

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
THURSDAY 24 APRIL 2008 AT
4.30 PM

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

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Committee Secretary
Helen Farrell	- HR Training and Development
Shona Gray	- Acting Head of People and Organisational Services
Philip Hamberger	- Director of Internal Services

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Jane Sharp	- (UNISON)
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665 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman commented that a new Head of People and Organisational Development, Emma Freeman, would be in post from 6 May 2008. The Chairman on behalf of Members, thanked Shona Gray for her help and professionalism on keeping him up to date on HR matters. He thanked Members for their hard work during the year.

666 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor C Woodward.

ACTIONRESOLVED ITEMS667 MINUTES

Councillor P A Ruffles commented that on the issue of training (Minute 445) people learn in a variety of different ways regardless of IQ, age and experience.

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 1 January 2008 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

668 INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

The Director of Internal Services commented that the Council was awaiting the final draft report from the Assessor. During the Assessor's visit earlier in the year, 50 staff had been interviewed at random. Feedback so far, was that the Council would retain the award but that there were one or two areas which needed to be addressed. The Assessor was impressed by the Chief Executive's and the Council's commitment to transparency. A report would be submitted to a future Human Resources meeting.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be noted; and

(B) that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

DIS

669 HR PEER REVIEW ACTION PLAN – QUARTERLY UPDATE

The Acting Head of People and Organisational Development submitted a report updating Members on the actions completed within the Action Plan which addressed areas for improvement. As a number of actions had been completed, the Acting Head of People and Organisational Development requested that the Action Plan be updated as

ACTION

a result.

Councillor J O Ranger raised the question of leadership training and how this was progressing. The Acting Head explained that the first tranche of training had been completed. The second tranche of training would commence shortly and a number of “rising stars” within middle management had been identified to benefit from this training.

The Director of Internal Services commented that the Investors in People (IIP) process had identified this as an issue for middle managers.

Councillor J O Ranger questioned what other training was being provided to all staff. Officers advised that a programme was being developed. The Director of Internal Services commented that Officers were trying to ensure that the development programme matched the needs at different levels of the organisation. Further work was also needed on equality and diversity before attempting assessment at Level 3.

Councillor J O Ranger sought clarification on the PDRS process. He stressed the need for the Council to become a learning and training Council. He commented that training should be for all staff and that it was important for staff to feel positive about training and change. Funding could be secured for basic training needs. The Director of Internal Services commented that the work was nearing completion. He commented that there had been issues concerning the translation of targets to match the overall objectives of the Council. A roll out was being piloted.

It was noted that an Annual Training Plan was produced which was directly linked to the PDRS process.

RESOLVED – that the Action Plan as amended, be received.

ACTION670 SCHEDULE FOR REVIEW / DEVELOPMENT OF HR POLICIES

The Acting Head of People and Organisational Development submitted a report on the work-plan for reviewing Human Resources Policies. It was noted that a number of policies had been developed over the past 12 months but that there was still some to be completed. She commented that in relation to travel and substance, further information was contained in the minutes of Local joint Panel held on 9 April 2008.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be noted.

671 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (LGPS) – UPDATE

The Acting Head of People and Organisational Development submitted a report on the changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme. The changes had undergone extensive consultation and had been widely publicised. It was noted that some aspects had yet to be settled ie ill health benefits and drawing part of a pension as cash.

Councillor J O ranger commented on possible concerns of new staff who might question contributing to the scheme when the Government could make deductions at the end.

Jane Sharp (UNISON) commented that some contributions to the pension scheme had increased considerably. She commented that she hoped employers would take this into account in considering the new pay claim. On the whole UNISON was please with the scheme apart from one or two areas.

The Committee noted the changes to the new LGPS.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

ACTION672 HUMAN RESOURCES EVENT - UPDATE

Following a request from the Chairman, the Acting Head of People and Organisational Development submitted a report on the work of the Human Resources Team. The report would be submitted to each Committee.

Councillor J O Ranger commented on the efficiency of partnership working. Concerns were expressed that some joint working arrangements might not work well with the Council's Local Government style. An event would be hosted to consider all forms of partnership agreements shortly. This would be circulated when a date had been agreed.

The Committee welcomed the report.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be noted; and

(B) updates be provided to each Committee. DIS

673 EYE TESTS

The Committee considered and supported the recommendations of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 9 April 2008 on eye tests.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Accor voucher scheme be introduced; DIS

(B) voucher contributions in the sum of £70 for single lenses and £100 for varifocals be supported; and DIS

(C) the scheme be reviewed regularly to ensure that prices are kept in line with inflation. DIS

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674 DISTURBANCE ALLOWANCE SCHEME

The Committee considered and supported the recommendations of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 9 April 2008 on the Disturbance Allowance scheme.

RESOLVED – that the revised Disturbance Allowance Scheme as now submitted, be approved and adopted.

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675 JOB EVALUATION PROTOCOL, PROCEDURE AND APPEAL PROCESS, HAY EVALUATION SCHEME JANUARY 2008

The Committee considered and supported the recommendations of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 9 April 2008 on the Hay Evaluation scheme.

RESOLVED – that the Policy as amended, be approved and adopted.

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676 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES: 9 APRIL 2008

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting of the Local Joint Panel held on 9 April 2008 be received.

(see also Minutes 673 – 675 above)

The meeting closed at 5.20 pm.

Chairman
Date