

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 MAY 2011 AT ORKNEY ROOM, COUNTY HALL EAST WING, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chairman), Cllr Rod Eaton, Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Francis Morland, Cllr Jane Scott OBE and Cllr John Smale

Also Present:

Cllr David Jenkins

37. Apologies for Absence and Changes to Committee Membership

- (1) Apologies for absence were received from Cllr John Noeken and Cllr Mark Packard.
- (2) To note that at the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 17 May 2011, the following changes in membership were agreed:-
 - Cllr Jon Hubbard was appointed as a member in place of Cllr David Jenkins.
 - Cllr Rosemary Brown, Cllr Chris Caswill and Cllr Malcolm Hewson were appointed as substitute members.

The Chairman paid warm tribute to Cllr David Jenkins and thanked him for the valuable contribution he had made to the work of this Committee during the past two years. These sentiments were warmly endorsed by other Members of the Committee.

38. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To confirm and sign the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 5 April 2011 as a correct record.

39. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

40. **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

41. **Public Participation and Councillors' Questions**

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

42. **Appointment of Sub-Committees**

The Committee considered appointments to its sub-committees.

Cllr Morland enquired as to whether or not it was a requirement that sub-committees be constituted on a political proportionality basis and requested that advice be sought from the Monitoring Officer. After some discussion,

Resolved: To appoint members to serve on the sub-committees of this Committee for the ensuing year as set out below, subject to the views of the Monitoring Officer:-

(1) **Senior Officers Employment Sub-Committee**

Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Jane Scott & a Liberal Democrat nominee.

(Substitute Members: Cllr Rod Eaton, Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr John Smale & a Liberal Democrat nominee.)

(2) **Appeals Sub-Committee**

Cllr Rod Eaton, Cllr John Noeken & a Liberal Democrat nominee.

(Substitute Members: Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr John Smale & a Liberal Democrat nominee.)

(3) **Grievance Appeals Sub-Committee**

Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Mike Hewitt & a Liberal Democrat nominee.

(Substitute Members: Cllr Rod Eaton, Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr Jonathon Seed & a Liberal Democrat nominee.)

43. **Flexible Working, Flexitime & Job Share Policies**

Consideration was given to a report by the Service Director HR & OD which sought approval for the adoption of a harmonised Flexible Working Policy, Flexi-

Time Policy and Job Share Policy in place of the current Ways of Working Policy and toolkit.

It was explained that since Ways of Working (WOW) had been introduced in 2006 the culture of the organisation had changed. In particular Local Government Reorganisation and subsequent workplace transformation projects had led to flexible working becoming “the way we work”. The ICT infrastructure had changed to support this with the introduction of laptops, wifi internet connection and voice over internet phones. A new suite of flexible working policies and toolkits had been created of which three, namely Flexible Working Policy, Flexi-Time Policy and Job Share Policy were the subject of the report under consideration. It was planned that the remaining policies currently being finalised would be presented to the next meeting of this Committee with the aim of having the whole suite of policies complete and ready for implementation by October 2011.

A full discussion ensued during which the following points were made:-

- The need for consideration to be given to a full risk assessment to be undertaken in respect of officers when working from home.
- The importance of management training necessary for the deliverance of these policies.

Resolved:

- (1) To approve the Flexible Working, Flexi-Time and Job Share Policies, to be implemented as part of the overall suite of flexible working policies by October 2011.**
- (2) To request the officers to ensure that adequate management training be implemented so as to ensure the effective implementation of these policies.**

44. Honoraria Policy

The Committee considered a report by the Service Director HR & OD which sought approval to a new Honoraria Policy which had been updated in line with a KPMG audit report which recommended a more robust sign off process for honoraria payments.

It was explained that there were two suggested main changes to this policy, as follows:-

- All honoraria payments must be approved by the relevant corporate director and countersigned by the head of HR & OD.

- In addition, any payment which exceeds £4,500 in any one year and/or increases the employee's grade by 2 grades or more above their substantive position, must be approved by the Cabinet Member for Resources (Cllr John Noeken) or a nominated Cabinet Member representative.

During discussion, Members considered that the title of this policy was incorrect and that this policy was really dealing with payment for additional duties rather than honoraria which were in fact ex-gratia payments made in gratitude for an officer undertaking and completing on a one-off basis a particularly complex piece of work. Members also questioned the need for payments to be approved by a Cabinet Member, it being considered that such payments should be signed off by management.

After further discussion

Resolved:

To defer consideration of this policy until the next meeting in order to obtain the following information:-

- (1) Whether or not the advice received from KPMG was based on honoraria or payment for additional duties.**
- (2) The need for a Cabinet Member to sign off such payments rather than senior management.**

45. Acting Up Policy

Consideration was given to a report by the Service Director HR & OD which presented an updated Acting Up Policy which was in line with Human Resources aim to create policies which were consistent in format, easy to read and understand and fit for purpose.

After discussion,

Resolved:

To approve the updated Acting Up Policy, subject some minor amendments.

46. Disability Support in the Workplace Policy and Procedure

The Committee considered a report by the Service Director HR & OD which presented a new Disability Support in the Workplace Policy and Procedure. It

was explained that this revised policy and procedure amalgamated existing disability support information and was in line with the Equality Act 2010.

After discussion,

Resolved:

To approve the new Disability Support in the Workplace Policy and Procedure.

47. **Smoking Policy**

Consideration was given to a report by the Service Director HR & OD which put forward options for a new Smoking Policy to cover all employees of Wiltshire Council. It was noted that Wiltshire Council currently had five smoking policies which had been implemented prior to reorganisation in April 2009 and these policies needed to be harmonised into one policy which would provide a consistent approach across Council sites.

After discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To allow employees to smoke on Wiltshire Council premises at designated points only provided that:-**
 - (i) these designated points were accessible to members of the public, including those with impaired mobility.**
 - (ii) receptacles for the deposit of cigarette ends were provided and emptied on a regular basis.**
- (2) To continue the ongoing policy of offering assistance and advice to employees to help them to give up smoking.**

48. **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held on Wednesday 20 July 2011, starting at 10.30am.

49. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.40 pm)

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

Press enquiries to Communications, direct line (01225) 713114/713115