

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 MAY 2012 AT ORKNEY ROOM, 2ND FLOOR, COUNTY HALL EAST WING, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chairman), Cllr Rod Eaton, Cllr Mike Hewitt (Vice Chairman), Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Francis Morland, Cllr John Noeken, Cllr Mark Packard, Cllr Jane Scott OBE and Cllr John Smale

31 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

32 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 7 March 2012.

33 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

34 Chairman's Announcements

It was announced that the Council's new careers website had won an award for Best Recruitment Website at the 2012 Public Sector People Managers Association (PPMA) awards which had taken place at their annual conference in Birmingham recently. The project to design and develop a new careers website was led by the HR strategy and policy team in partnership with Penna, the Council's recruitment advertising agency.

Members of the Committee requested that their congratulations be extended to all those members of staff who had been involved in making the website such a success.

35 **Public Participation**

There were no members of the public present or councillors' questions.

36 **Senior Officers' Employment Sub-Committee**

Resolved:

To receive and note the minutes of the Senior Officers' Employment Sub-Committee dated 19 April 2012.

37 **Fixed Term Contract Dismissal Policy & Procedure**

Consideration was given to a report by the Service Director HR & OD which presented a new fixed term contract dismissal policy and procedure which would apply to all Wiltshire Council employees except teaching and non-teaching staff employed in locally managed schools.

After discussion,

Resolved:

To approve the Fixed Term Contract Dismissal Policy and Procedure, subject to the following amendment:-

Para 4, first sentence, under Notification of ending a fixed term contract to read:-

“The meeting will be arranged between 4 and 6 weeks before the expiry of your contract and must be no later than 4 weeks before your contract end date.”

38 **Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure**

The Committee considered a report by the Service Director HR & OD which sought approval to a revised Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure which had been updated to reflect changes in line with the Equality Act 2010. The Committee also had before them an associated guide for managers and employees which provided further information on a number of areas which were specifically covered by the Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure.

After discussion,

Resolved:

To approve the updated Dignity at Work Policy & Procedure.

39 **Corporate Driving at Work Policy & Procedure**

Consideration was given to a report by the Service Director, Neighbourhood Services which sought approval to a new Driving at Work Policy & Procedure.

It was noted that there were currently a number of separate policies and guidance relating to driving at work and the new policy aimed to bring together all responsibilities for driving at work into one clear policy and procedure.

After discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To circulate the associated handbook to all Members of this Committee.
- (2) To approve the updated Driving at Work Policy & Procedure, subject to:-
 - (i) First sentence of the section *Who does it apply to?* to be amended to read:-

“This policy applies to all drivers, irrespective of their employment status, who drive at work on behalf of the council (with the exception of teaching and non-teaching staff employed in locally managed schools and elected Members).”
 - (ii) Para 27 being amended to read:-

“It is the employees responsibility to ensure that they drive in accordance with the law, and any other Council policies which might prevail, regarding consumption of alcohol, illegal substances, drugs & medications, the use of mobile phones.”
 - (iii) To authorise the Service Director HR & OD, after consultation with the Chairman, to delay the implementation of this Policy & Procedure, should Members identify anything in the handbook which might be at variance with the Policy & Procedure and to refer any such anomalies back to this Committee for determination.
- (3) To recommend the Standards Committee to consider introducing a similar policy & procedure applicable to Members of the Council.

40 **Vaccination Policy**

On considering a report by the Head of Occupational Health & Safety, Business Services,

Resolved:

To approve the new Vaccination Policy.

41 **Occupational Health Service Annual Report**

The Committee received a report by the Head of Occupational Health & Safety, Business Services, which gave an overview of the work outputs of the Occupational Health Service during 2011 as set out in the Occupational Health Performance Report.

During discussion, Members suggested that:-

- A cross reference between the percentage of referrals as set out in summary table 6 of the Annual Report and the number of staff in each location would be helpful.
- The inclusion of total numbers of staff per department be included in future in table 4 which set out numbers of new referrals per department.

Members congratulated the Head of Occupational Health & Safety, Business Services on the excellence of her report.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the Occupational Health Performance Annual Report.

42 **Stress/Depression, Mental Health & Fatigue Related Sickness Absence**

As requested at the last meeting, the Committee received a report by the Service Director HR & OD which set out further information about sickness absence caused by stress/depression, together with a comparison with staff from other local authorities suffering from similar ailments.

It was noted that Wiltshire's staff absences were similar to those experienced by other benchmarking authorities, i.e. Essex, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire & Hampshire. Members also noted that it was front line services, such as Waste Management, DCS Adult Care Operations and Children & Families Social Care, where absences were more prevalent.

Members noted that the Council had a range of practices and services in place which would help maintain levels of employee well-being and avoid or shorten stress-related absences, details of which were set out in the report.

Reference was made to the redesign of service delivery as part of systems thinking and behaviour and Members considered that it would be interesting to find out if this would lead to lower levels of sickness absence.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the contents of the report.
- (2) To request an update report in due course showing any areas of change.

43 **Quarterly Workforce Measures - Delivering the Business Plan - Quarter ended 31 March 2012**

The Committee received a quarterly workforce report, excluding fire, police and schools staff, for the quarter ended 31 March 2012 concerning:-

Staffing Levels
Workforce Information
Sickness Absence
Health and Safety
Disciplinary and Grievance Cases
Voluntary Staff Turnover

The report also provided information relating to Workforce Costs and benchmarking Data.

After discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To note the contents of the report.
- (2) To request that a breakdown of the 15% staff turnover in Children & Families be provided and emailed to Members of this Committee.

44 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next meeting was scheduled to be heard on Wednesday 4 July 2012, starting at 10.30am, to be held in the Council's Offices at Monkton Park, Chippenham.

45 **Urgent Items**

There were no items of urgent business.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.15 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Roger Bishton, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 713035, e-mail roger.bishton@wiltshire.gov.uk

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