CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

1 JANUARY 2008

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1. This policy details the arrangements agreed by the Council regarding reporting and attendance procedures for employees during adverse weather conditions.

1.2. This policy is cross-referenced with the following policies of the Council, they are:

- Annual Leave;
- Disciplinary Procedure;
- Flexible Working Hours Scheme;
- Grievance Procedure;
- Leave Of Absence Policy;
- Managing Attendance Procedure;
- Parental Leave Policy.

1.3. This policy is available on the Council's intranet for employees to access. For those employees who do not have intranet access, managers must ensure a paper copy is available on a notice board or at an accessible location for all employees, agency staff and volunteers. To ensure that an up-to-date version of the policy is being followed, managers and employees should refer to the intranet copy of the policy.

1.4. The Caerphilly CBC website has useful advice and guidance for managers and employees regarding which routes within the Authority are salted/gritted and in what priority order and also general guidance regarding winter driving. Home\Your Services\Transport, Roads and Streets\Road and Pathway Maintenance\Winter Maintenance.

1.5 It is a management responsibility to ensure business continuity. Managers should draw up business continuity plans aimed at maintaining essential services in the event of inclement weather and minimal staff attendance. Where there are unforeseen or excessive circumstances the Emergency Planning Department may at that time become involved.

Managers should have early discussions with employees in order to identify who may have difficulty attending work due to inclement weather to ensure suitable plans are in place to deal with any problem should it arise.

Managers may choose to identify which members of their team are essential and non-essential to ensuring business continuity. Managers may allow non-essential staff to remain at home to minimise road traffic, however no compensatory pay/flexi credit should be made.

In devising a business continuity strategy, managers may find it useful to liaise with their colleagues in other Directorates. For example availability of Council drivers to drive hired vehicles, liaising regarding priorities for emergency snow clearing.

1.6 Each Directorate should have a co-ordinated, "joined up" plan. Managers should liaise and be aware of the staffing levels in other areas of the Council, where this impacts on their service levels.

Any plans would include the transfer of DLO/DSO staff from service areas which cannot continue due to adverse weather conditions, to the emergency teams dealing with adverse conditions, such as flooding, snow clearance etc.

2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

2.1. This policy has been agreed with the Trade Unions and will apply to all Council employees, except those school based support/teaching staff for whom the Governing Body sets the local terms and conditions of employment.

Employees who as part of their duties are required to be at work during periods of inclement weather are excluded from these arrangements. As are those identified as essential staff and required to be at work or remain at work to ensure business continuity.

2.2. The Local Education Authority has a separate policy and guidance for schools, which covers the arrangements for closing schools, where the decision to close a school lies with the Head Teacher. This is enclosed at Appendix 1.

The Local Education Authority has developed the policy (Appendix 1) based on the principles contained within the corporate policy. The staff management practices contained in the corporate policy are recommended to Governing Bodies for adoption. Support in managing issues in relation to the subject matter of this policy can only be offered to schools where Local Education Authority recommended policies have been adopted.

2.3. Wherever the designation manager is used throughout this policy, it is taken to mean Head of Service, Line Manager, Supervisor, Officer in Charge, Head Teacher or anyone who has a responsibility for employees through their work.

2.4. The effective date of the policy is 1 January 2008.

3. PROVISIONS OF THE POLICY

General Principles

3.1. During a period of inclement weather the expectation is that employees will attend work.

Employees are responsible for making their own arrangements for travel to and from their designated place of work, and are expected to make all reasonable efforts to do so.

3.2. In the event of adverse weather conditions, as a result of which normal travel arrangements are severely disrupted, employees are required to notify their manager if they are unable to get to work. This should be done within 30 minutes of an employee's normal start time.

DLO/DSO areas should ensure they contact their manager to report their non-attendance, and not their Finance Support Unit.

3.3. Employees must maintain contact with their manager and if weather and road conditions improve so as to enable employees to travel to their normal workplace, then they will be reasonably expected to do so.

3.4. In the case of adverse weather conditions occurring during working hours, employees must not determine any course of action without first discussing the matter with their manager, who will issue advice in line with the Council's Emergency Planning Manager.

3.5. For the purposes of this policy all buildings will be maintained open wherever possible, during normal operating hours and managers will be required to ensure sufficient staff are available to operate, even if this is a "skeleton service".

In the unlikely event of the offices being closed or unable to be opened, then this policy will be viewed and guidance issued by management.

The Council's Emergency Planning Manager will issue weather advice. Where that advice causes concern, but no advice is given for employees to refrain from attending work or leave work early, employees who have caring responsibilities or who anticipate major transport difficulties in getting to or from work may utilise annual leave, flexi-time leave or time in lieu to cover any deficiencies in yours worked.

Employees must have their manager's permission to leave, as business continuity must be maintained. Directorates will also have their own business continuity plans and employees involved in these will be expected to remain at work.

Where employees are working remotely, away from Council sites/buildings managers/supervisors must ensure that they are able to contact their teams and up-date them regarding office closures or instructions to leave work.

3.6. Employees who usually work from home (eg: some area cleansing operatives) or go straight to their area of work or who are picked up on route (some refuse loaders) and who are unable to undertake their normal duties must either report to their Operational Depot for their normal start time (where possible) or contact their Supervisor who may require them to report to any other depot/location as directed.

Where a site closes employees may be directed by their manager to attend at a location, other than their normal place or work or to assist the community within their locality.

Employees must not turn up at another location without being directed to do so by their line manager and this should only occur where prior arrangements have been made with the manager responsible for that site.

3.7. If an employee is sick, and their first day of sickness absence coincides with a period of inclement weather, they will need to produce a medical certificate for the whole of their sickness period.

3.8. During adverse weather conditions the Authority recognises that there are employees who have specific physical or health problems that will cause them difficulty in attending work or remaining in work if weather conditions deteriorate. A register of these individual employees will be compiled by the Authority. Those employees on the register who do not attend work or are sent home will receive a normal day's pay or a credit to their flexi-time if they are on the flexi system.

3.9. Employees must make application to be placed on the register to their Directorate Personnel Department. The individual will then receive a form asking for full details of why they consider they should be placed on the register. The completed form will then be assessed by a panel comprising of the applicant's line manager, Health and Safety Officer, Personnel Office and Trade Union Representative.

3.10. If the employees application to be placed on the register is not successful then they have the right of appeal against the decision to the Head of HR and Development within 14 days of receipt of the decision.

3.11. All other employees who fail to attend work and the Council Offices are open will either be required to take flexi leave, annual leave, work back the time or take leave without pay.

4. REVIEW OF POLICY

4.1. The content of this policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

1 January 2008