

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 MARCH 2014 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chair), Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Bob Jones MBE, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Bill Moss (Substitute), Cllr David Pollitt, Cllr John Smale (Vice Chairman) and Cllr Stuart Wheeler

Also Present:

Cllr Peter Evans and Cllr Jeff Osborn

12 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr David Jenkins and Cllr Jane Scott OBE who was substituted by Cllr Bill Moss.

13 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Resolved:

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 8 January 2014.

14 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

15 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

16 **Public Participation**

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

17 **Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedure**

Consideration was given to a report by the Associate Director, People and Business which presented a domestic abuse policy and procedure.

Officers from the Public Protection Unit attended and explained that this policy and procedure would provide managers and staff with a framework of guidance, support and advice on domestic abuse. The domestic abuse policy was closely linked to the employee health and wellbeing policy and brought together existing good practice into one place.

It was noted that the Public Protection Unit was producing a short DVD to support managers in meetings with staff where a disclosure of domestic abuse took place and in discussions about putting support measures in place which might assist staff at work. Additional guidance would also be provided on the issue of perpetrators at work.

The draft policy had been approved by the JCC on 19 February 2014 following consultation and an Equality Impact Assessment had also been undertaken.

It was anticipated that once the policy and toolkit were operating within the Council, then similar information on domestic abuse would be made available for use as a model in other organisations in Wiltshire.

Members of the Committee commended the authors of the policy and procedure on its clarity.

Resolved:

To approve the publication of the Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedure.

18 **Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy**

The Committee received a report by the Associate Director, People and Business which presented a policy prepared by Information Services which sought to clarify the responsibilities of employees who would like access to Wiltshire Council data using their own IT devices such as smartphones and tablets.

Representatives from Information Services attended the meeting and explained the policy which would be amended as and when the advent of new technology necessitated this.

During discussion, some Members questioned the need for devices to lock after a five minute period of non-use and also the current policy of emails being cleared from personal devices after a period of three days, bearing in mind that this included weekends when recipients might be away and not be able to

access their emails. However, it was generally accepted that the current arrangements were satisfactory for staff.

Resolved:

To approve the Bring Your own Device (BYOD) Policy for use by staff but to refer the policy to the Standards Committee for consideration in terms of Members.

19 **Job Families Approach Report**

The Committee considered a report by the Associate Director, People and Business which outlined the likely timescales for the implementation of the job family approach, it being noted that the Committee at its previous meeting had requested a report outlining the next steps including timescales for implementation of the job family approach.

It was noted that the Corporate Leadership Team would be considering a report later in the month which would set out various options for implementing the job family approach. The key considerations would include:-

- Whether to restructure services in order to implement the job family approach or whether to implement job families into current structures.
- What the options were for exploring how the pay and grading system could be amended.
- What budget would be available to implement the job family approach.
- What organisational structure design principles would be agreed.
- What governance model for the project would be determined.

Members were informed that it was likely to take around 18 months for the project to be implemented which was in line with other local authorities who had introduced the job family approach.

Resolved:

To note the current position regarding the implementation of the job family approach and that a progress report would be presented to this Committee in due course.

20 **Delivering the Business Plan October to December 2013**

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

Staffing Levels

Sickness Absence

New Health and Safety RIDDOR related injuries

New Disciplinary and Grievance Cases

Voluntary Staff Turnover
Employee Costs
Additional Financial Information
Employee Diversity

During discussion the following points were highlighted:-

- Since the last quarter, the overall headcount had reduced by 89 to 4954 (-1.8%). The overall full time equivalent count had reduced by 87 to 3693 (-2.3%). The most common reason for leaving was due to redundancy with 121 taking place across the Council.
- The turnover rate for the rolling year was 8.0%, this being 1.0% above the benchmark figure. During the quarter the voluntary turnover rate had reduced from 2.3% to 1.9%.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report.

21 **Recruiting and Retaining Young People**

The Committee considered a report by the Associate Director, People & Business Services which provided an update on the schemes used to recruit and retain young people, particularly those under 25 years.

It was noted that Wiltshire Council's people strategy 2012-15 identified the under 25s workforce as an under-represented group. Wiltshire's workforce statistics showed that 7.5% were under 25 in comparison with 16% of the working age community. However, Wiltshire Council's percentage of under 25's was high when compared with the level seen across other local authorities at 4.8%.

The Committee noted the various schemes which the Council had in place to target young applicants and in particular:

- The National Graduate Development Programme
- Apprenticeships
- Traineeships
- Volunteering
- Work experience

Members also noted that the following schemes were being evaluated to decide if they would add value and complement the other strategies already implemented:

- Social Worker Academy - to help social workers who had been qualified for 6 months or less.
- Supported Internships – programmes of work and study based primarily at an employer’s premises for disabled young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- GROW Events – currently being designed by Human Resources along with existing National Management Trainees as part of their personal development.
- Support to School Leavers – the Council was looking at ways to liaise with Wiltshire schools and colleges and develop apprenticeship opportunities and thus provide opportunities for young school leavers.
- Changes to Job Descriptions and Interviews – looking at the recruiting process to make it more attractive and offer equal opportunities to younger applicants.

A number of retention initiatives had also been implemented such as HR Rising Stars, Wiltshire Rewards and learning & development opportunities.

During discussion, it was suggested that every effort should be sought to advertise career opportunities in local government through career fayres and at schools, colleges and universities. Members were informed that work was already being carried out but that there was still much to do in this area.

Members expressed their high regard at the calibre and standard of work of many of the young people currently working for the Council and noted with pleasure that Adam Feather, Workforce Data Analyst had been shortlisted for an award from the Public Sector People Management Association for writing a business case for an innovative idea, presenting it and then implementing it.

The Chairman reported that Paul Rouemaine, HR Information Manager, would be leaving the employment of the Council shortly on being successful in obtaining a position with John Lewis Partnership in London. Members thanked him for all the workforce reports he had presented to this Committee in such a clear and concise manner and warmly congratulated him on his new appointment.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report.

22 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next meeting of the Committee was due be held on Wednesday 7 May 2014 in the North Wiltshire Room, County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

23 **Urgent Items**

There were no items of urgent business.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.25 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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