

Employee Benefits



Enjoy the benefits of working for



Hull City Council
Workforce Strategy
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Introduction

Welcome to Hull City Council's Employee Benefits Booklet. We provide a range of benefits to motivate, reward and recognise the valuable work of our employees.

This booklet provides information on the range of benefits available to employees, which can help achieve a better balance between the demands of your job and those in your personal life. (School staff should confirm which policies and procedures have been adopted by their School).

One of the fundamental benefits of working for the Council is the job satisfaction you get from working to improve the lives of the local people we serve through the services we provide for them.

The world of work is changing rapidly. The use of new technology and enhanced customer expectations in our 24/7 society, an ageing population and increasing caring responsibilities, create many challenges for both employers and employees. This means that we all need to think about creative ways in which we can "work smarter not harder", ensuring you can give your best at work and still have the time and energy to enjoy a fulfilling personal life. This is equally true for all our employees, not just those who are parents of young children or those with other caring responsibilities, but for everyone, whatever their job role or personal circumstances

Employee Development

Hull City Council recognises that employees are its most valuable asset and is committed to the development of a culture in which all staff are supported and valued for their contribution to its priorities, aims and objectives. Learning

and Development is an essential component of working for the Council, ensuring both the individual's and the organisation's ability to function effectively. Every job changes over time and there is a constant need to acquire and develop new skills, knowledge and experience, enabling employees to maximise their potential and the contribution they can make at work.

Employee development encompasses a whole variety of activities, not just training courses or qualifications, ranging from on-the-job training to secondments, in-house development, external training courses and workshops, networking and research. Individual development needs are formally assessed at different points during an employee's career, starting with induction then supervision/1:1s and at least twice annually through the Personal Performance and Development Process.

Personal Performance and Development

Personal development for all employees

What is it?

A scheme to enable employees to have a clear focus of what is expected of them in their job and to develop the skills needed to perform at their highest level.

It provides a fair and equitable framework of opportunity for agreeing personal targets and determining individual learning and development needs which contribute to achieving the team and service area priorities.

Learning and Development provision

Internally run sessions for your development

What is it?

Training courses and solutions developed by the Learning & Development Team to satisfy your development needs.

Qualification Courses

Providing financial assistance and time off for academic study

What is it?

Employees who are following an approved course of academic study, with the support of their Service Area, may be given time off with pay to attend examinations.

Health and Well-being

The health and well-being of employees is of great importance to ensure a healthy and safe working environment for all. A range of services are provided which are designed to prevent, or minimise, the risk of illness or injury occurring. These include ensuring that good quality advice and support is available so that the health of staff is not adversely affected by the work they do, as well as providing rehabilitation opportunities for employees who do experience illness or disability, enabling them to recover and return to work. Other facilities are also available to encourage and support healthy lifestyles both at and outside work.

Well-being

Helping you acknowledge the signs of stress

What is it?

The Council is committed to promoting a healthy and supportive working environment. The Council believes that its people are its most important asset and that their well-being is essential to

effective work performance and the provision of high quality services.

To help employees cope with and manage difficult and challenging situations at work our Learning & Development Team run a number of employee development workshops. These include:

- Stress Awareness - for Employees;
- Managing Stress at Work – for Managers;
- Dealing with Difficult / Challenging Situations;
- Dealing with Change.

Occupational Health & Safety Services

Keeping you safe and healthy at work

What is it?

The service aims to promote and maintain the health and well being of staff and is concerned with the effects of work on health. It provides:

Assessment of pre-employment health questionnaires to establish medical fitness for employment;

Formal assessment of employees following management referral to assess the short and long term implications of health / work related issues;

Consultations with individual employees on issues involving the effects of work on health;

Health Surveillance that may be required for those considered to be at risk as identified by assessment;

Medical examinations required for employees where health standards exist specific to their occupation.

Independent Counselling Service

Helping you in difficult times

What is it?

A confidential counselling service to provide help and support to employees in times of work and/or personal difficulties. This may be because of: relationship difficulties; bereavement or other trauma; stress, anxiety or depression; redundancy; retirement or other difficult circumstances. Up to five free counselling sessions are available, at a time to suit you.

VDU Eyesight Test

Taking care of your eyesight

What is it?

Under the Health and Safety Display Screen Equipment (DSE) Regulations, the Council is required to provide a free eye test to recognised DSE users who request them. Where a special prescription solely for the use of DSE is required the Council will meet the cost of basic spectacles in accordance with the 'Rates of Allowances and Payments'.

Healthcare payment scheme

Helping you with healthcare costs

What is it?

The Health Scheme from BHSF, a scheme which deducts a monthly subscription from your salary which makes a contribution towards meeting some of your health care costs, for

example, dental costs, overnight stays in hospital and eye care. The costs of membership are met in full by the employee.

Sports and Recreation

Health and fitness facilities

A range of excellent health and fitness facilities, supported by professional staff, are available for all Council employees at any of the Council owned facilities at a discounted rate payable in monthly payments.

"No Smoking" Environment

Smoke free environment

What is it?

The Council operates a smoke-free working environment as the Council has a "no smoking" at work policy.

Embracing Diversity and Promoting Equality

Hull City Council is committed to supporting diversity and equal opportunities. We are fully committed to creating a stimulating and supportive learning and working environment based on mutual respect and trust to assist employees reach their full potential, regardless of age, disability, gender, ethnicity, faith or belief, sexual orientation or any other unjustifiable reason.

We respect and value diversity within the workforce and will promote equality of opportunity and challenge and strive to eliminate unlawful discrimination.

The Council acknowledges the special role of Local Authorities in promoting

equality of opportunity and furthering social inclusion. All employees have rights and responsibilities in relation to the promotion of equality of opportunity, as acknowledged by the Equal Opportunities in Employment Policy and Guidelines.

Equalities Focus Groups

What are they?

Groups of employees who meet in safe environments to discuss issues, and share information and ideas in order to further develop equality and diversity within the Council.

At present there are seven groups:

- Age
- Male
- Female
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans (LGBT)
- Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)
- Disability
- Faith and Belief

The aim of these focus groups is to consult with employees and get their opinions on how the Council can improve existing practices and work towards removing any identified barriers affecting employees from minority groups to make a contribution to the positive changes taking place within the Council.

Flexible Working

Helping you balance your working and personal life

What is it?

Different types of flexible working are available, options include:

- part-time working: working less than the standard full-time hours for your

job;

- term-time only working where the employee does not work for all or part of the school/academic holidays;
- compressed hours, i.e. 9 day fortnight;

Home-working

Enabling you to work from home

What is it?

Many of the responsibilities undertaken by employees do not have to be performed exclusively on Hull City Council premises. Increasing difficulties travelling to work, balancing work and domestic responsibilities and pressure on accommodation make the possibility of working from home an attractive proposition.

Annual Leave

Your holiday entitlement

What is it?

Annual leave is to be taken by mutual agreement between employees and those delegated by Heads of Service to authorise leave, except in services where there is already an agreement that holidays are taken during particular periods.

Our current annual leave provision is competitive and ranges from an initial 20 to 29 days dependant on the grade of the post. Additional days are awarded after 5 years service, a further additional entitlement is also awarded after 10 years service as a reward for loyalty.

In addition there are 8 statutory public holidays, 2 extra statutory public holidays and also a concessionary day during the Christmas period.

Family Leave

Providing time off work to deal with caring responsibilities and difficult personal circumstances

What is it?

Hull City Council is strongly committed to enabling employees, both female and male, who have parental and other caring responsibilities to enable these to be combined with their working lives and to provide a range of support to assist them in managing all their commitments effectively. There are also occasions when employees may need time off work for compassionate reasons and it may not be appropriate or practical to use annual leave for this purpose. Heads of Service have discretion to agree a short period of leave, which may be paid or unpaid depending on the individual circumstances.

Career Break

Up to 2 years' unpaid absence from work

What is it?

The Career Break Scheme enables an employee to take one period of up to 2 years' unpaid absence from work, with the option of returning to work and continuing in the same or similar post.

Maternity Scheme

Entitlements for expectant parents

What is it?

A period of leave from work both prior to and following the birth of a child, and provision for payments to be made for all or some of this period, dependant on the duration of leave taken.

Paternity Leave

Entitlements for partners of new mothers

What is it?

A period of two weeks consecutive Paternity Leave to be taken within eight weeks of the baby's birth.

Week 1 paid at basic salary, with week 2 paid at the national rate of Statutory Paternity Pay.

Statutory Paternity Pay: for employees who are eligible for paternity leave and who earn at least as much as the lower earnings rate for National Insurance contributions.

Adoption Leave

Entitlements for adoptive parents

What is it?

Paid leave for eligible employees when they have been matched with a child for adoption by an approved adoption agency.

Parental Leave

Entitlements for parents

What is it?

The ability for an employee, who has, or is expecting to have responsibility for a child, to take up to 13 weeks' unpaid absence from work, during the first 8 years of the child's life, for the purpose of caring for, bonding with, or simply being with that child. In the case of a child with a disability (i.e. one for whom a disability living allowance is provided) the period of parental leave is increased to a maximum of 26 weeks, which may be taken at any time during the first 18 years of the child's life.

Miscellaneous Leave

Framework for time off provisions not covered in existing separate policies

What is it?

Although it is not intended to cater for every single eventuality, this policy provides a framework for time off provisions not covered in existing separate policies.

Travel to Work and other Staff Benefits

Hull City Council offers certain benefits to assist employees with their travel to work arrangements and other purchases, potentially making financial savings, along with role specific allowances.

Allowances – Auto-cycle and Cycle

An allowance for authorised users of auto-cycles or cycles in connection with their duties

Where applicable and subject to approval we offer:

- Auto-cycle allowance
- Cycle allowance
- Load Allowance
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Childcare Voucher Scheme

Helping with the costs of childcare

Recognising the costs that many working parents face when making childcare arrangements Hull City Council has put in place a child care voucher scheme which offers financial savings and enables payments to carers to be made more easily.

Car Allowances

Assistance with work-related travel

Where applicable and subject to approval we offer:

- Casual or essential user car allowances
- Assisted vehicle purchase
- Car leasing

Car Park Passes

Helping you reduce the cost of your journey to work

What is it?

Employee concessionary car parks pass for use within Hull City Council long-stay facilities.

Easy Payment System

Easy options for specific payments

What is it?

The ability for certain payments to be deducted directly from your salary. For example, council tax instalments, HCC housing rent, trade union subscription and charitable donations, among others.

Employee Long Service Awards

Recognising loyalty

What is it?

The Long Service Award Scheme is established to provide a material acknowledgement and expression of appreciation, on the part of the City Council, for loyalty and long service by employees. The scheme is simply an additional means of reinforcing the City

Council's sincere belief that employees are the greatest asset available to the organisation.

Hull & East Yorkshire Credit Union

Providing financial services, savings and loans to employees and local residents

What is it?

A financial organisation run by its members for the purpose of providing banking facilities, savings schemes and affordable loans. H&EYCU is regulated by the Financial Services Authority.

Occupational Pension Scheme

Financial planning for retirement

What is it?

A final salary pension scheme, with lump sum and annual pension on retirement, as well as a range of other benefits, including provision for early retirement on health grounds, early retirement in certain other circumstances, death-in-service and partner benefits. Employee and employer contributions are paid into either the Teachers Pension Scheme or Local Government Pension Scheme. Employees may make Additional Voluntary Contributions into these schemes.

Removal and Re-location Expenses

Financial assistance for re-location

What is it?

A scheme to offer an incentive to recruit employees from other areas by providing financial assistance with expenses incurred in moving to the area.

Theatres & Halls

Special discount for selected performances at Hull City Hall and Hull New Theatre

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What is it?

From time to time discounts are available for certain performance tickets at both the City Hall and New Theatre.

Registered members on the mailing list receive early notification of special discounted rate performances.

Trade Union Membership

Employment representation and advice

What is it?

An organised group of workers who pay a monthly subscription to their chosen Union. A union negotiates agreements with employers on pay and conditions, and also provides legal and financial advice, sickness benefits and education facilities to its members