

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY
2020, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Rosemary Bolton (Chairman)
Councillors A Alder, J Dumont, S Newton
and P Ruffles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Scrutiny Officer
Peter Dickinson	- Health and Safety Officer
Claire Kirby	- Human Resources Officer
James Ellis	- Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Simon O'Hear	- Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development

353 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S Bull and M McMullen.

354 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2019 were submitted. The Head of HR and Organisational Development reminded Members that Local Joint Panel considered and commented on reports prior to consideration by Human Resources Committee Councillor P Ruffles said that the Local Joint Panel played a particularly important role in the debating process prior to reports being submitted to HR Committee.

355 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed James Ellis, the new Head of Legal and Democratic Services to the meeting.

356 HEALTH AND SAFETY QUARTERLY REVIEW - OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2019

The Head of HR and Organisational Development submitted a report detailing the results of the Health and Safety Quarterly Review (October to December 2019) which had been considered and supported by the Local Joint Panel on 5 February 2020. The Head of HR and Organisational Development explained that the Health and Safety Policy responsibilities and Organisation Section and the Health and Safety Policy Core Policy; Statement of Intent were both constitutionally required and would need to be submitted to Council for approval.

The Health and Safety Officer provided a summary of the review in relation to:-

- Contract Management and Compliance;
- Contract and Development Support

- Learning and Development : Partnership training and future events;
- Policy Development – future policies for Committee;
- Project work;
- Work Related Accidents

The Head of HR and Organisational Development commended the Health and Safety Officer for his work in consolidating the health and safety approach and especially for his work with contractors.

In response to a query from Councillor A Alder, the Health and Safety Officer explained how the lone worker safety devices worked and who they were issued to. The Head of HR and Organisational Development explained that health and safety refresher courses would be rolled out to all Members in due course.

Councillor P Ruffles explained that in relation to Contract and Development support, and, specifically,) Hertford Theatre, there were some “pinch points” in relation to the project. He hoped that Members would be kept apprised of such issues.

The Committee noted the report as detailed and that the Health and Safety Policy Responsibilities and Organisation Section and the Health and Safety Policy Core Policy; Statement of Intent would be presented to Council for approval.

The Chairman on behalf of Members thanked the Health and Safety Officer for his detailed report.

RESOLVED – that (A) the report be noted

(B) the report be endorsed for approval by Council.

357 GENDER PAY GAP

The Head of HR and Organisational Development submitted a report which detailed the outcome of the Gender Pay Gap report 2019, which reported on the progress on last year's action plan and of actions proposed for the 2020/21 civic year. The HR Officer provided a summary of the report adding that a number of actions had been introduced in an effort to reduce the gender pay gap for 2020/21.

Councillor S Newton commented on the ratio of women to men (73%) employed by the Council and said that, irrespective of this statistic, the issue was about competency to undertake a role. The HR Officer provided a summary of why so many women were employed by the Council and why this differed (for example) with Stevenage Borough Council (which had not contracted out its refuse service) which was predominately male and the impact this had on statistics.

In response to a query by Councillor A Alder, the Head of HR and Organisational Development explained that the Council employed 6 apprentices. The Head of HR and Organisational Development undertook to provide all Members with a summary of the Council's approach to apprenticeships.

The Committee noted the report, as detailed.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

358 PAY POLICY STATEMENT: 2020 - 2021

The Head of HR and Organisational Development submitted a report on the Council's Pay Policy Statement before its submission to Council in March 2020. The Head of HR and Organisational Development provided a summary of the report. He also advised that the Council had offered a 2% pay rise to staff which had been rejected by UNISON but that negotiations were ongoing.

The Committee supported the Pay Policy Statement and recommended its approval to Council.

RESOLVED – that the Pay Policy Statement 2020/21 be recommended to Council for approval.

359 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STATISTICS - QUARTERLY REPORT

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report outlining the current performance of HR Management Statistics for the Quarter 3 period (October – December 2019). The Head of HR and Organisational Development provided a summary of the report adding that the Council was continuing to improve management of its vacancies.

Councillor A Alder sought clarification as to whether Officers were remunerated if they were “acting up” also in addition to undertaking their own role. The Head of HR and Organisational Development confirmed that they were paid immediately when “acting up”.

In response to a query from Councillor S Newton, the Head of HR and Organisational Development explained the rationale and timescales in relation to keeping jobs/vacancies on hold.

The Chairman on behalf of Members, asked that their thanks be passed on to the Human Resources Officers for their continuing good work and professionalism.

Members received the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be received.

360 RECRUITMENT AUDIT 2019

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report on the findings, recommendations and management responses in relation to the Internal Audit Report on the Council's recruitment process, attached as an Appendix to the report. The Head of HR and Organisational Development provided a summary to the report.

Members noted the report.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

361 PAYROLL AUDIT 2019

The Head of HR and Organisational Development submitted a report setting out the findings and outcomes of the payroll audit undertaken by the Shared Internal Audit Services (SIAS) for the period 2019/20.

The Head of HR and Organisational Development commended the Payroll Team for their continuing hard work.

The Chairman on behalf of Members asked that Members' thanks be forwarded to the Payroll Team for their continuing hard work and professionalism.

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

(B) Members' thanks be forwarded to the Payroll Team for their continuing hard work and professionalism.

362 GENERAL LEAVE POLICY UPDATE

The Head of HR and Organisational Development submitted a report which updated the General Leave Policy. He said the updated policy now omitted the Carers Policy, which had duplicated sections of the General Leave Policy and Family Friendly policy. Removing such duplication would minimise confusion.

The Head of HR and Organisational Development provided a summary of the report and why it had been necessary to update the General Leave Policy.

The Committee noted the report.

RESOLVED – that the report updating the General Leave Policy be noted;

363 HUMAN RESOURCES AND PAYROLL TEAM UPDATE

The Head of HR and Organisational Development submitted a report updating the Committee on the work of the HR and Payroll team during Quarter 3 (October – December 2019). The Head of HR and Organisational Development provided a summary of the report.

Members acknowledged a number of positive outcomes contained within the report, including the fact that the Council had been shortlisted as a finalist by Reward and Employee Benefits Association for its wellbeing programme. The results would be announced on 5 March 2020 at an award ceremony.

The Head of HR and Organisational Development explained a number of ongoing issues and frustrations from the viewpoint of support and customer services and in relation to the HR and Payroll System specifically in relation to the Health & Safety Module and Learning & Development Modules.

The Committee noted the report and the good work being progressed.

RESOLVED – that the report be noted.

364 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES OF THE MEETING: 5 JUNE 2019

The Minutes of the LJP meeting held on 5 June 2019 were submitted for information.

RESOLVED - that the Minutes be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

Chairman

Date