

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD
IN THE ROOM 27, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON WEDNESDAY 14
JANUARY 2015, AT 3.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor G McAndrew (Chairman)
Councillors P Ballam, Mrs D Hone, J Ranger,
P Ruffles and N Wilson

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor C Woodward

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Vicki David	- Human Resources Officer
Emma Freeman	- Head of People and Property Services
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services

465 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2015/16

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report on the Pay Policy Statement 2015/16 which, annually, needed to be agreed and published under Sections 38 to 43 of the Localism Act 2011. She stated that the Pay Policy Statement had been amended to reflect the new code in terms of transparency of information.

In response to a query raised by Councillor J Ranger at an earlier meeting, the Head of People and Property

Services explained the arrangements around apprenticeships. She said that the Council had experienced some difficulties in trying to recruit an apprentice in Facilities Management and that over the last three years; the Council had employed two or three apprentices.

In response to a query from Councillor P Ruffles, the Director of Finance and Support Services explained what other professional schemes the Council had to offer, including those offered to graduates.

The Committee supported the report, and recommended its approval.

RECOMMENDED - that the Pay Policy Statement for 2015/16, as now submitted, be approved.

466 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

467 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY 2014/15

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report on the Council's Equality and Diversity Annual Report for 2013/14. The Human Resources Officer provided a summary of the main points contained within the detailed analysis of the Council's workforce under a number of sub-headings, the detail of which was set out in the report now submitted.

In terms of the gender percentage of female to male (69% : 31%), Councillor P Ruffles suggested that it might be necessary for the Council to consider, at some future point, applying positive methods to balance the female to male staff ratio. The Head of People and Property Services stated that from 2014/15 it was anticipated that human resources would be able to provide an audit trail of information from application to appointment, which would provide additional information

from a gender viewpoint.

Councillor J Ranger queried whether there was a difference in terms of gender in relation to those applying for full time or part time employment. The Human Resources Officer explained that the information contained in Figure 3.4 of the report now submitted, provided further clarification. In respect of “unknown” categories in the body of the report, the Head of People and Property Services explained that some people chose not to declare particular types of information.

Councillor J Ranger raised the issue of “male leavers” adding that no reasons had been given. The Head of People and Property Services explained that while exit interviews did take place, some leavers might choose not to give a reason. The Director of Finance and Support Services explained that some reasons were provided within Table 8.2 (ii) of the report now submitted.

Councillor P Ballam raised the issue of the number of males leaving the Council. The Head of People and Property Services explained that paragraph 8.4 of the report now submitted, attempted to provide further information on this matter.

Councillor P Ruffles referred to the positive effects of Member Training organised by the Scrutiny Officer. He felt that this should be published publically.

The Chairman referred Members to the statistics in relation to Personal Development Reviews (PDRs) and reminded Members that concerns had already been voiced about this and that figures to be released in the next few weeks, should reflect a much improved position. In response to a further query about the PDR process, the Head of People and Property Services explained how the process was carried out by Heads of Service and Line Managers.

Councillor P Ruffles further queried the “expectations” of those staff who had gone beyond the usual retirement age in term of the PDR process. The Director of Finance stated that

age should not be something for consideration in the PDR process, in that the Council employed an individual to do a particular job. She accepted that disability could be a limitation in terms of a role, adding that objectives had to reflect the expectations of a role.

Councillor J Ranger stated that he hoped that the interview process picked up on the fact that roles were constantly changing and that appropriate adjustments were made. The Head of People and Property Services stated that the Job Evaluation Process would pick up substantial changes.

The Committee supported the report, as now submitted.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Equality and Diversity Annual Report 2013/14 be approved;

(B) Equalities data be collected at the shortlist and interview stage for all applicants;

(C) Recruitment Panel Members be trained in the Council's Recruitment Policy and Equal Opportunities, and Panels be balanced in terms of gender;

(D) Discipline and Grievance equalities data continue to be monitored;

(E) Equalities data be captured for all participants attending all training courses; and

(F) Data from exit questionnaires continue to be reviewed to establish the disproportionate number of male leavers and that this be incorporated within the regular Turnover Report reported to Corporate Management Team.

468 HOME WORKERS' SICKNESS ABSENCE

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report on sickness absence by Home Workers following a report to an earlier meeting. The Head of People and Property

Services stated that having investigated the matter, there was no particular trend to the reported absences. She added that the findings showed that home workers' sickness absence levels were not higher than expected and that current advice regarding flexible working practices, indicated that there was no distinction with regard to absenteeism levels between the two different working practices of home working and those who were office based.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

469 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STATISTICS:
QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report setting out Human Resource information for the period 1 April to 31 December 2014.

The Head of People and Property Services advised that, based on the current figures, the projected turnover for 2014/15 was 7.99% which was below the target of 10%. Current voluntary leavers' rate was projected to be 6.46% against a target of 7%. Updates were provided in terms of posts filled both internally and externally.

The Head of People and Property Services explained that short term sickness per full time equivalent (FTE) for the year was 2.76 days overall against a target of 4.5 days and current projected long-term sickness absence per FTE was 0.06 days per month. The current rate of projected long-term sickness for the year was 0.72 days against a target of 2 days.

Updates were provided in relation to Training and Development and Performance Development Reviews (PDRs), Equalities Monitoring and Policy Development. The Head of People and Property Services stated that an update on the PDR statistics would be emailed to all Members of Human Resources Committee at the end of January 2015.

In response to a query from Councillor J Ranger, the Head of People and Property Services provided an update on the National Pay negotiations, adding that UNISON members had rejected, via a ballot, the Employer's Side's proposals and that as a result, the local award had been reduced from 4% to 2%. It was noted that the Expenses Policy had been referred to the Joint Secretaries for England for further negotiations.

The Committee received the report.

RESOLVED – that the Human Resource Quarterly Management Statistics, as now submitted, be received.

470 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES OF THE MEETING: 3 DECEMBER 2014

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 3 December 2014 be received.

(see also Minutes 471 – 474)

471 GENERAL LEAVE POLICY

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report updating the General Leave Policy which had been revised following a number of changes suggested by the Local Joint Panel on 3 December 2014.

The Committee considered and approved the recommendations made at the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 3 December 2014.

RESOLVED – that the revised General Leave Policy, as now submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 470)

472 CARERS POLICY

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report

on a new Carers Policy which had been revised following a number of changes suggested by the Local Joint Panel on 3 December 2014.

The Committee considered and approved the recommendations made at the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 3 December 2014.

RESOLVED – that the Carers Policy as now submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 470)

473 RETIREMENT POLICY

The Head of People and Property Services submitted a report on the updated Retirement Policy which had been revised following a number of changes suggested by the Local Joint Panel on 3 December 2014.

The Committee considered and approved the recommendations made at the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 3 December 2014.

RESOLVED – that the Retirement Policy as now submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 470)

474 REVISED FLEXIBLE WORKING POLICY

The Committee considered and approved the recommendations made at the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 3 December 2014.

RESOLVED – that the revised Flexible Working Policy as now submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 470)

The meeting closed at 4.15 pm

Chairman

Date