

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 7 JANUARY 2009 AT
3.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor D A A Peek (Chairman).
Councillors J Demonti, J Mayes, J O Ranger,
S Rutland-Barsby, C Woodward.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Committee Secretary
Emma Freeman	- Head of People and Organisational Services
Philip Hamberger	- Programme Director of Change
Mekhola Ray	- Community Projects Team Leader
George A Robertson	- Director of Customer and Community Services

500 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor M Wood.

RESOLVED ITEMS

501 MINUTES

In respect of Minute 339 - All Staff Email Facility, the Committee agreed that the Minute be amended to reflect the fact that Human Resources Committee had endorsed the views of the Local Joint Panel for the reinstatement of the facility on the basis that this be used for disseminating information for the business benefit of the Council.

ACTION

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 15 October 2008, as amended, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

502 DEVELOPING THE COUNCIL'S EQUALITIES AGENDA

The Committee noted that the Local Joint Panel, meeting on 15 October 2008, had agreed to recommend that their comments be forwarded to Human Resources Committee and requested that they be incorporated within the new policies and framework. The report now submitted, asked Members to consider workforce related issues contained in the new policy framework on the pages identified. The Officer leading on the Policy was introduced.

The Director of Customer and Community Services commented that equalities had changed substantially over the years and although the Council had undertaken a considerable amount of work in the past, the focus was now on equality of service delivery. To keep abreast of legislation, there was a need to adopt a systematic approach to equalities issues. A number of the Council's policies needed to be replaced with a Comprehensive Corporate Equality Policy, Scheme and supporting Action Plan. The Action Plan attached to the report now submitted set out what needed to be achieved during the first year.

The Director commented on the substantial amount of assessment work which needed to be undertaken on how the Council delivered its services to make them accessible to all sections of the community.

The Director welcomed comments from Members on any workforce related matters on the pages identified within the report now submitted.

Councillor J O Ranger referred to the Council working towards Level 3 in terms of self assessment.

ACTION

The Committee agreed to support the recommendation to include comments from Local Joint Panel Members within the new policies and framework. Members also agreed to forward any further comments directly to either the Community Projects Team Leader or the Director.

It was noted that the report would be submitted to the Executive on 10 February 2009.

RESOLVED - that (A) Local Joint Panel Members' comments be incorporated within the new policies and framework; and

DCCS

(B) further Members' comments be forwarded directly to either the Community Projects Team Leader or the Director of Customer and Community Services.

503 METHODOLOGY FOR THE PAYMENT OF UNTAKEN ANNUAL LEAVE

The Committee noted that the Local Joint Panel meeting on 15 October 2008 had agreed to recommend that the annual salary calculation for the payment of untaken leave and the deduction of reclaimed and unpaid leave be adopted on the basis of 1/260th.

The Committee agreed to support the recommendation.

RESOLVED – that the annual salary calculation for the payment of untaken leave and the deduction of reclaimed and unpaid leave be adopted on the basis of 1/260th.

DIS

504 HUMAN RESOURCES QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT – JANUARY 2009

The Head of People and Organisational Services submitted a quarterly report on performance information relating to the Council's people management and human resources

ACTION

service. The Head of People and Organisational Services commented that the agreement with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and Manpower Plc for the provision of recruitment services had been approved by the Executive on 25 November 2008. An implementation plan had been agreed for temporary and permanent recruitment.

A summary was provided in relation to:-

- Corporate Training
- Management Development Programme
- Investors in People (IIP)
- PDRS
- Policies
- Equalities and Diversity
- C3W Programme
- Unison Recognition and Procedural Agreement.

The Head of People and Organisational Services commented that a more detailed performance report would be submitted to the next meeting of Human Resources Committee which would compare performance with other Councils. An explanation was provided in relation to funded vacancies.

In response to a query on absence levels and self certification, the Head of People and Organisational Services explained how the statistics had been determined. It was noted that staff used the Council's flexi-time to cover absences which were not emergencies.

In response to a query on recent changes to the Work Time Directive, the Head of People and Organisational

ACTION

Services commented that the Council was not affected by recent changes. The flexi time system and annual leave in terms of carry over arrangements were explained. Staff were encouraged to take all their annual leave.

The Programme Director of Change provided an update on the C3W (Changing the Way We Work) Programme and what progress had been made. He referred to the development of a Change Management Toolkit to help support managers in the change process. It was noted that 1:1 employee consultations would be completed by the end of January 2009. Following this, HR Policies would be reviewed to ensure that they supported the C3W programme.

Updates were provided in relation to:

- Accommodation
- Customer Service
- Improved ways of working

The Programme Director commented on the phasing of the work and what work had been done including website and telephone enhancement. He provided updates in relation to the corporate approach to making the organisation run efficiently and more simply, i.e. developing standards for IT. Methods of managing software compatibility on a service by service basis were being explored.

The Programme Director outlined the remit of the Programme Board and User Groups and how these fed into the C3W initiative.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

ACTION505 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STATISTICS
APRIL – DECEMBER 2008

The Head of People and Organisational Services submitted a report updating Members on Human Resources Performance Indicators for the period 1 April to 31 December 2008. The report provided an update on current turnover, sickness absence, training / development, performance management and equalities monitoring.

In response to a query about national job losses and the potential effects on East Herts, the Head of People and Organisational Services referred to the current staff turnover figure of 4.24%. She commented on the general perception of local government offering a greater sense of security and that the current turnover reflected that people appeared not to be moving on. It was noted that on previously harder to recruit roles such as planning and building control, the current climate could benefit the Council in that people might want to seek employment within Local Government.

In response to a query about corporate training, the Head of People and Organisational Services assured Members that more training would be organised following the return to work of a member of Staff.

The Committee agreed to note the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

506 INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ACTION PLAN: UPDATE

The Head of People and Organisational Services submitted a report and Action Plan addressing areas for improvement following the post recognition Investors in People (IIP) Review completed in April 2008. It was noted that the review had highlighted a number of strengths but some inconsistencies existed in the Council. Investor in People status had been retained and an Action Plan developed to address these inconsistencies. These were detailed in the

ACTION

report now submitted.

A progress review of the Action Plan would take place no later than 10 April 2009.

In response to a query about reassessment costs, the Head of People and Organisational Services undertook to email this information to Members. She also undertook to explore the Employer Development Award next year.

The Head of People and Organisational Services assured Members that the overall picture was healthy and that the Council was on target to achieve the actions set out in the Action Plan now submitted. Further reports would be submitted to Corporate Management Team as necessary.

Members noted the progress made on the Action Plan and congratulated staff on what action had been achieved.

RESOLVED – that the progress made on the Investors in People Action Plan be noted.

507 RECRUITMENT SERVICES

The Director of Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the provision of recruitment services following the Council's decision on 25 November 2008, to enter into a shared recruitment service with Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) and Manpower PLC. It was noted that the Council had become a member of the Herts HR Partnership in August 2008. The remit of the partnership and the savings to be achieved were set out in the appendix to the report now submitted.

The report detailed a number of findings in relation to the current recruitment service and what actions needed to be developed to support the new recruitment process. These were set out in the report now submitted. The performance of Manpower would be measured in accordance with a set of agreed key performance indicators attached to the report.

ACTION

The shared benefits which would accrue to the Council were explained including electronic processing of recruitment forms and a broader advertising standard. Assurances were provided that performance, including that of retention and turnover, would be monitored and reported back to Members on a regular basis.

The Head of People and Organisational Services explained how Manpower PLC could assist the Council in terms of those employees employed on a temporary basis.

The Committee noted the agreement to enter into a shared recruitment service with Hertfordshire County Council and Manpower PLC and approved the key performance indicators.

RESOLVED – that (A) the agreement with Hertfordshire County Council and Manpower for the provision of recruitment services be noted;

(B) the key performance indicators be approved;
and

(C) Officers report on a six monthly basis, a year from the commencement of the contract, detailing recruitment spend and management information on recruitment and retention trends.

DIS

508 SAFETY COMMITTEE – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2008

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2008 be received.

509 CHANGING THE WAY WE WORK (C3W) CHANGE MANAGEMENT TOOLKIT

The Committee considered the recommendations of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 15 October 2008

ACTION

detailing the C3W employee consultation arrangements.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted and the consultation arrangements endorsed.

510 CODE OF CONDUCT: CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

The Committee considered and supported the recommendations of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 15 October 2008 on the consultation paper “Orders and Regulations relating to the Conduct of Local Authority Members in England”.

RESOLVED – that the Consultation Code on the Code of Conduct for Members and Officers’ comments be noted.

511 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES: 15 OCTOBER 2008

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 15 October 2008, be received.

(see also Minutes 509 – 510 above)

The meeting closed at 4.40 pm.

Chairman
Date