

**Report to:** Governance Committee  
**Date of meeting:** 7 November 2023  
**By:** Chief Operating Officer  
**Title:** Employee loans for visa fees  
**Purpose:** To seek the Governance Committee's agreement to increase the limit for employee loans related to visa fees

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Governance Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Agree that the limit for employee loans related to visa fees is increased from £2,000 to £3,000**
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### 1 Background

- 1.1 As the Governance Committee may recall, the Council operates an employee loan scheme, under which employees can take out loans for various work-related purposes. In September 2022, the Committee agreed expanding the loan scheme to include loans for visa application fees (the link to the report can be found [here](#)).
- 1.2 Under the loan scheme, the current limit for visa application loans is £2,000. However, the government has now increased the application fee for a number of different types of visa by 5-15%, and has also announced that the accompanying NHS immigration surcharge will increase from £624 a year to £1,035 per year in 2024.
- 1.3 The exact cost of a visa application varies depending on the specific application category the individual applies under. However, under the new fee structure, a typical ESCC recruit applying for a Skilled Worker visa will pay £2,535 for their first visa application - £1,500 for the visa itself and an additional £1,035 for the NHS immigration surcharge.
- 1.4 On this basis, it's recommended that the limit for visa applications is increased to £3,000 – this would cover the fee increase as well as allowing some leeway for potential future fee increases, or additional fees such as those for travel documents or status confirmation letters where applicable. As always, employees would need to cover the initial cost of the application, providing receipts as evidence of expenditure, with any outstanding debt recovered in the event that the employee leaves.

### 2 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 2.1 The Governance Committee is recommended to agree that the limit for employee loans related to visa fees is increased from £2,000 to £3,000.

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