy of the appeal arrangements.

d. 22 March— the employee will advise HR whether he/she wishes to accept the revised terms and conditions as outlined in the previous correspondence.

Approved Applications

8.2 When an application for term-time working has been approved by the relevant Director and SMT the HR Department will notify the employee in writing in March, outlining the revised terms and conditions of employment.

8.3 On receipt of the confirmation letter from the HR Department, the member

of staff must consider the revised terms and conditions of employment as outlined and confirm in writing their decision to accept or decline these to the HR Department by 22 March of the particular year of application.

9. Declined Applications

9.1 When an application for term-time working has been declined, the HR department will also inform the member of staff in writing in March of the particular year of application. The response will give an explanation of the reason(s) the application has been refused. The HR Department will send a copy of the explanation to the applicant by 15 March of the relevant year and retain a copy of the documentation for the employee's personal file.

10. Right of Appeal

10.1 A member of staff may appeal against a decision to refuse an application for term-time working as noted in the Flexible Working Arrangements Policy (section 1.11).

11. Special Leave

The Council will ensure that employees working on a term time only basis will have equal access to that of full and part time employees to the agreed arrangements for both paid and unpaid special leave.

12. Calculation of Statutory Redundancy Pay

When calculating a week's pay for the purpose of calculating redundancy pay for a term time only employee, the calculation should be based on the number of weeks actually worked (including paid leave) by the employee. In the example given in Section 3(b) above the calculation of a week's pay for statutory redundancy, purposes would be based on 1/45.45 weeks of the employee's annual pay.

13. Termination of Term-Time Working Arrangements

13.1 If an application for term-time working has been successful, the employee is expected to remain as a term-time employee for the period 1 April to 31 March. Should he/she wish to terminate the term-time working arrangement before he/she has taken the agreed period(s) of absence, he/she should apply to his/her Director, giving a minimum of one month's written notice. Where, for justifiable business reasons, it becomes necessary for a Department to terminate a member of staff's term-time working arrangement, he/she must be given a minimum of one month's written notice and full reasons for the termination. Term time working arrangements should normally be in place for a 12-month period.

14. Learning & Development

An employee working on a term time only basis will be given equal access to learning and development opportunities. Where temporary cover is required in respect of a term time working employee, this temporary vacancy will be initially internally trawled within Mid Ulster District Council, in accordance with Part B of LGSC Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection.

15. Continuity of employment service

15.1 Term Time Only employees will have continuity of employment (Part 2 Paragraph 14 of NJCLGS Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service is applicable) and periods of school closures should not be treated as a break in employment service.

16. Other Assistance

16.1 It is recognised that an employee may request term-time working to enable the employee to care for their children during school holidays or to care for other dependents. There are a range of other options available that are also aimed at helping staff with caring responsibilities (e.g. Employers for Childcare Benefits Advisory Service, freephone 0800 028 3008 can provide information and advice on tax credits, childcare vouchers etc.), flexi time, parental leave, the temporary re-arrangement of working hours, job share, career break, and carer's leave.

DRAFT

Appendix 1

GUIDELINES FOR CONSIDERING TERM-TIME APPLICATIONS

1.1 Directors/Heads of Service should strive to accommodate as many applications as possible, while at the same time ensuring that there are sufficient staff present to meet the business needs of the service. This includes, not only ensuring the delivery of the service, but also that a non-term-time member of staff is able to have his/her reasonable annual leave requirements met during the school holiday periods.

1.2 In determining the number of applications that can be accommodated, the Director should consider the options available for covering absences. Examples of some of these are listed below:

- a) employing temporary staff;
- b) requesting assistance from other departments on a temporary basis
- c) asking other part-time staff if they would be prepared to work full-time over the summer months

1.3 If, after considering the above, the number of applications still exceeds the number that can be accommodated, but there is capacity for some term-time working, the Director should meet with staff to discuss the possibility of meeting part of each request.

Approved Applications

2.1 When an application for term-time working has been approved, the employee will receive written notification of this decision in March of the relevant year, accompanied by the relevant terms and conditions associated with the proposed term time working arrangement.

2. Refused Applications

2.1 As stated in section 2.1, applications for term-time working should be considered on a business grounds basis only. An application can be refused only where there is a clear, justifiable business reason. The business ground(s) for refusing an application must be one of those listed below:

- a. the burden of additional costs;
- b. detrimental effect on ability to meet customer demand;
- c. inability to re-organise work among existing staff;
- d. inability to recruit additional staff;
- e. detrimental impact on quality;
- f. detrimental impact on performance; and
- g. planned structural changes.

2.2 When an application for term-time working has been refused, the Director must complete the relevant section of the Term-time Working Application Form providing an explanation of the reason(s) for refusal, and send a copy of this form to HR Department by 10 March of the particular year of the application.