

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 JULY 2011 AT ORKNEY ROOM, EAST WING, COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chairman), Cllr Mary Douglas (Substitute), Cllr Rod Eaton, Cllr Mike Hewitt (Vice Chairman), Cllr Francis Morland, Cllr John Noeken and Cllr John Smale

50. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Jon Hubbard and Cllr Jane Scott (who was substituted by Cllr Mary Douglas).

51. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To confirm and sign the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 18 May 2011.

52. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

53. Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

54. Public Participation

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

55. Appointment of Sub-Committees

On considering a report by the Solicitor to the Council and Monitoring Officer,

Resolved:

- (1) To confirm that this Committee wishes to appoint its three sub-committees by applying the rules on political proportionality, rather than agreeing that appointments be made from its membership on a non-political basis as and when a Sub-Committee meeting is required, as adopted by the Licensing and Appeals Committees.
- (2) 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 Jane Scott & a Liberal Democrat nominee.
(Substitute Members: Cllr Rod Eaton, Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr John Smale & a Liberal Democrat nominee.)
 - (b) **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.)
 - (c) **Grievance Appeals Sub-Committee**
Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Mike Hewitt & an Independent nominee.
(Substitute Members: Cllr Rod Eaton, Cllr Bill Moss, Cllr Jonathon Seed & an Independent nominee.)

56. **Flexible Working - Annualised Hours Policy**

Consideration was given to a report by the Service Director HR & OD which sought approval to the new Annualised Hours Policy which would be part of a group of flexible working policies which would apply to all Wiltshire Council employees, except for teaching and non-teaching staff employed in locally managed schools, and replace the current Ways of Working Policy and toolkit.

After discussion,

Resolved:

To approve the updated Annualised Hours Policy.

57. **Flexible Working - Time Off in Lieu Policy**

On considering a report by the Service Director HR & OD, which sought approval to the new Time Off In Lieu Policy which would be part of a group of flexible working policies which would apply to all Wiltshire Council employees, except for teaching and non-teaching staff employed in locally managed schools, and replace the current Ways of Working Policy and toolkit.

Resolved:

To approve the updated Time Off In Lieu Policy.

58. **Criminal Record Disclosures Policy & Procedure**

The Committee considered a report by the Service Director HR & OD which requested approval to the new Criminal Record Disclosures Policy and Procedure.

It was noted that the Government had recently brought the Criminal Records Bureau, previously a separate entity, under the remit of the Home Office in anticipation of further changes to be made to the Criminal Records Bureau during 2012. The new Policy being considered had been updated to reflect these changes by the Government. Furthermore, the Policy had also been updated to reflect changes made by the Government to its Vetting and Barring Scheme.

During discussion the following points were raised:-

- Para 18 of the Policy stated as follows:-

You should be aware that it may take several weeks to obtain a CRB check and that you may not normally work in the role for which the CRB check is being obtained, until it is received and the offer of employment is confirmed.

A clarification of *normally* was required.

- In Para 19 (Information required from the applicant) of the Policy stated that *You will be required to produce originals of three documents from two specific lists, including an original copy of your birth certificate.* Members asked for confirmation that an original copy of a birth certificate was required, bearing in mind that many members of the public did not possess a copy.
- Clarification was requested concerning the arrangements for CRB checking of Members of the Authority, there appearing to be some uncertainty of the requirements.

Resolved:

- (1) To approve the revised Criminal Record Disclosures Policy and Procedure, subject to clarification of Para 18 of the Policy, as set out above.
- (2) To request the Cabinet Member for Resources (Cllr John Noeken) to investigate the procedure for the CRB checking of Members of the Authority.

59. **Recruitment of Ex-offenders Policy & Procedure**

On considering a report by the Service Director HR & OD,

Resolved:

To approve the new Recruitment of Ex-Offenders Policy and Procedure.

60. **Storage of Disclosure Information Policy & Procedure**

On considering a report by the Service Director HR & OD,

Resolved:

To approve the new Storage of Disclosure Information Policy and Procedure.

61. **Recruitment Policy & Procedure**

Consideration was given to a report by the Service Director HR & OD which presented a new Recruitment Policy and Procedure which had been rewritten in line with the Equality Act 2010 and to make it more accessible to managers and employees.

After discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To approve the new Recruitment Policy and Procedure, subject to Para 16 being amended to read as follows:-

The role will be advertised internally via the e-recruitment system and on the Careers Bulletin. The role will be advertised externally if it is a customer facing role and so as to give as wide a range of candidates as possible the opportunity to apply.

- (2) To request a report on the current discharge policy and procedures for leavers for the next meeting.

62. **Probationary Periods Policy & Procedure**

The Committee considered a report by the Service Director HR & OD which sought approval of a new Probationary Periods Policy and Procedure.

After discussion,

Resolved:

To approve the new Probationary Periods Policy and Procedure, subject to the following amendments:-

- (1) Para 4 – last sentence to read *The objectives will relate to the job description and person specification and the Council's Business Plan.*
- (2) Para 29 to read *Once your post has been confirmed, the appraisal procedure will be followed.*

63. **Payment for Acting Up or Additional Duties Policy & Procedure**

On considering a report by the Service Director HR & OD,

Resolved:

To approve the new Payment for Acting Up or Additional Duties Policy, which combines the current Acting Up and Honoraria Policies, as previously agreed by this Committee.

64. **Ex-gratia and Honoraria Payments**

On considering a report by the Service Director HR & OD,

Resolved:

- (1) To confirm the current practice whereby no honoraria or ex-gratia payments are made to individuals to recognise high performance.
- (2) To look for other ways, outside of additional salary payments, to recognise employees who managers believe have performed above what is expected of them in their role.

65. **Quarterly Performance Reports for March 2011**

The Committee received quarterly workforce reports excluding schools for the quarter ended 31 March 2011 concerning:-

Headcount and Full Time Equivalent
Age Profile
Employee Diversity
Sickness Absence
Health and Safety
Voluntary Staff Turnover
Disciplinary and Grievance Cases

Members of the Committee questioned the reasoning for setting the benchmark at the upper or lower quartiles in some instances.

Resolved:

- (1) To note the contents of the report.**
- (2) To request an improvement in tracking the disciplinary and grievance cases, especially from the Departments of Neighbourhood & Planning and Children & Education.**

66. **Revision to Terms and Conditions of Employment**

Consideration was given to a report by the Service Director HR & OD which recommended revisions to terms and conditions of employment in order to save an estimated £8.81 million over four years in support of the Council's Business Plan.

It was noted that the Council was faced with absorbing a cut of 28.4% to its grant funding in addition to managing more than 300 new pieces of legislation.

In order to help meet these challenges and to achieve these savings, various options to changes in terms and conditions of employment were explored and some had been rejected. However, during negotiations with trade unions a final list proposals was drawn up, as set out in the report, and UNISON, GMB and UNITE thereupon balloted their members locally. The result of the three separate ballots was announced the previous day and Members were informed that the majority of the members who voted from all three Trade Unions supported the package of proposals.

After discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To agree the proposed changes to the terms and conditions of employment.
- (2) To record the Committee's thanks and appreciation to the staff and union negotiation teams for the way they had worked together and which had resulted in ballot decisions which would contribute to the benefit and stability of the Council, its staff and the people of Wiltshire.

67. **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.35 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

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