

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON WEDNESDAY 9 JANUARY
2019, AT 3.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Boylan (Chairman)
Councillors S Bull, Mrs R Cheswright,
S Cousins, M McMullen, P Ruffles and
M Stevenson

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Lorraine Blackburn | - Democratic Services Officer |
| Vicki David | - Human Resources Officer |
| Claire Kirby | - Human Resources Officer |
| Kate Leeke | - Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development |

333 MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor S Cousins and seconded by Councillor M McMullen that the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2018 be confirmed as a correct record

and signed by the Chairman. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

334 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting and wished everyone a Happy New Year.

335 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT STATISTICS: OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2018

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report inviting Members to consider the Human Resources (HR) Management Statistics for Quarter 3 (October – December 2018).

Members were advised that the number of vacancies had fallen from 46 in Quarter 2 to 32 in Quarter 3. It was noted that projected employee turnover was anticipated to be 21.7% (against last Quarter's figure of 25.4%). Sickness absence had increased on Quarter 2 figures and now stood at 6.2 days per FTE compared to the last Quarter (5.5 days) and below the overall target of 6.5 days.

Councillor M Stevenson asked if more information was available on a departmental basis and was advised that this information and comparative benchmarking would be provided within the Annual Reports.

The Interim Head of HR and OD explained that the return

rate for exit questionnaires remained high at 72%, however it was a slight decrease since Quarter 2 (74%). It was anticipated that if this figure was maintained, this may help identify trends and patterns including those which may be seasonal, which may then be addressed.

Councillor R Cheswright asked for and was given assurance that comparative benchmarked figures were included within the Annual Reports to make the information more meaningful.

The Interim Head of HR and OD referred to a number of staff initiatives which were being introduced to help improve retention.

Members also noted the summary in relation to other issues referred to in the report:

- Projected Short Term Absence for 2018/19
- Projected Long Term Absence for 2018/19
- Worked related accidents
- Learning and Development
- Performance Management
- Equalities Monitoring Indicators; and
- Policy Development initiatives.

The Committee received the report.

It was proposed by Councillor M Stevenson and seconded by Councillor M McMullen, that the report, as detailed, be received. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the HR Management Statistics for Quarter 3 (October – December 2018) be received.

336 HUMAN RESOURCES AND PAYROLL UPDATE

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development provided a summary of the report. She referred to the inclusion of a statement on payslips regarding countering fraud and the additional payroll exercise which had been carried out in relation to election payments. The Interim Head referred to the excellent service provided by payroll which provided 100% accuracy which, she said, was not always the case in many organisations.

In relation to health and safety, the Interim Head thanked those who had contributed to the cost of two defibrillators. The Interim Head provided an update in relation to:

- General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) – HR was now fully compliant;
- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) – of ongoing work with Hertfordshire County Council;
- Gender Pay Gap Report 2018;
- Recruitment – and posts which had been filled in relation to the Head of HR, an Executive Assistant and two Service Managers in Planning;
- Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) – 22 people had attended training to become Mental Health First Aiders and the scheme was being launched across the Council in February;
- Flu vaccinations – that 73 staff had been vaccinated which was approximately one-fifth of the workforce;
- Attendance at Which? Careers fair

The Committee Chairman sought and was provided with clarification regarding the support mechanism for mental

health first aiders. Councillor S Bull supported the ongoing work to support Mental Health initiatives. The initiative had been welcomed by Staff. On the issue of flu vaccinations, the Committee Chairman felt that a 20% turnout could be improved upon. The Interim Head of HR explained that this was the first year of this initiative and explained how the process had been set up across the authority and what sessions had been made available to staff. It was hoped that the initiative would be repeated next year, with a greater number of staff participation.

The Interim Head explained the ongoing work to improve the Council's advertising of vacancies and raise the Council's online profile to attract the best candidates for the roles.

Councillor R Cheswright commented that it would be useful to have more regular information about leavers and new starters. The Democratic Services Officer undertook to raise the issue with Communications.

Councillor S Cousins thanked the Interim Head for the positive action taken to address recruitment.

It was proposed by Councillor S Cousins and seconded by Councillor M Stevenson, that the report, as detailed, be received. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) the update report be received;
and

(B) the Head of Communications, Policy and Strategy be asked to review how information about leavers and new starters could be communicated to

Members on a regular basis.

337 GENDER PAY GAP

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report regarding the Gender Pay Gap report. The Human Resources Officer provided a summary of the report and the action taken since the first Gender Pay report was published in March 2018, the detail of which was set out in the report. In response to a query, the Human Resources Officer provided an explanation of the Council's mean gender pay gap and the median gender pay gap.

The Committee Chairman queried the introduction of "name blind" recruitment and Officers explained the difficulties in anonymising data. She assured Members that this would be progressed but was not yet logistically feasible. The Interim Head explained that she would contact the new Shared Service ICT Manager and discuss this further.

Councillor P Ruffles sought and was provided with clarification regarding the use of the word "agile" in relation to an enabling environment.

The Committee Chairman suggested that, as the Gender Pay Gap was to be published that the recommendation should be amended slightly to reflect this. This was supported.

It was proposed by Councillor S Cousins and seconded by Councillor P Ruffles, that the report as amended, be noted. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that (A) the Council’s Gender Pay Gap report 2018 be noted and published; and

(B) the Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development discuss the issue of “name blind” recruitment with the ICT Strategic Partnership Manager.

338 LOCAL JOINT PANEL - MINUTES OF THE MEETING: 12
DECEMBER 2018

The Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development commented that at the last meeting, the Panel discussed the issue of the Restructure Consultation Policy and referred to the current positive working relationship with UNISON.

The Committee Chairman referred to the Minutes of the LJP and of three issues requiring approval by Members of Human Resources, these were:

- Flexible Working Scheme
- Appeals Policy
- Revisions to the Local Joint Panel’s Constitution

The Committee Chairman expressed concern about the current process in terms of Members of the HR Committee (HRC) being asked to approve reports which he stated, had no supporting information within the context of the HR agenda and that it felt that this amounted to a “rubber stamping” exercise.

The Democratic Services Officer explained the current process, in that Members (of HRC) were also forwarded a

copy of the Local Joint Panel agenda when the reports were considered by Panel Members on 12 December 2018. Members were therefore provided with all relevant information for consideration by HRC on 9 January 2019 so that an informed decision could be taken. The Democratic Services Officer also advised that within the HRC Agenda, Members were also *“asked to bring with them their copy of the agenda for the Local Joint Panel meeting held on 12 December 2018”* as a point of further reference.

Members were reminded that the LJP was an advisory Panel and could not approve reports and that this responsibility lay with Members of Human Resources Committee. It was further noted that changes to the LJP's constitution needed to be referred to Council for approval.

Members debated at length, the wording used in the resolution concerning the proposed change to the LJP's constitution. The Committee Chairman suggested that this wording should be changed. Members were advised that it was not within the remit of HRC to make changes to the LJP's Minutes but that it could resolve to make a change within the context of its own Minutes. This was supported.

The Committee Chairman suggested that the proposed changes to the Flexible Working Scheme and Appeals Policy be deferred and included for consideration on the next Human Resources agenda. Members noted that this was a change to the current process and that this change would need to be discussed with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

The Committee Chairman suggested that in relation to the proposed changes to the Local Joint Panel's Constitution that the recommendation of Human Resources to Council

should be:

“Members resolved that the revised Local Joint Panel’s Constitution be presented to Council subject to the deletion of 7.15e in Essential Reference Paper “B”.

This was supported. It was proposed by Councillor P Ruffles and seconded by Councillor S Bull that the motion, as detailed be supported. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED - that (A) that the Appeals Policy and the proposed changes to the Flexible Working Scheme be deferred for inclusion on the next Human Resources agenda; and

(B) Members resolved that the proposed revisions to Local Joint Panel’s Constitution be presented to Council subject to the deletion of 7.15e in Essential Reference Paper “B”.

(C) that the current process of referring the Local Joint Panel’s recommendations to Human Resources Committee for approval, be referred to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services.

339 HEALTH AND SAFETY : MINUTES

The Minutes of the Health and Safety Committee held on 18 September 2018 were submitted for information.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2018 be received.

The meeting closed at 4.15 pm

Chairman

Date