

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
THURSDAY, 25 OCTOBER 2007,
AT 5.30 PM

PRESENT: Councillor D A A Peek (Chairman).
Councillors Mrs D Hone, M P A McMullen,
J O Ranger (as substitute for Councillor
P A Ruffles), S Rutland-Barsby, M Wood,
C Woodward.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Shona Gray	- Principal Human Resources Officer
Judith Fear	- Interim Head of People and Organisational Services
Philip Hamberger	- Director of Internal Services
Jeff Hughes	- Head of Democratic Services

333 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor P A Ruffles. It was noted that Councillor J O Ranger was substituting for him.

334 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman drew Members' attention to a report circulated separately from the agenda for the meeting entitled "Recruitment". He stated that he had agreed to consider the report as an item of urgent business in order to prevent undue delay in securing a financially beneficial position for the Council.

ACTION

The Chairman welcomed to the meeting the Council's Director of Internal Services, Philip Hamberger. The Chairman stated that the Director would be the Committee's "lead officer".

The Chairman invited the Committee to consider what, if any, further information it would like to receive to enable it to perform its functions.

The Committee identified the following areas that should be the subject of regular report:

- Employees salary negotiations;
- Staff sickness/attendance statistics.

The Committee welcomed Councillor Ranger's undertaking to report regularly on matters discussed regionally and nationally arising from his membership of the Regional Employer's Panel.

ACTIONRESOLVED ITEMS335 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 5 July 2007 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

336 CODE OF CONDUCT FOR OFFICERS

The Interim Head of People and Organisational Services submitted a report inviting the Committee to consider and approve a revised Code of Conduct for Officers.

ACTION

The Committee noted the background to the revised code as detailed in the report now submitted.

The draft revised Code had been the subject of staff consultation. Staff feedback on the revised Code had been reported to the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 10 October 2007. The Panel, in supporting the revised Code, drew a number of points, as now advised, to the Council’s Monitoring Officer for consideration. The Committee noted that no further staff representations had been received since the Local Joint Panel meeting.

The Committee agreed to approve the revised Code of Conduct for Officers subject to any minor amendments deemed necessary by the Monitoring Officer after consideration of the points detailed in the report now submitted. The Committee further agreed that training should be provided for all employees on the revised Code as part of the implementation plan.

RESOLVED - that (A) the revised Code of Conduct for Officers be approved subject to any minor amendments deemed necessary by the Monitoring Officer after consideration of the points detailed in the report now submitted, and

DIS

(B) training be provided for all employees on the revised Code of Conduct for Officers as part of the implementation plan

DIS

337 PEOPLE AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
POLICY SCHEDULE

The Interim Head of People and Organisational Development submitted a report detailing a schedule for reviewing Council human resources policies.

The Committee noted that the introduction of new legislation was a key driver for human resources policy development. Appended to the report now submitted was

ACTION

a list of human resources legislation, both recent and proposed. Most of the existing legislation had been reflected in new or revised Council staff policies. Likely future legislation indicated that the areas of maternity/paternity provision and pensions would continue to be key points of focus.

The Committee noted the proposed schedule for Council human resources policies to be developed or reviewed over the next 12 months.

Councillor J O Ranger commented that legislation relating to minimum statutory holiday entitlement was inclusive of public holidays.

The Interim Head highlighted the need for organisations and individuals to be aware of the implications of legislation relating to corporate manslaughter.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

338 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES: 10 OCTOBER 2007

The Committee noted the Local Joint Panel recommendations in relation to the matters detailed below made at its meeting held on the 10 October 2007 (Minutes 14, 15 and 16 refer):

- Code of Conduct for Officers
- Monitoring of Appeals
- Christmas Eve 2007.

The Committee had considered the recommendations concerning the Code of Conduct for Officers earlier during the meeting (Minute 336 above refers).

The Committee noted the Panel's recommendation in relation to the Staff Side suggestion to close the Council

ACTION

Offices on Monday 24 December 2007. The Interim Head of People and Organisational Development tabled information on what other District and County Council arrangements were over the Christmas period.

The Committee recalled that Council had previously resolved to keep Council offices open on 24 December 2007.

The Committee confirmed its support for the Council's decision on this matter.

The Committee agreed not to adopt the Panel's recommendation on the Monitoring of Appeals. Rather, it welcomed Officer confirmation that statistics on appeals heard by the Chief Executive on grievance and disciplinary matters would be reported to future Human Resources Committee meetings.

RESOLVED - that (A) the Minutes of the meeting of the Local Joint Panel held on 10 October 2007 be received;

(B) the Committee's support for the Council's decision to keep Council offices open on 24 December 2007 be confirmed, and

(C) the Panel's recommendation on the Monitoring of Appeals be not adopted and Officer confirmation that statistics on appeals heard by the Chief Executive on grievance and disciplinary matters would be reported to future Human Resources Committee meetings, be welcomed.

339 RECRUITMENT

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on a proposal to enter into a shared recruitment service with Hertfordshire County Council and Manpower PLC.

ACTION

The Committee noted the potential benefits of such a shared recruitment vehicle and the expectation that it would generate a saving compared with current costs.

The Committee commented that it would expect any recruitment agreement to afford the Council flexibility in determining sources of recruitment. It further felt that Council needed to consider its use of agency staff and ensure that such staff were obtained at the lowest possible rates.

The Interim Head of People and Organisational Development noted the Committee’s views on this matter and confirmed they would be taken into consideration as part of the investigatory process to determine the provision of recruitment services.

The Committee agreed that the possibility of entering into an agreement with the County Council and Manpower PLC for the provision of recruitment services for the Council should be investigated. Further, if suitable terms could be agreed, it felt that the Executive should be requested to consider authorising an agreement.

RESOLVED – that (A) the possibility of entering into an agreement with the County Council and Manpower PLC for the provision of recruitment services for the Council be investigated, and

DIS/DNS

(B) if suitable terms can be agreed, then the Executive be requested to consider authorising an agreement as described in (A) above.

DIS/DNS

The meeting closed at 6.23 pm.

Chairman
Date