Education, Culture & Sport Service

Highland Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers

LNCT Agreement no. 8 -

Policy on the Use of Exit Interviews

<u>**Policy on the Use of Exit Interviews**</u>

Report by Director of Corporate Services

Summary

The report recommends the establishment of a policy and associated procedure for the use of exit interviews.

1.   <u>Background</u>

1.1   A recent Audit Commission report into public sector recruitment and retention has outlined the value of information gained from exit interviews in providing a basis for developing future management strategies.

1.2   Local Authorities have a specific duty under the Race Relations Amendment (RRA) Act 2000 to conduct racial monitoring in employment on, amongst other things "*where employment ceases with the Council*". Exit questionnaires and interviews are a useful tool in providing the data for such monitoring.

1.3   At its meeting of 13 February 2003 the Resources Committee approved an action proposed by the Women in Management Group to introduce Exit Interviews as part of a Corporate Communications Strategy.

1.4   Elements of the Employment Relations Act 2002, to be implemented in October 2004, require the Council to exhaust fully internal procedures prior to cases being considered at an Employment Tribunal. Accurate and honest information from staff leaving the organisation can assist managers in ensuring that full and proper procedures have been followed.

1.5   Information gained from staff leaving the Council can be helpful in reviewing and developing policy and management practice in a number of areas.

- Identifying trends in reasons for leaving can highlight discriminatory practice, workload issues and stress that need to be addressed to retain committed staff.

- Information from employees leaving can identify factors that could persuade people to remain within the Council, such as changes to terms and conditions, working patterns or culture. Any subsequent proposed changes to , for example , conditions of service would be subject to consultation with the trade unions.

- Exit interviews can be used to assess the effectiveness of induction and recruitment practices and identify any training and development needs for remaining employees, including management training.

- Trends in reasons for leaving can be used to evaluate the success of personnel policies and procedures and determine where changes need to be made or new strategies developed.

1.6 This report recommends a Policy on the Use of Exit interviews designed to collect information on employees' reasons for leaving and manage strategies to ensure that the Council is a satisfying place to work. It is proposed that a 3 month pilot is run to review the effectiveness of the policy.

2. Consultation

2.1 The policy and procedures have been developed in consultation with Service Directors. They will be submitted to the recognised trade unions for comment and it is recommended that authority be granted to the Director of Corporate Services to amend the policy or procedures in response to any significant comments. The trade unions will also be consulted on the summaries of the outcomes of exit interviews and any consequent proposals.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 The Council recognises that the achievement of its strategic goals and the securing of its values are dependent on the retention of a skilled and committed workforce. The Council's policy and associated procedures on the use of exit interviews are designed to support this aim by monitoring the reasons why employees leave the Council and managing actions to ensure that the Council is a satisfying place to work.

3.2 The policy accords with good professional practice and is supported by the Society of Personnel Directors in Scotland.

4. Aims and Objectives

4.1 The policy on the use of exit interviews has the following aims:

- To identify reasons for and trends in turnover (e.g. discriminatory practice, workload issues, stress etc) and manage actions to address these
- To identify any training and development needs for remaining employees, including management training
- To assess the effectiveness of induction and recruitment practices
- To identify factors that could persuade people to remain within the Council, such as changes to terms and conditions, working patterns or culture
- To evaluate the success of personnel policies and procedures and determine where changes need to be made or new strategies developed
- To prepare for the review and development of the job specification to fill the vacant post
- To identify any issues that are likely to lead to grievances or employment tribunal cases and to address these
- To comply with statutory monitoring requirements including the Race Relations Amendment Act 2000.

5. Proposed Procedure

5.1 All employees leaving the Council's employment will be asked to complete the Exit Questionnaire (Appendix 1) by their Line Manager as he or she becomes aware that the staff member's employment is to end.

5.2 The Line Manager will then interview the employee, record the employee's reasons for leaving and additional comments on the Exit Interview Record form (Appendix 2).

5.3 In the event that an employee refuses an interview with the Line Manager, the interview will be conducted by another Senior Manager or, in exceptional circumstances, the Area Personnel Adviser. The employee may, if (s)he wishes , be accompanied by their trade union representative at the interview. If the employee still refuses an interview, this will be noted and recorded by the Service ie interview offered but declined.

5.4 This procedure will apply regardless of the reason for ending employment and will include retirement, redundancy, disciplinary dismissal, etc. as well as resignation.

5.5 Where a member of staff indicates Discrimination, Harassment or Bullying as his or her reason for leaving the Council the Line Manager must inform the Area Personnel Adviser. This is essential to ensure that all appropriate Council procedures are followed.

5.6 After analysing the information provided through the questionnaire or interview, the Line Manager will prepare a plan of any actions required and progress these. Copies of completed questionnaires and action plans will be forwarded to the Service Director.

5.7 The Service Director will put in place a mechanism to monitor the outputs from this procedure relevant to their Service and implement improvement strategies as required in consultation , as appropriate , with the trade unions.

5.8 It is planned that information provided on the Exit Questionnaire will be stored on the new integrated Personnel & Payroll database to allow monitoring reports to be prepared. This function will not be available before the introduction of the policy. In the meantime Service Directors will arrange for a copy of all completed questionnaires and action plans to be filed in readiness for this information to be stored on the database.

6. Data Protection

6.1 Exit questionnaires and interview guidance must state the reasons why this information is being requested, how the information will be processed and how it will be used. Questionnaires will be anonymised in any collation for statistical purposes.

7. Monitoring and Review

7.1 To ensure that the policy is operated effectively and meets its objectives, regular reports of reasons for leaving will be prepared by officers directed by the Director of Corporate Services, and advice provided to Service Directors as appropriate.

7.2 Service Directors will provide information to the Director of Corporate Services of actions taken to address issues raised by employees and issues of a corporate nature so that these can be used to inform future corporate policy and management strategies.

8 Conclusion

8.1 There are a number of strong business reasons for implementing Exit Interviews including recruiting and retaining skilled staff, ensuring effectiveness of staff policies and meeting our requirements under employment legislation. Piloting the proposed procedures will allow the Council to develop a procedure that would achieve these aims and support service delivery across the Council.

9. **Recommendations**

Resources Committee are asked to:

i) approve the policy on the use of exit interviews and associated procedures subject to consultation with the trade unions.

ii) give authority to the Director of Corporate Services to amend the policy or associated procedures in response to any significant comments from the trade unions.

Signed on behalf of the Council   Signed on behalf of the Teachers' Side

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Name   Bruce Robertson   Name   Andrew Stewart

Designation   Joint Secretary LNCT   Designation   Joint Secretary LNCT

Date   16 June 2004   Date   16 June 2004

Exit Questionnaire

Employee Name:		Payroll Number:	

Line Manager's Name:		Leaving Date:	

Service:	

This form should be completed by the employee and provided to the Line Manager prior to the exit interview. If the exit interview is conducted by another manager or Area Personnel Adviser , the Line Manager will forward the form to the interviewer.

The purpose of the exit questionnaire and interview is to enable the Council to examine the reasons why people leave the organisation and to identify any improvements in employment practice that could be made. Details supplied will be recorded on a database and used to produce regular monitoring information to help the Council develop its employment practices.

Details provided on the questionnaire and comments made during the interview will not influence future references or re-employment with the Council.

If you have any queries regarding this form or the exit interview process, please contact your Area Personnel Adviser

1. Method of Leaving

Please record the method of leaving by ticking one of the boxes below.

☑ Please Tick

☐ Normal Retirement Age
☐ Ill-health Retirement
☐ Redundancy
☐ Dismissal
☐ Resignation
☐ End of Temporary Contract

Where the method of leaving is resignation please complete section 2.

2. Reasons for Resignation

Please record your 3 main reasons for resignation by ticking three of the boxes below.

2.1 Reasons relating to career progression

☑ Please Tick

- ☐ Promotion/higher paid job
- ☐ Lack of training/career development opportunities
- ☐ Taking up full/part-time education/study

2.2 Personal Reasons

☑ Please Tick

- ☐ Health
- ☐ Home relocation
- ☐ Caring responsibilities
- ☐ Not returning to work following maternity leave
- ☐ Need for change
- ☐ Travel problems/work closer to home
- ☐ Other personal reasons

2.3 Reasons relating to the job

☑ Please Tick

- ☐ Lack of job security
- ☐ Dissatisfaction with workload
- ☐ Dissatisfaction with duties
- ☐ Dissatisfaction with working environment

2.4 Reasons relating to the workplace

☑ Please Tick

- ☐ Problems with work colleagues
- ☐ Problems with Manager(s)
- ☐ Discrimination
- ☐ Harassment and/or bullying

Thank you for your co-operation

EXIT INTERVIEW RECORD

Employee Name:		Payroll Number:	

Line Manager's Name:		Leaving Date:	

Service:	

This form should be completed by the Line Manager undertaking the exit interview as a record of the points that were discussed.

The employee should be informed that the purpose of the exit interview is to enable the Council to examine the reasons why people leave the organisation and to identify any improvements in employment practice that could be made. Details supplied will be recorded on a database and used to produce regular monitoring information to help the Council develop its employment practices.

The employee should be made aware that any comments made during the interview would not influence future references or re-employment with the Council.

If you have any queries regarding this form or the exit interview process, please contact the Area Personnel Adviser

Through discussion with the employee you should establish their views on the different aspects of working with Highland Council listed below and record any comments or suggestions for improvements. Example questions to stimulate discussion are attached.

1.   Job Satisfaction
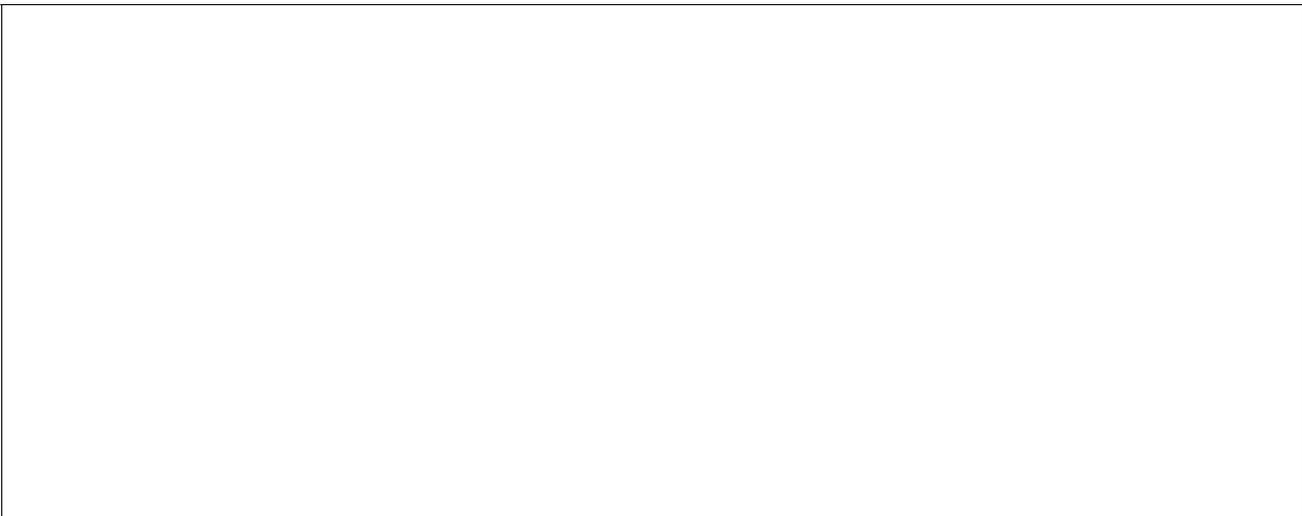
2.   Career Progression and Development

3.   Employment Policies

4.   Work-Life Balance

## 5.	Miscellaneous Comments

Please note any other comment made:

Signature of Line Manager:		Date	

Signature of Employee:		Date	

Exit Interview

TRIGGER QUESTIONS

1.   Job Satisfaction

- Do you find your job satisfying?
- Could any changes to your job description or working environment have been made to improve your level of job satisfaction?
- Do you have any comments on the workload associated with your job?

2.   Career Progression and Development

- How would you describe the training provided to carry out your job?
- Have you had the opportunity to develop your career at Highland Council?
- Could any changes be made to improve training and career opportunities at Highland Council?

3.   Employment Policies

- Can you suggest any improvements that could be made to Council employment policies?

4.   Work-Life Balance

- Have you made use of any of the Council's flexible working arrangements?
- Could you suggest any improvements that the Council could make to help you balance your home and work life?