

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 JANUARY 2015 AT COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chair), Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Jane Scott OBE, Cllr Stuart Wheeler,
Cllr Bill Moss (Substitute) and Cllr Bob Jones MBE

Also Present:

Cllr Peter Evans

1 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr John Smale (who was substituted by Cllr Bill Moss), Cllr David Jenkins, Cllr David Pollitt and Cllr Graham Wright.

2 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Resolved:

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 9 July 2014.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

5 **Public Participation**

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

6 **Pay Policy Statement**

The Committee received a report by the Associate Director, People & Business, which presented the updated Pay Policy Statement which required approval prior to agreement by Council on 24 February 2015 and publication on the Council's website.

It was noted that under chapter 8 of the Localism Act 2011, every local authority had to publish a pay policy statement for each financial year. Wiltshire originally published its pay policy statement in February 2012 and an updated policy was now required to be published on the Council's website by 1 April 2015.

The Committee noted that the policy had been updated to include:

- A revised introduction setting the context of the Council.
- Information about the overtime policy and standby and callout policy.
- Updated total number of Council employees and latest pay ratios.

It was drawn to the Committee's attention that from 2015 no Hay graded officers would receive the JNC pay award but instead an annual review of the pay scales would take place to ensure that they were aligned with the market median pay. It was the Council's policy to pay the median market rate for the job and aim to ensure that the pay scales for hay posts were sensitive to labour market pressures. Attention was drawn to difficulties that were being experienced in recruiting staff to various shortage professions, such as social workers, solicitors and planning officers. It was appreciated that this was a national problem and it was noted that attempts made locally to attract personnel to these specialties were generally used by other authorities.

After some discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To approve the draft Pay Policy Statement which would be presented to Council at its meeting on 24 February 2015 for agreement after the budget figure had been reviewed and updated.**
- (2) To request a presentation at the next Committee meeting due to be held on 4 March 2015 on the problems associated with the shortage of key workers, such as social workers, solicitors and planning officers, together with a short report to be considered at that meeting setting out suggestions on how to attract and retain these key personnel.**

7 Revised Overtime Policy

Consideration was given to a report by the Associate Director, People & Business together with a draft revised Overtime Policy for agreement.

It was noted that the current overtime policy had different arrangements for employees depending on their grade whilst there was currently no provision for Hay graded employees to claim overtime payments. It had been discovered that this policy had been applied inconsistently with some part time employees being paid overtime rates instead of additional hours if they were required to work on a Sunday, equivalent Sunday or a Bank Holiday. Feedback from managers had indicated that a higher rate was required for all staff for these unsocial hours in order for service delivery to be maintained.

Additionally, it was noted that county wide events and major incidents had demonstrated that there was sometimes the need to mobilise a flexible workforce, often where staff were either asked to volunteer to support the Council beyond the normal remits of their roles such as sports events or the Jubilee Festival or as an essential need in an emergency situation such as the floods in December 2013.

After discussion,

Resolved:

To approve the proposed amendments to the Overtime Policy.

8 **Equality and Diversity Update**

A report by the Associate Director, People and Business was received which presented the updated equality and diversity employment monitoring report. It was noted that the Council was required to produce this information annually as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) in line with the Equality Act 2010.

It was reported that the report was updated to include information about the development of the corporate equality and diversity steering group, the setting of equality objectives and information about maternity returner rates. Data on sex, disability, ethnicity and age in relation to the current workforce, leavers and applicants for employment was currently being collected, monitored and published.

During discussion, Members referred to the employment of young people and apprentices and recorded their complete support for the increased engaging of such valuable people. They enquired what further measures were being used to promote the various schemes. It was explained that every opportunity was being taken to publicise the benefits that young graduates and apprentices brought to the Council and that measures were being taken to promote an increasing use of the national and internal graduate and also apprenticeship training schemes.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the contents of the report.**
- (2) To request a report to a future meeting of this Committee on the various schemes that had been developed to encourage young people to seek employment by the Council.**

9 Developing the Business Plan - September Quarter 2014

The Committee received a quarterly workforce report, excluding fire, police and schools staff, for the quarter ending September 2014, concerning:-

Staffing Levels
Sickness Absence
New Health & 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:-

- Sickness rates had increased this quarter by 0.1 FTE days to 2.1 days per FTE, this being 0.4 days per FTE less than the benchmark local authority median and 0.1 days per FTE less than the July – September 2013 quarter. The highest levels of sickness this quarter occurred in the Waste & Environment and Adult Social Care Services at 4.5 and 3.5 days per FTE respectively, these being the only areas that were above the benchmark figure for local government; all other service areas were under the benchmark figure.
- The cost of sick pay had reduced this quarter by £16,133 to £568,032. Although the sickness absence rate had slightly increased this quarter, this could be explained by the fact that sickness had decreased significantly in both Finance & Commissioning and Performance & School Effectiveness.
- The voluntary turnover rate had increased to 3.4% this quarter, an increase of 1.1%, this being 1.6% above the benchmark rate for local government. 35.5% (61) of all voluntary leavers had resigned for alternative employment other than with a local authority, this being an increase of 23 resignations.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report.

10 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next meeting of this Committee was scheduled to be held on Wednesday 4 March 2015, to be held in the Kennet Room at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

11 **Urgent Items**

There were no items of urgent business.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 - 11.25 am)

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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