



Employee Handbook

<i>Date issued</i>	<i>June 2016</i>	<i>Department</i>	Human Resources
<i>Review date</i>	<i>June 2018</i>	<i>Version</i>	3.0

This document is available in alternative formats other languages, Braille and large print.

Employee Handbook



Welcome to Hart District Council

Office Opening Hours

Employee Handbook

Chief Executive Profile

Organisational Structure

1. Your Employment

- 1.1 Your First Day
- 1.2 Identification Card
- 1.3 Security Door Passes
- 1.4 Probationary Period
- 1.5 Performance and Development Review
- 1.6 Learning and Development
- 1.7 Notice Periods

2. Personal Details

- 2.1 Changes to Personal Information
- 2.2 Emergency Contact/Next of Kin Information
- 2.3 Data Protection
- 2.4 Access to Your Personal Records

3. Pay Arrangements

- 3.1 Salary Scales and Grades
- 3.2 Incremental Progression
- 3.3 Your Pay
- 3.4 Pension Arrangements
- 3.5 Overtime
- 3.6 Allowances
- 3.7 Deductions from Salary
- 3.8 Impact of Industrial Action on Pay
- 3.9 Statement of Earnings

4. Flexi-Time Scheme

- 4.1 Core Hours
- 4.2 Lunch Breaks
- 4.3 Recording your Hours (Civic Offices)
- 4.4 Hours Away from the Office
- 4.5 Balancing your Flexitime Hours
- 4.6 Flexi-Days
- 4.7 When you Leave the Council
- 4.8 Abuse of the Scheme

5. Leave provision for Employees

5.1 Annual Leave

6. Attendance Management

6.1 Sickness Absence

6.2 Reporting Sickness Absence

6.3 Certification

6.4 Sickness Records

6.5 Medical Information/Reports

6.6 Leave for Medical Appointments

7. Benefits

7.1 Free Parking

7.2 Health and Wellbeing Service

7.3 Child Care Vouchers

7.4 Cycle to Work Scheme

7.5 Long Service Awards

8. Claiming Expenses

9. Conduct, Rules & Confidentiality

9.1 Gifts and Hospitality

9.2 Interest in Contracts

9.3 Confidential Documents and Information

9.4 Freedom of Information

9.5 Contact with the Media

9.6 External Employment

9.7 Health and Safety

9.8 Internet, Intranet & Email Policy

9.9 Personal Security Responsibilities

9.10 Personal Clothing

9.11 Smoking Policy

9.12 Telephones

9.13 Mobile Phones and Personal Equipment

9.14 Equipment

10. Buildings and Premises

10.1 Locking/Unlocking the Workplace

10.2 Public Access

10.3 Office Cleaning

10.4 Signs and Wall Fixings

10.5 Lift Failure

10.6 Communications

11. Collective Bargaining / Union Membership

12. Policies and Procedures

WELCOME TO HART DISTRICT COUNCIL

At Hart District Council we deliver a wide range of services for the communities that make up Hart. You will find further information on these in our A-Z of services section on the website: www.hart.gov.uk.

Hart District Council is committed to putting its residents at the very centre of everything it does and has developed the HART values to embed a shared culture and ethos that responds effectively to the needs of residents and ensures continual service development. Each service has a Service Plan, which describes in detail how they deliver their service and identifies the key performance criteria. This is an active document which contributes to the overall aims of Hart's Corporate Plan, ultimately improving the quality of life for Hart residents. Excellent Customer Service is a must for all Hart employees and delivering on the HART values is a key part of this.

As a new employee at Hart you will have already demonstrated that you are able to behave in a manner that reflects the HART core values. As you continue on your journey working for the Council these values will be embedded more firmly in everything you do to deliver good customer service. The HART core values are:

- H** **Helpful** – we will really listen to what our citizens, customers and residents want to achieve and help them reach their goals.
- A** **Approachable**- we will be open, friendly and fair, working with others and helping others to succeed.
- R** **Responsive** – we will strive to do things well and look for ways to innovate and improve.
- T** **Take Ownership** – we will take responsibility, do what we say we will and see things through. People and teams will be required to work collaboratively with others both inside and outside the organisation and actively share learning and best practice.

You will find further information about the HART values in the booklet, 'The Hart Values: Our operating model that guides how we design and deliver services', a copy of which is available through your line manager.

Our operations are spread over a number of offices and facilities. The main Civic Offices are in Fleet. This is where Cabinet, Committee Meetings and Council are held on a monthly basis.

We hope you find your new job rewarding and challenging in your career progression.

OFFICE OPENING HOURS

- ◆ The Civic Offices are normally open to the public from 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Thursday, and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday.
- ◆ The Community Centres are opened specifically for customer bookings and regular community groups.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

The Employee Handbook contains much of the information you will need during your day-to-day employment with Hart District Council.

More detailed information can be obtained from the HR Client or the Share Point system.

Hart District Council reserves the right to amend this handbook and any of its policies and procedures from time to time in consultation with staff and trade unions.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE PROFILE



A message from Daryl Phillips and Patricia Hughes Joint Chief Executives at Hart District Council

Thank you for joining us at Hart District Council!

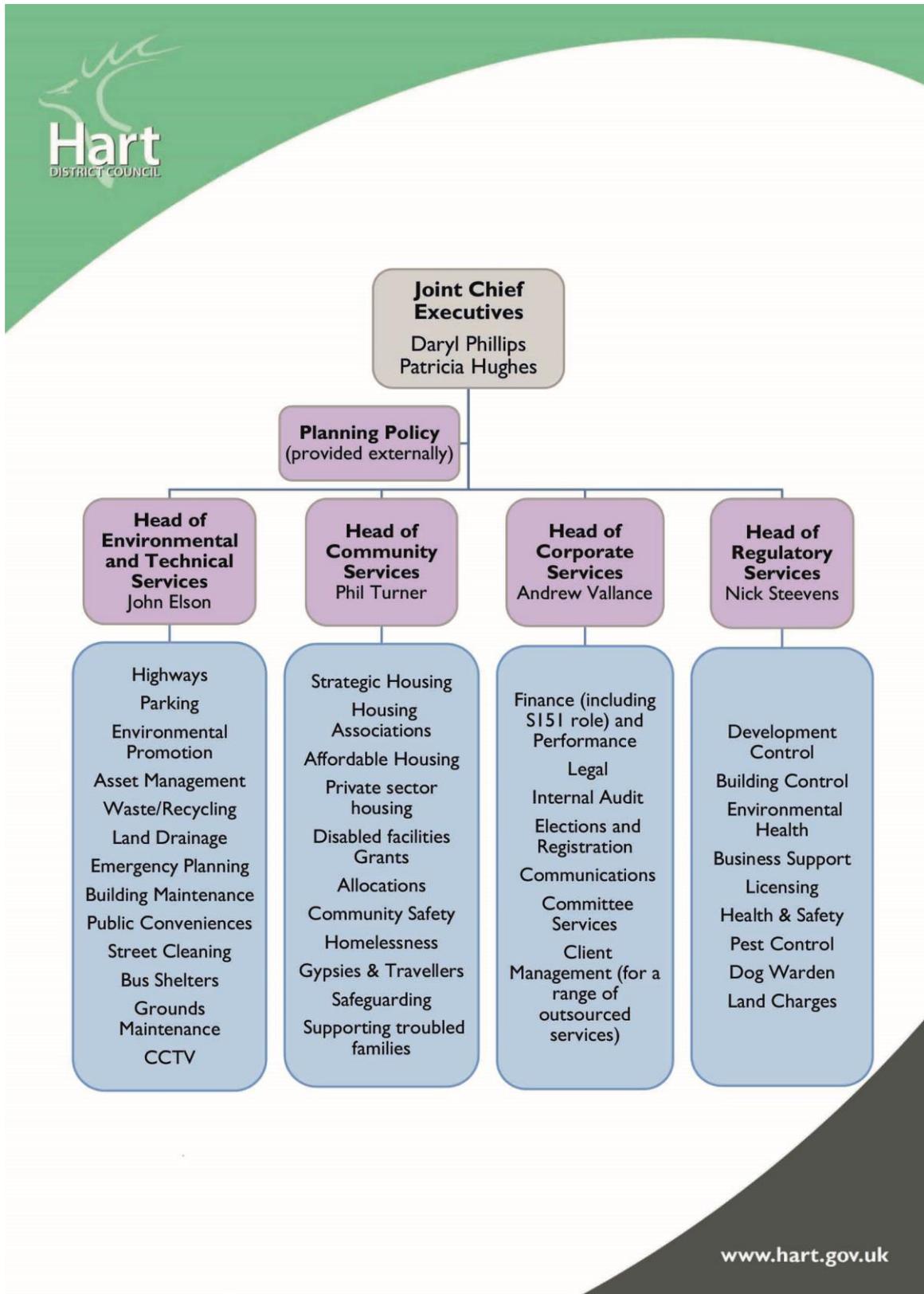
Your role is important to the council as we seek to recruit committed and talented staff who can help us achieve our ambitious plans for our community, as part of a modern and efficient local authority that can deliver high quality services to our residents.

We look for staff for share our commitment to our public service ethos, which we encapsulate in our HART values and we are pleased that you have chosen to join us on this journey.

Our organisation has already been through considerable change, however we need to continue to innovate, to build on what we have achieved so far and look for opportunities to do things better. We pride ourselves on taking a collaborative approach both internally and externally and this is helping ensure we continue to support our communities, including the most vulnerable.

We hope you enjoy your time here at Hart and we look forward to meeting you at the next available induction training.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE



I. YOUR EMPLOYMENT

1.1 Your First Day

On your first day a member of your new Service will meet you. They will spend some time going through the induction checklist with you. You will also be booked to attend an induction day to give you further information about the Council. Along with your signed contract you should have returned:

- New employee details form
- Your P45 or P46
- Your pension forms

If you haven't done this please take them to your line manager on your first day.

1.2 Identification Card

You will be issued with an identification card which you must carry with you at all times whilst you are at work. Your card must be shown to any employee or member of the public who wishes to verify that you are an employee of Hart District Council.

If you lose your identification card you must report it immediately to your line manager.

1.3 Security Door Passes

Civic offices:

On your first day you will be issued with a swipe pass that allows you access to the different wings within the building. If needed, you will also be issued with an access number should you need to enter the building through the back door. If you lose the pass you must report it immediately to the Facilities Manager.

1.4 Probationary Period

Your probationary period will normally last for six months. At the end of this period if you are not meeting the standards of the job, a decision may be made to either extend your probationary period or end your employment. If it is decided to extend your probation, your manager will discuss the reasons for this and work with you on any areas that need development.

At the end of your probation period your manager will talk with you about your performance and where this has been satisfactory, he/she will advise you that you have completed your probation period. This will then be confirmed to you in writing. Further details can be found within the Hart District Council Probationary Policy.

1.5 Performance and Development Review

Hart District Council is committed to Performance Development Reviews (PDR) for all employees as part of our philosophy in valuing all the people who work for us.

We aim to help everyone to do their particular job to the best of their ability, to enable everyone to get satisfaction from their work and to provide the best possible service to the public. It is essential that employees are clear about the key objectives of their Service and how their individual work contributes to the quality of the overall service. To do this effectively, all employees will need to ensure that they are familiar with the Hart Corporate Plan and their specific Service Plan to effectively serve our residents' needs. Employees should also be able to demonstrate a good understanding of the HART values and give clear examples of how these core values are embedded in their daily work.

The PDR scheme and HART values have been developed to suit the needs and structure of a modern and efficient local authority and they will assist the Council in supporting a culture of continuous development and improvement. The completion of personal development plans which are linked to the HART values is an essential part of this process. The Council can only achieve these objectives with employees that are committed to this shared culture and ethos.

Employees should think about their training and development needs in order to discuss these with their manager at their PDR. For further information all employees should have a copy of the booklet 'The Hart Values: Guide to Performance and Development of our staff through Performance Development Review (PDR's) which is available through your line manager.

1.6 Learning and Development

An annual Learning and Development plan is produced in conjunction with the training needs identified from staff Personal Development Plans. By looking at the training needs of all staff to ensure that they are equipped to meet the targets of the service and corporate plans Hart are committed to developing our staff to better serve our customers.

1.7 Notice Periods

The period of notice you must give to end your employment with the Council is clearly stated on your contract of employment when you join us. However, since notice period is linked to your grade, your notice period may change during the course of your employment.

- ◆ Where the maximum SCP for your grade is up to or including SCP28 - One month
- ◆ Where the maximum SCP for your grade is between SCP 29 and 39 - Two months
- ◆ Where the maximum SCP for your grade is SCP 40 or above – Three months

These contractual notice periods apply over and above the statutory notice periods set down by law. However, if the Council has reason to terminate your employment with notice then you will be given whichever notice is the greater.

2. PERSONAL DETAILS

2.1 Changes to Personal Information

You are responsible for informing HartHR@capita.co.uk of any changes to the following information:-

- Emergency contact details
- Your address
- Change of name
- Next of kin details
- Your mobile or telephone number

2.2 Emergency Contact/Next of Kin Information

All staff are asked to provide details of an emergency contact/next of kin which is on the New Employee Details form which was sent to you with your contract, this tells us who to contact in the case of emergency whilst at work. This information will be held confidentially on your personal file and on the Human Resource Information System and only used in emergency situations. Please ensure that you tell us if you change any of your details.

2.3 Data Protection

The 1998 Data Protection Act increases the scope of the right of access to certain non-automated or “manual” paper based data and electronic data. Within this act there are eight data protection principles. These state that personal data must be:

1. Fairly and lawfully processed
2. Processed for limited purposes and not in any matter incompatible with those purposes
3. Adequate, relevant and not excessive
4. Accurate
5. Not kept for longer than is necessary
6. Processed in accordance with “individuals” rights
7. Secure
8. Not transferred to countries without adequate protection.

The Council and Capita HR will comply with all requirements relating to the data protection principals.

2.4 Access to Your Personal Records

You have the right to see information that is held about you. If you wish to see your personal file, please speak to your manager or contact HartHR@Capita.co.uk who will make the appropriate arrangements.

PAY ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 Salary Scales and Grades

The council's pay structure is based on the pay spine issued by the National Joint Council (NJC) as part of the National Agreement for Local Government Services. This incorporates posts on Grade A to M and Heads of Service. There are 14 grades in total. Each grade contains no more than five points to provide incremental pay points within the grade. Details of the salary scales and grades for the current year can be viewed on the Intranet.

3.2 Incremental Progression

Staff on the NJC (National Joint Council) terms and conditions are eligible for incremental progression through their grading band. Incremental progression is dependent on your performance in your job. Your performance will be assessed through the Performance Development Review system. If your performance is excellent your salary will be advanced one incremental point on the 1st April each year until you reach the maximum salary point for your grade.

If you join Hart between the 1st October and the 31st March you will not be paid an increment on the following 1st April. Instead, your salary will be reviewed six months after your start date.

3.3 Your Pay

Your grade and annual salary are detailed in your contract of employment. Where your contract is for less than 37 hours per week your salary will be calculated on a pro rata basis.

You will be paid by credit transfer on the 20th day of each month to your bank account. If the 20th falls on a weekend then your pay will be credited to your account on the Friday before.

3.4 Pension Arrangements

From January 2014 all employees (subject to certain criteria) will automatically be enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme. Employees who do not wish to remain in the scheme will have the option to opt-out.

Information relating to automatic enrolment is available on the Hampshire Pensions website at <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/pensions.htm>

3.5 Overtime

Hart District Council's overtime provisions come directly from the NJC terms and conditions. Details can be found in the Single Status Employees (Green Book) or contact the HR Shared Service Centre.

All overtime must be authorised in advance by the appropriate Head of Service. Only staff on SCP 28 or less may claim overtime unless a specific agreement to pay overtime to staff above this SCP point is made for exceptional reasons.

Overtime can only be worked outside of the flexitime scheme i.e. before 8.00am and after 6.00pm or at weekends. If you are contracted to work at any of these times as part of your normal hours you will not receive overtime payments for these periods.

If you work overtime, you must record the hours directly into the Core system which requires authorisation from your line manager. You will not be paid for overtime if you have not completed the equivalent of 37 hours per week during your normal working hours during the last month.

If you are employed on a part time contract this means that you will be paid at your contractual hourly rate for additional hours up to 37 hours a week, and at overtime rates thereafter.

Where overtime is authorised, it will be paid at the following rates:

- ◆ Overtime worked on any day other than a Sunday or a general or public holiday – payment at time and a half
- ◆ Overtime worked on a Sunday – payment at double time.

Special rates apply to work carried out on a public holiday.

3.6 Allowances

The Staff Allowances Policy sets out allowances available to employees and in what circumstances they are applicable. They include allowances for car use and mileage, and accommodation and subsistence when on Council business, and also allowances relating to stand-by, call-out and overtime, and payments for undertaking the role of an official first aider. See the Staff Allowances Policy for further detail.

3.7 Deductions From Salary

You can arrange to have a number of voluntary deductions to be made directly from your salary, including council tax (if you are a Hart resident), UNISON membership fees, and charity giving. Contact the Payroll Operations Team, for further details.

3.8 Impact of Industrial Action on Pay

If you participate in a strike, pay deductions are calculated by dividing your annual wage by the number of working days. Therefore, for those who work a 5-day week, the deduction is 1/260th of annual salary for salaried staff, or 1/5 of a week's wage for weekly paid staff. The same formula (pro rata) is used for calculating part timers' pay deduction.

If you are in the Pension Fund the loss of one day's pay will impact on your pension, however, there is a provision in the LGPS regulations which enables an employee to elect to pay pension contributions in respect of a period of absence from duty because of a "trade dispute". If you elect to make this contribution you will need to complete a form which is available from the Payroll Operations Team.

3.9 Statement of Earnings

If you are employed on or after the 5th April you will be issued with a P60 form, which gives details of your total earnings, superannuation deductions and income tax

paid over the last year. As this is an important document and only one copy is issued, you should keep it somewhere safe. You will need a P60 if you are asked to complete a tax return or need to claim National Insurance or unemployment benefits at a future point.

4. FLEXI-TIME SCHEME

Flexitime is available for NJC staff, with the permission of the managers, and on the understanding that all sections of all services will be staffed during the service opening hours. Due to the business demands within certain services requiring work attendance during specific hours, the use of the flexitime system may be limited or unavailable.

Flexitime (where applicable – please refer to your contract) can only be worked between 8.00am and 6.00pm.

4.1 Core Hours

You must be at work between 10.00 – 12.00 noon, and 2.00pm – 4.00pm. These are called core times. You must be at work during core times unless you are on annual or special leave, at college or on a training event, or are absent because of sickness.

4.2 Lunch Breaks

All employees are required to take a minimum of 30 minutes unpaid rest break per day (where they are working in excess of 6 hours in a single block), with a maximum lunch break of 2 hours for staff on flexi-time. This must be taken in one block and not at either end of the working day.

4.3 Recording Your Hours (Civic Offices)

You will record your hours of work on a flexi-time sheet which will be issued to you by your line manager. This will record your monthly hours, annual leave, sickness leave and other time away from the office.

4.4 Hours Away From the Office

If you are working away from the office, you must keep a record of the hours that you work. At the end of the month, these hours must be recorded onto a monthly adjustment sheet so that your manager can see the accurate number of hours you have worked during that month. If you are away from the office on a training course you can only claim a maximum of 7.40 hours.

A full day = 7.40 hours A half day = 3.70 hours

4.5 Balancing your Flexi- Time Hours

The settlement period for your working hours is one calendar month. Your recorded hours should equal your contracted hours. Your contract hours = 7.40 x number of working days in the month for a full time employee.

You may carry hours over to the following month. You can carry forward a maximum of 16 over-worked hours (credit hours) and a maximum of 8 under-worked hours (debit hours). During the following month you must make up all debit hours and use all credit hours.

4.6 Flexi-Days

If you have accumulated enough credit hours during the previous month, you may take up to four core periods, i.e. two full days as flexible leave. Flexi-days can only be taken if you have worked enough credit hours during the previous month. You must book flexi-days through your line manager and record them on your leave card.

4.7 When You Leave the Council

During your last month (or part month) of service, you may continue to work flexible hours on the clear understanding that you must work at least your contracted hours for that period. If you do not work your contracted hours then we may not be able to make your final salary payment on your last day, as it will take time to work out the adjustment needed for under worked hours.

4.8 Abuse of the Scheme

The success of the flexi-time scheme is based on trust. It is a disciplinary offence to inaccurately record your hours or to fail to clock on or off in line with the rules of the scheme. We hope that all staff will see the benefits that flexitime brings and will make every effort to accurately record their working hours.

5. LEAVE

The Council's Leave Policy outlines the various contractual, statutory and locally agreed leave provisions for employees. For more information please refer to the Council's Leave Policy. Key provisions relating to annual leave are set out below.

5.1 Annual Leave

Your leave entitlement is based on two factors – your salary point and your length of service.

The annual leave year runs from 1st April until 31st March each year. Your leave entitlement will be confirmed to your line manager. All leave (including flexi, training and sick) should be noted on your leave record with the Core system.. You must have your manager's approval before you take any leave. Where your contractual hours are less than the 37 per week, your leave entitlement will be pro rata to the full time equivalent.

To work out your pro rata annual leave entitlements please refer to the Annual Leave Calculator on the Share point system

For NJC staff, the table below shows how to calculate your holiday entitlement:

		Total Local Government Service	
		After 5 years	After 10 years
Heads of Service & above	31 days	31 days	34 days
SCP 40 and above	30 days	30 days	33 days
SCP 29 to SCP39	28 days	29 days	31 days
SCP 22 to SCP 28	26 days	29 days	29 days
SCP 3 to SCP 21	24 days	29 days	29 days

For more information on Annual Leave refer to the Leave Policy on the Intranet.

6. ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT

6.1 Sickness Absence

There may be occasions when you are unable to attend work due to sickness. Your entitlement to pay in these instances is detailed in the Appendix C in the Attendance Management Policy.

6.2 Reporting Sickness Absence

To receive sick pay from the Council in accordance with your conditions of service you must always:

- (a) Contact your line manager personally by telephone, (or in his/her absence, your senior manager) as early as possible on the first day of your absence. In the case of NJC staff this should be by 10.00am, and for staff working shift or other patterns, before the start of your shift. Family members or friends should only notify sickness when the illness is of a serious or incapacitating nature.
- (b) State the reason for your absence and what your likely return to work date will be.
- (c) If you are unable to return to work within 3 days, you should contact your line manager again on the fourth day of absence to inform them of your continuing ill health.
- (d) If you are absent for more than 7 days (including Saturdays and Sundays) then you must provide your line manager with a medical certificate by your eighth day of absence.
- (e) If you continue to be absent, you must submit further doctor's certificates at regular intervals covering your period of absence.

6.3 Certification

You will be required to provide written certification for all sickness absences. For absences of up to 7 days (including Saturdays and Sundays) you will be asked to complete and sign a self-certification form on your first day back at work.

For sickness absence of more than 7 days (including Saturdays and Sundays) you are required to obtain a medical certificate or statement signed by a doctor, and to pass it to your line manager immediately. If your manager deems it necessary to request a fit note to cover an absence of seven calendar days or less, they will request this directly from your doctor.

Further details of the attendance management procedure are set out in the Attendance Management Policy.

6.4 Sickness Records

Corporate records are kept of your sickness absence. These will be used for monitoring purposes and to produce overall staff information for the Council.

6.5 Medical Information/Reports

If you are absent from work on grounds of sickness, we may with your consent request a medical report from your doctor or any other medical practitioner who is treating you during your absence. You will be asked to complete a medical permission form that will be sent to your doctor or consultant asking them to prepare a report for the Council's Medical Adviser. You may also be asked to attend for an examination by the Council's Medical Adviser, who will then produce a report for the Council on your state of health. This report will be viewed by a Human Resources Advisor if there is a requirement.

You have the right to see all medical reports written about you (subject to the provisions of the Access to Medical Reports Act 1988) before they are sent to us or our Occupational Health provider. Further information on your rights will be given to you with the initial medical permission form.

6.6 Leave for Medical Appointments

Wherever possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of working hours. Where this is not possible, staff are expected to take this time off as annual or flexi leave; this leave can be converted to sickness absence on receipt of an official letter/appointment card.

Managers have the discretion to act outside of the policy dependent upon the circumstances and severity of the case.

7. BENEFITS

7.1 Free Parking

If you are given a parking permit when you start your employment, the permit is only valid whilst you are parked in your specified car park and for work purposes only. The permit must be displayed in your vehicle at all times. You will be instructed as to which car parks you are entitled to park in and you may only park in the car parks for which you are permitted to. See the Parking Policy for more information.

7.2 Health and Wellbeing Service

This is an independent, free, confidential counselling service which is available for all employees at Hart District Council. This is available on request from your line manager or an Occupational referral.

7.3 Child Care Voucher Scheme

Computershare Childcare Voucher Scheme is an employee benefit available to all eligible working parents. The vouchers are non-taxable and exempt from National Insurance and can reduce the cost of your childcare. The vouchers can be used to pay for all types of childcare. Please contact the HR Client or Payroll Operational Team for further details.

7.4 Cycle to Work Scheme

Employees can enter into a Cycle Scheme Hire Agreement, whereby the Council will purchase a bicycle for the employee's personal use – mainly to travel to and from work and travel during the working day. Via a salary sacrifice system the employee effectively hires the bicycle and can opt to purchase it at the end of the hire agreement. Detailed information is available from the HR Client or Payroll Operational Team.

7.5 Long Service Awards

The Council recognises the long service of its staff with a financial reward to staff after 25 years continuous service with Hart.

8. CLAIMING EXPENSES

The Staff Allowances Policy sets out the expenses that employees can claim, and under what circumstances. These include reimbursement for the cost of:

- mileage (on a pence per mile rate) paid to all staff required to use private vehicles for official Council duties,
- travel via public transport,
- overnight accommodation,
- subsistence (meals).

To claim reimbursement you must have incurred the expense in the course of the performance of your work duties, and provide receipts for monies paid out. Refer to the Staff Allowances Policy for full details.

9. CONDUCT, RULES AND CONFIDENTIALITY

As a local government officer, your conduct must be beyond reproach. The Council's Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Rules applies to all employees of Hart District Council and sets out the standards of behaviour expected in order to maintain an efficient and effective working environment and preserve and protect the reputation of the Council. For full details refer to the Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Rules

Some key requirements in relation to conduct at work which employees should be aware of at the beginning of their employment are listed here.

9.1 Gifts and Hospitality

The Council has established rules regarding the offer and acceptance of gifts and hospitality from members of the public, contractors and other external individuals, businesses and organisations. The rules are in place to ensure that the Council and its employees comply with legislative requirements and also to protect the Council from the risk of reputational damage.

All employees are expected to use their professional judgement and apply the provisions of the Council's protocol on gifts and hospitality at all times (full details are in Appendix A to the Council's Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy). Queries and concerns should be raised with the manager in the first instance.

9.2 Declaration of Outside Interests

Under the Local Government Act 1972 (Section 117), all employees are required to declare any pecuniary interest (that is financial interest), whether direct or indirect, in any contract that has been or is proposed to be entered into by or on behalf of the Council.

It is a requirement of the Council's Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Rules that in addition to the above, employees formally declare if they have any financial interest in contracts proposed or to be entered into, other paid employment, or outside interests where there is a potential conflict of interest with any part of the Council's Services. (See detailed guidance in Appendix B to the Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy).

9.3 Confidential Documents and Information

During the course of your duties you are likely to see or hear information of a confidential nature. You must not disclose this information to any person who is not entitled to it. For some staff there is a statutory duty not to disclose certain information.

You must be particularly careful when dealing with telephone enquiries asking for information about any individual person, as the use of personal information in the Council's possession is regulated by the Data Protection Act. If necessary seek guidance from a member of the Internal Audit Team. Enquirers should be asked to put their enquiry in writing unless it is a matter of urgency in which case you should

take down their name, official position, department and telephone number and ring them back before you start to give any information to them.

You must not give out personal information on any member of staff without their express permission, even to other members of staff. This includes personal telephone numbers and addresses. If in doubt, take the caller's name and number, telephone the employee and pass the information on to them so that they can choose whether or not to respond.

An employee must not use any information obtained in the course of his/her employment for personal gain or benefit, nor pass it on to others who might use it in such a way.

An employee must not use in a private capacity (for example in a public meeting) any information gained through employment with the Council that is not available to the public at large.

9.4 Freedom of Information

Anyone (including individuals, the press, politicians, companies and people living outside the district) has the right to be told about and given access to any information that Hart holds, unless there is a good reason not to do so.

Personal data will still be dealt with under the Data Protection Act 1998.

All information held by Hart, including information dated prior to January 2005, will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act, including paper and electronic records as well as audio or video recordings.

For further information please email the FOI co-ordinator at FOI@hart.gov.uk

9.5 Contact With the Media

Only elected Members and Chief Executive may deal directly with the media. The Chief Executive, Heads of Service and all other staff members shall refer any media enquiry to the Communications Officer. You must not make comments about the Council to the media at any time unless specifically authorised to do so.

9.6 External Employment

Whilst the Council does not wish to unreasonably prevent its employees from taking other paid employment, it is important that this should not interfere with their work for the Council in any way. If an employee has paid employment, in addition to his/her Council job, or is considering it, he/she should discuss it with their manager. Heads of Service have the discretion to approve outside employment, but must refer cases where they are unsure to the Staff and General Purposes Committee. Any disputes will be referred to the Council's Appeals Committee.

The Council supports employees who undertake voluntary work but if there is a possibility of a conflict of interest, for example volunteering with an organisation which receives a Council grant, the employee should discuss it with his or her manager and consider recording it.

9.7 Health and Safety

It is the responsibility of all Hart employees to adhere to agreed working arrangements and promote the health and safety within their area of work. Employees also have a statutory obligation and responsibility to co-operate with health and safety. The responsibilities and duties of all Hart employees are detailed in Part Two of the General Safety Policy.

For more information on Corporate Health and Safety Information please refer to the Share Point system.

9.8 Internet, Email & Social Media Usage Policy

The Internet, Email & Social media Usage Policy is in place to ensure that staff are able to make the best use of facilities provided while protecting the Council from the potential dangers of carelessness or misuse. Your manager should outline the rules relating to usage as part of your induction. For more information on the Internet, Email & Social Media Policy please refer to your line manager.

All employees using Council systems should ensure that they are familiar with the policy. Breaches of the usage standards by employees will constitute misconduct and may, in some circumstances, be regarded as gross misconduct.

9.9 Personal Security Responsibilities

You should not bring large quantities of money, or items of value, into your work place unless unavoidable. Your property and possessions remain your responsibility at all times and you should ensure that they are stored safely. The Council is not responsible for your personal property if it is stolen, although it will conduct a full investigation of any such incident and call the police if necessary.

9.10 Personal Clothing

You must be suitably attired at all times. If your manager feels that you are not dressed in such a way as to present a professional and appropriate image to your colleagues and the public, you will be sent home to change. Jeans, sports wear and shorts are generally not considered as proper attire. Personal clothing and accessories must be kept in the desks, cupboards or on stands provided.

9.11 Smoking policy

We are a non smoking organisation. Staff and members are not permitted to smoke on any Council property whilst on Council Business, other than in approved designated areas. Please refer to the Smoking At Work Policy.

9.12 Telephones

Office telephones are for business use only. If you are not at your desk you must make sure that your telephone is re-directed to another officer so that members of the public can make contact with your unit. Do not leave telephones ringing in your department. You must try to help customers with their enquiries and present a positive image of the Council in the way you deal with people on the telephone.

 **When dialling a local number please use the 01252 code, this gives us a cheaper tariff.**

9.13 Mobile Phones and Personal Equipment

Employees who have been issued with a council-owned mobile phone or phones used in the course of their duties should not under any circumstances, make or receive a call whilst driving a vehicle. Mobile phones should be switched off prior to driving the vehicle.

While in the office, mobile phones should be switched to silent mode and should be turned off if you are attending a meeting as an official representative of Hart DC.

9.14 Equipment

Hart aims to provide its staff with safe systems of working and effective procedures for their area of work and allocated duties. For those non-office based staff Hart will provide safe, suitable and well-maintained plant equipment, tools, materials and transport. For further information please refer to the health and safety policies on the Sharepoint System.

10. BUILDINGS AND PREMISES

10.1 Locking/Unlocking the Workplace

There are appointed officers at each site who have the responsibility for locking and unlocking the buildings. Officers with cellular offices can lock them at their own discretion. All windows should be shut and cupboards (where appropriate) locked at the end of the working day.

10.2 Public Access

Members of the public should not be admitted into the staff working areas at any of the Council's sites without the approval of a senior officer, i.e. Head of Service or manager. There are tables and interview rooms available in the main reception at the Civic Offices, and public areas at all other sites where members of the public can talk to officers. Any visitors to your area or to a meeting you have arranged must to be collected and returned to the reception area by a member of staff. They will need to be signed in if they are leaving the ground floor.

10.3 Office Cleaning

The offices and toilets are cleaned daily. You should make sure that your desk and work areas are clear so that the cleaning staff can do their job. Cleaners will not move papers from desks. Window cleaning takes place regularly during the year. You must make sure that cleaners can have access to windows in your work area. You will be given notice of window cleaning so that you can make sure the windowsills are clear.

10.4 Signs and Wall Fixings

Do not use hand-written signs or notices in public or reception areas. Please speak to your manager if you feel a permanent sign is needed for your area. You must take care not to damage walls or screens when you affix things to them.

10.5 Lift Failure

If you find yourself in a failed lift please remain calm and re-assure any fellow passengers. If the lift does not respond to any of the operating buttons then you should press the alarm button. An alarm will sound in the lift area and Reception, and the alarm will be raised. It is important to note that you should not use the lift if you are working late at night or early in the morning or at weekends. If you are working out of hours please contact Parking Enforcement when you arrive and when you leave so if there is an emergency Parking Enforcement know whether or not anyone else is in the building.

10.6 Communications

The Council is committed to encouraging the involvement of staff in communications with the Council Key messages arising from management meetings are sent out to all employees with e-mail accounts.

In addition to these, the Council also produces a newspaper which is delivered to all residents.

11. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING / UNION MEMBERSHIP

This Council supports the system of collective bargaining and believes in the principles of solving employee relations problems by discussion and agreement.

We recognise your right to belong to a trade union of your choice. The Council recognise UNISON for the purposes of collective bargaining. You can arrange for your UNISON membership fees to be paid directly from your salary each month. Please speak to your union representative to arrange this. Details can be found on notice boards in the Civic Offices.

12. POLICIES & PROCEDURES

These policies are available and are subject to regular updates. Always refer to the Intranet for the most up to date version of a policy document, form or template.

[Alcohol & Drugs Policy](#)

Anti-Fraud & Corruption Policy

Attendance Management Policy

[Capability Policy](#)

[Code of Conduct](#)

[Dignity at Work Statement](#)

[Disciplinary Policy](#)

Disclosure and Baring Service Policy

[Early Retirement & Discretions Policy](#)

Equalities Policy

[Internet, Email & Social Media Usage Policy](#)

Family Friendly Policy

[Flexible Retirement Policy](#)

[Flexible Working Policy](#)

[Grievance Policy](#)

Hart Values: Our operating model that guides how we design and deliver services

Hart Values: Guide to Performance and Development of our staff through

Performance Development Review (PDR's)

[Leave Policy](#)

[Maternity Policy](#)

[Parking Policy](#)

[Pay Policy Statement 2013-2014](#)

Probation Policy

[Redundancy and Redeployment Policy](#)

[Relocation Policy](#)

[Remote and Home Working Policy](#)

[Smoking At Work Policy](#)

Shared Parental Leave

Staff Allowances Policy – under review

[Whistleblowing Policy](#)

VERSION CONTROL

Printed documents are uncontrolled. This document is only valid on the day it was printed.

Version	Author(s)	Summary of key changes	Effective Date
2.0	HR (Capita)	• Re-ordering and streamlining content.	Aug 2013
3.0	Hart / HR (Capita)	• Updating factual information where necessary.	June 2016