

Committee: Corporate Services Committee – For decision	Dated: 30 May 2022
Subject: Special Leave Policy: Paid Leave for Reservists for Training or Voluntary Service	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation’s Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	3, 8
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain’s Department?	Y/N
Report of: Emma Moore, Chief Operating Officer	For Decision
Report author: Colette Hawkins, Town Clerks	

Summary

The City of London Corporation is a signatory of the Armed Forces Community Covenant which is a promise from the nation ensuring that people who serve (or have served) in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly. The City Corporation is also a Gold Award holder of the Ministry of Defence’s Employer Recognition Scheme. To maintain this accreditation as an employer we are required to meet a set of criteria which demonstrate our forces-friendly credentials.

The City Corporation already promotes job opportunities with organisations which support ex-forces personnel and will include reference to any increased provisions approved by members in our recruitment information.

Reservists are required to undertake a significant amount of training each year, most of which is undertaken in their own time. The City Corporation currently provides 10 days paid leave, each leave year, which covers the annual training camp. However, it is proposed to increase the number of days paid leave a reservist can claim to 15 days, each leave year, this will put the City Corporation in line with the City of London Police (for Police Officers), the Metropolitan Police Service and the Civil Service. A guidance document for employees and their managers has been produced detailing the support the City Corporation provides for reservists and the information managers require.

By enhancing our employee policy, it will highlight our recognition of the valuable contributions reservists make not only to our Armed Forces, but also to the City Corporation.

Recommendations

Members are asked to:

- Approve the increase of paid leave days for employees who are members of the reserve forces to attend training to 15 days (per leave year), from 10 days
- Approve the amendment to the number of paid leave days stated within the Special Leave Policy and the inclusion of the reservist guidance
- If the above recommendations are approved the provisions will be communicated to all staff on Reserves Day - 22 June 2022

Main Report

Background

1. Members of the reserve forces are typically required to commit to 19 - 27 days training per year depending on which Service they belong to and any specialist skills with an average training requirement for 24 – 40 days. Training tends to take place 1 evening per week, over various weekends throughout the year and one 2-week continuous training period, known as 'annual camp'.
2. The City of London's Special Leave Policy provides employees who are a member of the reserve forces with 10 days paid leave (per leave year) in addition to their normal annual leave entitlement to attend the annual training camp.

Current Position

3. In November 2013 the then Lord Mayor Dame Fiona Woolf CBE signed the Armed Forces Community Covenant on behalf of the City of London Corporation. The Armed Forces Community Covenant is a promise from the nation ensuring people who serve (or have served) in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly.
4. The City Corporation is a Gold Award holder as part of the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme. To maintain gold accreditation there is a set of criteria which the organisation needs to meet including:
 - ensuring that staff are aware of the employee policies that support them as members of a reserve force;
 - providing at least 10 days' paid additional leave for reservist employees to attend training;
 - proactively demonstrate our forces-friendly credentials as part of our recruitment processes.
5. Currently within the City Corporation there are 8 employees who have advised they are a member of the reserve forces (excluding City of London Police officers).

6. The City of London Police are in the process of applying to join the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme and as part of their submission they are providing an allowance for Police Officers who are a member of the reserve forces with 15 days paid leave for training (per leave year). This will align their policy to the Metropolitan Police Service and the Civil Service.

Proposals

7. For the City Corporation to continue to maintain gold accreditation the following proposals are recommended to enhance our current employee policy for members of the reserve forces.
8. To support employees who are members of the reserve forces and their managers during the COVID-19 pandemic a separate guide was developed covering: the actions employees are required to undertake in relation to reservist duties; guidance for managers on how to manage reservists and requests for time off for training; and guidance and actions for when a reservist is mobilised, demobilised and returns to work. It is recommended that this guide is attached as an appendix to the Special Leave Policy (Appendix 1).
9. As part of the recruitment process, job roles are advertised through a number of organisations, including those working with ex-forces personnel, along with media relevant to the role. Information on any increased provisions approved by members will be referenced in recruitment information to encourage ex-armed forces personnel to join the City Corporation.
10. Reservists are required to undertake training every year, typically this is up to 27 days. However, for those required to undertake specialist skills training this can be up to 40 days. Most of this training is completed within their own time.
11. The City Corporation's special leave policy already provides 10 days paid leave per year for reservists to attend their annual camp. It is proposed to increase this to 15 days paid leave per leave. This would cover the 10 days annual camp, the additional 5 days paid leave would be used to attend other training days they are required to attend each year. Any additional time required above this will continue to be taken from the employee's annual leave entitlement.
12. By increasing the entitlement to 15 days per leave year it would allow staff employed at the City Corporation to match arrangements provided to City of London Police Officers, ensuring consistency of approach across the wider organisation. It will also bring our provisions in line with the Civil Service and Metropolitan Police Service.
13. If the proposals are agreed, it is recommended that these are communicated to all staff on Reserves Day, which is on 22 June 2022, to highlight to staff that we recognise the valuable contribution reservists make to the City Corporation.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

Strategic implications – These proposals support the delivery of the Corporate Plan by ensuring employees have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential. These proposals will also be used to promote the City Corporation as an employer of choice for members of the reserve forces. It also supports the Responsible Business Strategy and our continued accreditation as a gold award holder under the Ministry of Defence's Employer Recognition Scheme. The proposals are supported by the Remembrancer.

Financial implications – There are 8 employees who are members of the reserve forces currently within the City Corporation, as such the additional 5 days paid leave each year will be minimal to the organisation and will continue to be met by departments as all special leave is paid for.

Resource implications – Leave will be managed on a departmental basis as currently.

Legal implications – None

Risk implications – None

Equalities implications – The proposals within this report have no impact on people protected by existing equality legislation as the provisions for reservists in the Special Leave Policy apply to all employees who are members of the reserve forces.

Climate implications - None

Security implications - None

Conclusion

14. By enhancing our current special leave provisions for employees who are members of the reserve forces we are demonstrating to them that we value the skills that this voluntary role brings to the City Corporation.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Reservist Guidance

Background Papers

- Test of Relevance – Special Leave Policy: Reservists
- [City of London Armed Forces Community Covenant](#)
- [Defence Employer Recognition Scheme](#)

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