

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER,
WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 6 JULY 2016, AT 3.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Woodward (Chairman)
Councillors S Bull, S Cousins, P Ruffles and
M Stevenson.

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor G McAndrew

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Vicki David	- Human Resources Officer
Emma Freeman	- Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development

124 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was moved and seconded that Councillor P Ruffles be appointed Vice Chairman of the Human Resources Committee for the civic year 2016/17.

RESOLVED – that Councillor P Ruffles be appointed Vice Chairman of the Human Resources Committee for the civic year 2016/17.

125 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members received the Terms of Reference for Human Resources Committee.

The Chairman referred to the Committee's responsibilities in relation to health and safety matters and asked the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development to investigate reporting lines in relation to health and safety matters and how they were considered in the context of the Council's stakeholders. This was supported.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Terms of Reference be noted; and

(B) reporting lines in relation to health and safety matters be investigated and how these were considered in the context of the Council's stakeholders..

126 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P Ballam and J Goodeve.

127 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

128 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY UPDATE

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report on the progress made on the Council's Organisational Development Strategy 2015 – 2019. The Head provided a summary of the report in terms of the strategy's key themes and referred to the Council's success in being awarded the IIP Silver Award in April 2016.

The Head summarised the positive feedback from the assessors and referred to the Council's strengths highlighted in the assessor's report. The Head was happy to state that according to the report, the assessor had not identified many actions, and referred Members to those which had been identified.

The Chairman, on behalf of Members thanked the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development for the commendable achievement of the IIP Silver Award. In response to a query from the Chairman, the Head explained what progress had been made in developing a volunteering programme.

In response to a query from Councillor P Ruffles, the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development explained the accreditation process and the associated costs.

Members noted the progress made on the Organisational Development Strategy and congratulated Officers on the report and the work involved in achieving IIP Silver Award accreditation.

RESOLVED - that the progress made on the Council's Organisational Development Strategy 2015 – 2019 and the commendable success in achieving IIP Silver Award accreditation be noted.

129 PERFORMANCE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW - NEW SCHEME

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report outlining the changes to the Performance Development Review Scheme (PDRS) and associated guidance and forms. She provided a summary of the report which, following a request by had been approved by the Corporate Management Team in May 2015, following a review of the scheme. The Head commented that the East of England Local Government Association (EELGA) had circulated the document as “best practice” to a number of Councils.

In response to a query from Councillor S Bull, the Head explained the opportunities available to staff in liaising with UNSION.

In response to a query from Councillors P Ruffles and M Stevenson, the Head explained that managers were

committed to the PDRS process, adding that the evaluation of staff necessitated judgment calls from managers in terms of an employee's ability to do a job and how the manager evaluated staff during the process.

Members thanked all involved in terms of the design and development of the new PDRS document and the supporting forms.

RESOLVED – that the revised PDRS process, guidance and forms be noted.

130 TURNOVER REPORT: APRIL 2015 - MARCH 2016

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report setting out the turnover for 2015/16 and outlined recommendations for 2016/17. The Human Resources Officer provided a summary of the report.

The Head reminded Members that the Council had an ageing workforce and that retirement by a number of staff, was affecting the turnover figures. She referred to ongoing work which needed to be undertaken regarding those employees who left the Council in under a year, to see if a pattern could be established.

Members discussed the reasons why employees might want to leave employment with less than a year's service and sought clarification on the graph in relation to Voluntary Leavers by Length of Service over a three year period, as detailed in the report. Of particular note was the fact that 12 (12%) of staff in Revenues and Benefits had left the Council's employment. Members queried whether this could be stress related.

Councillor S Cousins acknowledged the stress that working in Revenues and Benefits generated. The Head explained how experienced staff mentored less experienced staff in Revenues and Benefits. Members asked if the Head could write and explain how the "buddy" system in Revenues and Benefits worked. The Head explained that in relation to

reasons for leaving, the category of “other” could include jobs in another service field such as the Fire Service.

Members approved the report, as now detailed.

RESOLVED – that (A) the turnover report be noted and the turnover targets remain unchanged for 2016/17;

(B) services continue to be supported in implementing their workforce plans through career development and succession planning for its employees;

(C) the Council’s values and behaviours be embedded within HR Policies;

(D) the Council continue to attract and promote young people into local government (apprentices, graduates, work placements, secondments, sabbaticals and volunteers) and support initiatives such as career fayres, partnerships with Schools (Hertfordshire LEP);

(E) actions from the East Herts health and wellbeing work plan be implemented;

(F) employees continue to be engaged through Staff Forums and other Forums;

(G) the recruitment action plan continue to implement modern and innovative ways to recruit;

(H) the success of achieving the Investors in People silver award through the delivery of the Organisational Development Strategy continue to be developed;

(I) the exit interview process be reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purpose and reflects the Council’s behaviours and values; and

(J) from information provided at an exit Interview, staff who leave within their first year of service be monitored in order to identify patterns and

implement action to reduce the number of voluntary leavers in this area.

131 SICKNESS AND ABSENCE REPORT : APRIL 2015 - MARCH 2016

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report on Sickness Absence levels in terms of the short and long term during 2015/16 and outlined current and proposed initiatives to reduce absence. The Human Resources Officer provided a summary of the report and the statistics provided. She referred Members to corrected replacement pages 107 to 114 and page number 127 which had been circulated separately.

The Chairman referred to musculoskeletal, mental health and back pain absences and queried whether this was work related. He suggested that Officers investigate this and report back. This was supported.

In response to a query from Councillor S Bull regarding support to staff suffering from cancer, the Head explained how the Absence Management Policy (elsewhere on the agenda), now allowed managers more discretion in dealing with absence issues at an earlier stage and now incorporated guidance on managing employees / family members with cancer and critical illnesses and providing them with ongoing support.

In response to a query from Councillor P Ruffles regarding the point at which the Council decided that it could no longer support a member of staff because of illness and their inability to do their job, the Head explained the Council's pay policy for those affected by a critical illness. The Head explained the ongoing work which was being done in terms of the promotion of health and wellbeing.

Members noted the sickness absence report and supported the retention of the sickness absence management targets as follows:

- 4.5 days (FTE) for short term absence,
- 2 days (FTE) for long term absence ; and
- 6.5 days FTE total sickness absence.

RESOLVED – that (A) the sickness absence targets as now detailed be agreed; and

(B) musculoskeletal and mental health targets be reviewed to established whether these were work related.

132 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STATISTICS -
QUARTERLY REPORT APRIL - JUNE 2016

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report setting out management statistics for the period 1 April to 14 June 2016. The Human Resources Officer provided a summary of the report.

The Chairman referred to the fact that 68.1% of the workforce was female and asked what could be done in bringing them into more senior roles. The Head explained that statistically, there was a higher proportion of women working in Local Government and that East Herts was not unusual. She referred to the career opportunities now available following changes introduced by the Leadership Team. In response to a query from Councillor M Stevenson regarding a breakdown of the 68.1%, the Head provided an overview by departmental breakdown.

The Committee approved the Human Resource Management Statistics for April to June 2016.

RESOLVED – that the Human Resource Management Statistics for April to June 2016, be approved.

133 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT 2015/16

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report reviewing the Learning and Development programme delivered in 2015/16 and sought

approval of the Learning and Development Programme for 2016-18. The Head provided a summary of the report and explained what finances were available to support the training programme.

Councillor S Cousins asked if Diabetes Awareness training might be included in the “Personal” learning and development programme for 2016/18. This was supported.

The Committee noted the annual report and approved the Learning and Development Programme for 2016-18 with the inclusion of Diabetes Awareness training.

RESOLVED – that (A) the annual report be noted; and
(B) the Learning and Development Programme for 2016-18, as amended, be approved.

134 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES OF THE MEETING: 8 JUNE 2016

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2016 be received.

(see also Minute 135)

135 ABSENCE MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Committee considered and approved the recommendation of the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 8 June 2016 on a revised Absence Management Policy.

RESOLVED – that the revised Absence Management Policy, as now submitted, be approved.

(see also Minute 134)

The meeting closed at 4.50 pm