

# Single Status Review Manager Guidance 2 – Your responsibilities in supporting employees through change

This document outlines the support you should provide to your employees as we implement Single Status.

## Your role as a manager

Your key responsibilities are as follows:

1. Managing your service and supporting employees through this change.
2. Ensuring your employees have received, and understood, their contract variation letters and encouraging them to return their signed contract by the due date.
3. Contacting people, in a timely manner, who are absent from work because of illness, maternity, annual or unpaid leave or any other reason in order to ensure they receive and understand their letter and what it means for them
4. Discussing personal outcomes and impacts with individuals
5. Helping to clarify points of accuracy on personal information, salary, hours and the application of enhancements and allowances and rectify errors as quickly as possible.
6. Communicating and discussing the Single Status Review with teams and individuals
7. Clarifying when appeals may be made
8. Responding to questions and comments
9. Making sure that if your employees work overtime and/or unsocial hours that you are aware of the new allowances and what the implications are for work patterns from the date of implementation.
10. Advising employees of other forms of support where needed.

## Key points

You may notice negative experiences such as -

Team work may suffer

Loyalty may waiver

Absenteeism may rise

Low morale

Tension between different groups/individuals because of different outcomes

It is important that you and your team continue to focus on work priorities throughout this period of change and maintain stability in order to continue to provide services to our customers.

We know the next few months and beyond will be unsettling and challenging and as a

Manager your role is critical in helping us to implement Single Status. We must continue to deliver efficient services to our customers and try to maintain employee morale.

We recognise it is more difficult for managers if you are adversely affected yourself, and rely on your professionalism to put aside personal impact and help support your team positively through the change. If you have concerns about this, please discuss these with your own manager.

## **Communication**

It is very important that you communicate regularly with your team(s) to give them timely updates, face to face, and that they therefore have the opportunity to talk through their concerns and questions.

As a manager you will be briefed on the key aspects of Single Status to help lead your employees through the changes facing the Council.

Ensure people understand this is a change brought about by the national Single Status Agreement and the need within it to carry out a wholesale job evaluation programme. It is not a change initiated by each department or by managers.

Make sure you are familiar with the changes and consider how they will impact upon your own team(s).

Your team(s) will be interested in - as you will be yourself –

- The changes and what they mean to them
- The timescales for key stages of implementation
- Having the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions
- Having the opportunity to raise queries on a confidential 1 to 1 basis
- Understanding the role of the trades unions
- Their options if they do not agree with the grading of their job

If you're not sure of the answer, please find out through speaking to your own manager, contacting HR or the SSC Helpline.

People at home may feel isolated or may be receiving information on the grapevine. Please make contact with them, confirm that they have received their letter and make arrangements for 1-2-1 meetings as appropriate. Take care to be aware of the reasons why an employee is off work, and be sensitive to personal situations.

It is important that you keep a record of your 1-2-1 meetings with employees. We may be asked to provide records which demonstrate that employees have had the opportunity to ask questions and check their understanding. Note also that employee queries and responses received in the SSC will be logged, in order to maintain an audit trail. The SSC may contact you to provide details in case of employees' queries.

For those of your team who don't have intranet/internet access at work, please make copies of documents available to them.

**You cannot over communicate during a period of change.**

## Supporting employees

A feeling of loss is a normal part of change and if not acknowledged, could lead to resistance and disruption. For example, people may feel a loss of status or respect for the Council. People react to change in different ways but typical stages include: Denial –Anger- Rationalisation - Acceptance

You can support people through these stages:

- Before meeting with them, either collectively or as individuals, make sure you are fully aware of the rationale behind the changes, and what the changes are. Read all the documents that have been made available to you, so that you fully understand the changes. Talk to your departmental HR colleagues if you have any queries.
- Treat people as individuals, they will deal with the change in different ways.
- Be sensitive to those who may not wish to share their thoughts but check that they understand the impact on themselves and that they are aware of the support available from yourself and others, if they need it at any point.
- Confirm that each employee understands the effect of the new changes.
- Remind employees why the changes are taking place
- Explain it's not personal - the changes affect lots of other people
- Allow time for people to understand the information and the impact on them
- Help answer their questions or refer them to the right people
- Understand they may be angry and that this might impact on their work
- Give people space – but don't tolerate any extremes such as violence or aggression
- Make yourself available to people and listen to their concerns
- Ensure you maintain regular team meetings and one to one's
- Don't make promises you can't keep or the Authority can't deliver
- Reassure people as they begin to accept the changes are going to happen
- Actively try to build the team's morale and focus on looking forward not backwards
- Remember that people can find change difficult and painful and therefore some take a long time to adapt to it

## Other support available

Give people information about the confidential counselling service, and financial/legal advice available under the Council's Employee Assistance Programme. Allow them time to obtain support.

Remind people of the Single Status helpline on 01629 535525 or [single.status@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:single.status@derbyshire.gov.uk)

## Support for you

Your departmental HR team will be on hand to support you over the next few months with any employee relations issues that may arise.