

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
THURSDAY, 5 JULY 2007 AT 5.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor D A A Peek (Chairman).
Councillors Mrs D Hone, M P A McMullen,
P A Ruffles, S Rutland-Barsby, C Woodward.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor J O Ranger.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Helen Farrell	- Human Resources Officer
Judith Fear	- Interim Head of People and Organisational Services
Jeff Hughes	- Head of Democratic Services

118 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor M Wood.

RECOMMENDED ITEM

ACTION

119 **CHRISTMAS EVE 2007**

The Committee noted that the Local Joint Panel, meeting on 20 June 2007, had agreed to recommend it to consider the Staff Side request to close Council offices on 24 December 2007.

The Committee noted the basis for the Staff Side's request and also comments from the Interim Head of People and Organisational Services in relation to

ACTION

consequential operational matters.

The Committee agreed to recommend that Council offices be kept open.

RECOMMENDED - that Council offices be kept open on Monday, 24 December 2007.

(Note: Also see Minute 124 below)

RESOLVED ITEMS120 MINUTES

The Committee noted a typographical error in the title of the Minutes of its meeting held on 25 January 2007. The title incorrectly detailed the commencement time of the meeting as 7.30 pm rather than 5.00 pm. The Committee agreed to confirm the Minutes of its meeting held on 25 January 2007 as a correct record subject to the correction to the commencement time as now detailed.

The Committee noted also that the meeting in January 2007 was the last attended by Tina Nash, the Council's Head of People and Organisation Service, who had died tragically at the end of February 2007. The Committee expressed its appreciation of the work undertaken by Tina for the Authority and expressed its sadness at her untimely death.

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 25 January 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to an amendment to the title to detail that the meeting commenced at "5.00 pm" rather than "7.30 pm".

ACTION121 TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report setting out the terms of reference of the Human Resources Committee. The Head of Democratic Services also detailed the schedule of meetings of the Committee for the remainder of the current civic year.

In response to a query from a Member, the Committee noted that its meeting in April 2008 would be held on the 24th day of that month and not the 25th day as detailed in the report.

The Committee agreed to receive the report.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

122 ANTI-FRAUD AND CORRUPTION STRATEGY AND CONFIDENTIAL REPORTING CODE

The Leader of the Council submitted a report inviting the Committee to consider and approve the following revised policies:

- Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy;
- Confidential Reporting Code.

The Committee noted that both of the policies had been supported by the Local Joint Panel meeting on 20 June 2007. Each revised policy was appended to the report now submitted.

In response to comments from Members, the Interim Head of People and Organisational Services:

- undertook to consider, and if appropriate clarify, the relationship between the confidential reporting

ACTION

provisions insofar as they related to Members and their Code of Conduct;

- confirmed that, under the Confidential Reporting Code, there was a duty on officers to “blow the whistle” in the prescribed circumstances and that failure to do so could in certain circumstances be a disciplinary matter;
- undertook to investigate alternative personal checking sources, for example voluntary police checks, in the context of recruitment processes; and
- undertook to ensure employees were made aware of any communication monitoring measures if introduced by the Authority.

The Committee supported the Leader’s recommendation that the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and Confidential Reporting Code be approved and adopted.

RESOLVED - that the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Strategy and Confidential Reporting Code, appended to the report now submitted, be approved and adopted.

IHPOS

123 SMOKE FREE WORKPLACE POLICY 2007; ALCOHOL, DRUG AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY 2007; MANAGING VIOLENCE AND AGRESSION POLICY 2007 AND MANAGING THE CRIMINAL RECORD BUREAU PROCESS POLICY 2007

The Interim Head of People and Organisational Services submitted a report inviting the Committee to consider and approve the following policies:-

- Smoke Free Workplace Policy 2007;
- Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy 2007;

ACTION

- Managing Violence and Aggression Policy 2007; and
- Managing the Criminal Record Bureau Process Policy 2007.

The Committee noted that all of the foregoing policies had been supported by the Local Joint Panel meeting held on the 20 June 2007.

The Committee further noted that in relation to the Managing the Criminal Record Bureau Process Policy, the Local Joint Panel had recommended an amendment seeking the inclusion of contact details for the Local Employers' Organisation as a source of additional advice where necessary. The version of this policy appended to the report now submitted incorporated the Local Joint Panel's suggested amendment.

In relation to the Smoke Free Workplace Policy, the Committee agreed to amend the first sentence in the fourth paragraph of the narrative by deleting the phrase "by smoking in unauthorised areas". The Committee considered this phrase to be unnecessary.

In relation to the Managing Violence and Aggression Policy, the Committee noted that the policy applied to officers who would be expected to act in accordance with its provisions at meetings of the Authority. The Committee noted that appropriate training on this subject also needed to be provided for Members, particularly those chairing meetings.

In response to comments from Members, the Interim Head of People and Organisational Services undertook to inform staff of further sources of advice they may access under this policy.

In relation to the Managing the Criminal Record Bureau Process Policy, the Committee supported a Member's suggestion that it should include reference to other sources

ACTION

of record checks for individuals.

The Committee agreed that the policies be approved and adopted subject to the amendments now detailed.

RESOLVED - that the following policies be approved and adopted subject to the amendments now detailed:-

IHPOS

- Smoke Free Workplace Policy 2007;
- Alcohol, Drug and Substance Misuse Policy 2007;
- Managing Violence and Aggression Policy 2007; and
- Managing the Criminal Record Bureau Process Policy 2007.

124 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES: 20 JUNE 2007

The Committee noted the Local Joint Panel recommendations in relation to revised Human Resources Policies made at its meeting held on the 20 June 2007 (Minutes 1 and 2 refer).

The Committee had considered the recommendations concerning the revised policies earlier during the meeting (Minutes 5 and 6 above refer).

The Committee considered the Panel's recommendation in relation to the Staff Side suggestion to close the Council Offices on Monday 24 December 2007. (See Minute 2 above)

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting of the Local Joint Panel held on 20 June 2007 be received.

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The meeting closed at 6.45 pm.

Chairman
Date

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