

## **Wiltshire Association of Local Councils – Employment Support Consultation**

### **Introduction**

Queries relating to employment matters are a regular feature in the WALC office. Issues can be lengthy and complex, as well as distressing for those involved. Local Councils can often be different to other employers in that there are several employers (the council) and sometimes just one or two employees. Laws relating to meetings and procedures as well as the code of conduct can have an impact on how employment matters are dealt with. As councils take on more responsibilities and the professional role of clerks and other staff continues to build across all sizes of councils; it is likely that the number of queries on this subject will increase.

Very few local councils have direct support on employment matters and many councils have no provision for HR.

Whilst WALC can provide some general advice and NALC can provide legal advice this does not address the HR content of the issue raised. Many of the queries require professional advice from qualified HR advisers which WALC does not have.

Some council clerks are members of the Association of Local Council Clerks (ALCC) which is a union for local council employees. This provides support for the clerk as employee.

Some councils have a separate arrangement or contract for HR support services.

Having HR support can make everyone feel safer in this rapid changing environment which brings up issues which may be both complicated and controversial. Impartial advice is invaluable if dealing with an in-house employment issue.

Of course, it is hoped that issues won't arise but to trying to engage HR support at the point of need can be difficult and costly; WALC providing this service for member councils would be an additional benefit of membership at a potentially stressful time.

### **Proposal**

Monahans Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers - <http://www.monahans.co.uk/> provides employment support for businesses. A discussion with Monahans staff led to a proposal for support for WALC member councils.

This proposal will include the local, personal and professional support services including telephone support during office hours, review of HR related documents and HR updates relating to legislation, best practice and comment. It will also include practical advice and discussion and coaching through processes in line with council procedures.

There will also be support for recruitment, disciplinary, grievance, capability, appeal, redundancy, etc. Additional services and bespoke and visits to the council by Monahans' staff will be at the expense of the council concerned.

It is difficult to determine the level of need for member councils as issues arise randomly, some are resolved quickly, whilst others may be longer-term, ongoing matters. We will only be able to determine the level of demand/use if we take up the offer for the first year.

## Costs

Of course, the cost for this support package must be covered by WALC subscriptions. We are unable to separate councils wanting the service and those who don't because it would be too difficult to know how to spread the cost. For this reason, we need to know what our members think.

We want you to tell us if this is something you would like, or not.

The additional cost for the first year (2019-2020) would be an increase of 4% per council on the WALC aspect of the subscription fee ONLY. This does not include the NALC aspect of the subscription and it does not include any other increases which may arise as a result of budgeting.

## The question

Please register your response at the end of this document. It is vital that all member councils respond to this question. We want to give our member councils the best service possible and therefore we need to know your view. We ask that as many councils as possible respond to this question and we will take all responses and comments on board.

This consultation closes at 5pm on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018. Please return responses to Katie Fielding at [kfielding@communityfirst.org.uk](mailto:kfielding@communityfirst.org.uk)

Council Name:		
Do you agree to the 4% increase to the WALC aspect of the subscription to add the HR support package as a benefit of membership (this is separate from any other increase)?		
Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>	
We would welcome your comments. Please add your comments below:		