

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 MAY 2019 AT WEST WILTS COMMITTEE ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chairman), Cllr Tony Jackson (Vice-Chairman), Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Hayley Illman, Cllr John Smale, Cllr David Halik (Substitute) and Cllr Tony Trotman (Substitute)

20 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from:-

Cllr Richard Clewer, who was substituted by Cllr David Halik.

Cllr David Jenkins

Cllr Ricky Rogers

Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, who was substituted by Cllr Tony Trotman.

21 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Resolved:

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 6 March 2019.

22 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

23 **Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman made the following announcement:-

HR Excellence Awards It was announced that the Wiltshire HR team had been shortlisted for the following three Excellence Awards:-

- Best HR Team
- Outstanding Employee Engagement Strategy
- Most innovative use of HR technology

Presentations were due to be made on 2 July 2019 in London.

24 **Public Participation**

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

25 **Senior Officers Employment Sub-Committee**

Resolved:

To receive and note the minutes of the Senior Officers Employment Sub-Committee held on 27 March and 9 April 2019.

26 **ASYE - Assessed and Supported Year of Employment policy and procedure**

Consideration was given to a report by the Director, Human Resources & Organisational Development concerning proposals to change the ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year of Employment) policy and procedure. The ASYE policy had been updated and revised to change the way the Council dealt with performance issues for trainee social workers so that should action need to be taken, the probationary policy was used rather than the SOSR (some other substantial reason) procedure.

It was pointed out that the ASYE procedure was a 12-month programme that newly qualified social workers (NQSWs) needed to successfully complete in order to practise as qualified social workers. It was designed to enable NQSWs develop their professional competence and confidence alongside their skills, knowledge and capability and to make the transition from formal study to practise.

The current ASYE policy used the SOSR (some other substantial reason) procedure should there be performance issues with a NQSW but after discussions with the legal team and HR operations team, it was felt that using SOSR was not appropriate as the ASYE is a probationary programme and the policy should reflect this.

After some discussion,

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report and agree the revisions to the policy and procedure

27 **Quarterly Workforce Report: January to March 2019**

The Committee received a workforce report, excluding fire, police and school staff, for the quarter ended 31 March 2019.

The report showed that the current workforce appeared to be in a fairly stable position. Staffing levels remained consistent, whilst voluntary turnover was seeing a year-on-year downward trend.

Members were pleased to note that the proportion of staff under the age of 25 had seen a steady but consistent increase over the 2018/19 financial year and was now at its highest rate since 2015.

However, it was noted that there had been an increase in agency spend over the last 18 months but this increase mainly related to covering social worker roles in Support and Safeguarding and providing interim executive/director positions.

Resolved:

To note the Quarterly Workforce report.

28 **Staff Survey 2018**

The Committee received a report by the Director, Human Resources & Organisational Development which provided a summary of the results of the 2018 staff engagement survey.

The Committee also received a presentation which set out the findings in some detail, a copy of which would be circulated to Committee members.

It was noted that the response rate was 63.3% (2,729 individual responses), this being slightly lower than the previous survey rate in 2016 of 65.7% ((2,898 responses). However, it was explained that most of the reduced response rate could be attributed to receiving significantly less paper copy surveys in 2018. Just under 5% of responses (129) were received as paper copies compared to almost 8% (229) in 2016.

It was generally regarded that 63.3% represented a good return but thought was being given to the format of future staff surveys. Consideration would need to be given as to whether to repeat a survey every two years or to break down the survey into a number of bite sizes.

Members were pleased to note that staff submitted over 5,500 free-text comments, compared with only 534 in the 2016 survey. Attention was drawn to the analysis of these comments which highlighted the main positive and negative themes.

After further discussion,

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report and to thank the staff for the huge amount of work that had been undertaken.

29 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next meeting of this Committee was due to be held on Wednesday 10 July 2019, starting at 10.30am at County Hall, Trowbridge.

30 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items of business.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 11.50 am)

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