

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 22 MAY 2013 AT THE PRATCHETT ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chair), Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr David Jenkins, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr David Pollitt, Cllr John Smale (Vice Chairman) and Cllr Stuart Wheeler

Also Present:

Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Peter Hutton and Cllr Anthony Trotman

12 **Membership of the Committee**

Resolved:

To note that at its Annual Meeting on 14 May 2013, the Council

- (1) appointed the following councillors to serve on this Committee for the ensuing year

Conservative (5)

Cllr A Bucknell
Cllr M Hewitt
Cllr J Scott
Cllr J Smale
Cllr S Wheeler

Lib. Dem. (3)

Cllr J Hubbard
Cllr J Jenkins
Cllr G King

UKIP (1)

Cllr D Pollitt

Substitutes

Cllr P Hutton
Cllr P Evans
Cllr A Trotman

Cllr D Allen
Cllr R Brown
Cllr M Packard
Cllr I Thorn

- (2) and named Cllr Allison Bucknell as Chairman and Cllr John Smale as Vice-Chairman of the Committee.

13 **Apologies for absence**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr Jane Scott.

14 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Resolved:

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 9 January 2013.

Arising therefrom

Minute No. 2 – Update on Equality and Diversity – Dedicated Personal Care Room

The Chairman referred to a verbal update made at the previous meeting that a dedicated Personal Care Room had been made available to both visitors and staff by Facilities Management on the ground floor of New County Hall. However, the room had remained locked and the Committee had requested that access should be checked out and the outcome reported back to the following meeting.

It was reported that the room was kept locked owing to the amount of expensive equipment the room contained but a radar key was available from Main Reception if required. Members requested that a notice be fixed to the door of the Personal Care Room stating this and also to all other dedicated Personal Care Rooms stating where a radar key could be obtained.

15 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

16 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's Announcements.

17 **Public Participation**

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

18 **Appointment of Sub-Committees**

Resolved:

To appoint members to serve on the sub-committees of this Committee for the ensuing year as set out below:-

- (a) **Senior Officers Employment Sub-Committee**
Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Jon Hubbard & Cllr Stuart Wheeler.
(Substitute Members: Cllr David Jenkins, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Jane Scott & Cllr John Smale.)
- (b) **Appeals Sub-Committee**
Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr David Jenkins & Cllr Stuart Wheeler.
(Substitute Members: Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Gordon King & Cllr John Smale.)
- (c) **Grievance Appeals Sub-Committee**
Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Mike Hewitt & Cllr Gordon King.
(Substitute Members: Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Peter Hutton, Cllr David Jenkins & Cllr Tony Trotman.)

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

Resolved:

- (1) To receive and note the minutes of the Senior Officers' Employment Sub-Committee meeting held on 18 December 2012.
- (2) To request that in future only those sections of reports which contained personal details as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1072, be considered in private.

20 **Delivering the Business Plan - December 2012**

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

Staffing Levels
Sickness Absence
New Health and Safety RIDDOR related injuries
New Disciplinary and Grievance Cases
Voluntary Staff Turnover
Employee Costs

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report.

21 Delivering the Business Plan - March 2013

The Committee received a quarterly workforce report, excluding fire, police and schools staff, for the quarter ended 31 March 2013 concerning:-

Staffing Levels
Sickness Absence
New Health and Safety RIDDOR related injuries
New Disciplinary and Grievance Cases
Voluntary Staff Turnover
Employee Costs

During discussion the following points were highlighted:-

- The headcount (full time equivalent FTE) during this quarter had decreased by 37 to 3889, a decrease of 0.9%. The ratio of managers to employees remained at 1:8, the required level being at least 1:6.
- Sickness rates during the quarter had decreased to 2.3 FTE days per FTE, this being 0.3 FTE days lower than for the same quarter in 2012. The sickness rate for the 2012-13 financial year was 8.7 FTE days per FTE, this being 1.2 FTE lower than the benchmark rate. Members enquired as to how much long term and short term sickness recorded was due to stress related illnesses and requested that this information be sent to them after the meeting.
- There had been 191 redundancies that had taken place from April to September 2012.
- It was noted that for the second consecutive quarter, Transformation had had the largest reduction in agency spend (-£91,752 compared to the last quarter). This had contributed to an overall reduction in agency spend of £40,704 for the quarter ended 31 March 2013. Members requested details of the total accumulative spend over the whole of the financial year 2012-13 be sent to them after the meeting.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the contents of the report.
- (2) To request that the number of agency workers and consultants be shown separately in future reports.

22 Wiltshire Council Staff Survey 2012

The Committee received a report showing overall results of the Wiltshire Council Staff Survey 2012.

It was noted that the Council had last surveyed its employees in February 2011 from which staff had stated that they wanted:

- More consistent and regular information
- Greater respect and recognition
- A greater understanding on why decisions are made
- To be consulted when decisions are made

In response the Council had:

- Introduced regular blogs from senior managers
- Undertaken hub visits from senior management
- Introduced The Directory and Microsoft Lync
- Arranged employee and management forums
- Introduced the behaviours framework
- Introduced HR Direct
- Introduced new uses of social media such as Twitter
- Introduced additional corporate awards
- Introduced a new and improved appraisal solution
- Agreed a yearly staff survey to capture staff views
- Offered senior management attendance to attend team meetings upon invite
- Communicated the 2011-2015 Business Plan

The Committee was pleased to note that the response rate from staff responding to the Survey had increased from 55% in 2011 to 60% in respect of the recent Survey carried out in November 2012. It was also noted that the positive feedback responses had all increased since 2011.

The analysis of the Survey had also shown that, once again, there were four organisational wide priority areas for improvement which were as follows:-

1. Wiltshire Council employees need to receive more consistent and regular information and, in particular, clarity is needed on why changes are being made by our leadership team.
2. Communication needs to be open and honest in order to give staff confidence in our leaders.
3. The Council needs to further develop a culture where respect and recognition is embedded.
4. Wiltshire needs to ensure that it is committed to customer satisfaction and that all our staff are part of this.

The Committee was informed that officers were considering these four areas where improvements were required, together with other areas where discontent had been expressed, and responses on actions being taken would be requested later in the year.

It was suggested that future Staff Surveys should include a column showing numbers of staff who had not responded to specific questions.

There was a general discussion about the Council's appraisal system and it was emphasised that it was mandatory for all staff to receive an annual appraisal and quarterly reviews. An electronic appraisal system was now in use which assisted in the monitoring and tracking of appraisals. It was suggested that consideration be given to providing a training session on the appraisal scheme for Members of this Committee.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the contents of the report.**
- (2) To request that future Staff Surveys should include statistics showing the number of staff who did not respond to specific questions.**
- (3) To request the provision of a training session on the appraisal scheme for members of this Committee.**

23 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

- (1) To note that the next scheduled meeting of this Committee was due to be held on Wednesday 10 July 2013 in the Pratchett Room at New County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.**
- (2) To note that an additional meeting of the Committee had been arranged to be held on Wednesday 26 June 2013 in the Pratchett Room at New County Hall, Trowbridge to consider a report on an urgent staffing matter prior to a decision being made by full Council on Tuesday 9 July 2013. A short training session would be held at 3.30pm, during which certain policies and aspects of the subject would be explained prior to the start of the formal meeting at 4.00pm.**

24 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items of business.

(Duration of meeting: 11.20 am - 12.35 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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