

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 SEPTEMBER 2013 AT PITMAN ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE.

Present:

Cllr Peter Evans (Substitute), Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr David Jenkins, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr David Pollitt, Cllr Jane Scott OBE, Cllr John Smale (Vice Chairman in the Chair), Cllr Anthony Trotman (Substitute) and Cllr Stuart Wheeler

32 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Allison Bucknell, who was substituted by Cllr Peter Evans and Cllr Mike Hewitt, who was substituted by Cllr Tony Trotman.

33 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 10 July 2013.

34 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

35 Chairman's Announcements

There were no Chairman's announcements.

36 Public Participation

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

37 **Overview of Role of Chaplaincy Service**

The Chairman introduced and welcomed Revd. Rob Thomas, Rector of St James' Church, Trowbridge and Chaplain at County Hall, who was attending the meeting to explain the role of the Chaplaincy Service.

Revd Thomas explained that the Chaplaincy Service was available to all staff and also members of the Council irrespective of their religion or beliefs and was available at any of the Council's main hubs at County Hall, Trowbridge, Monkton Park, Chippenham and Bourne Hill, Salisbury. The Service was resourced by the local churches and was provided by 12 ordained ministers from across the County. They offered a listening confidential and unbiased service to:

- help individuals reflect on personal, workplace and other issues,
- provide personal encouragement and support, and
- signpost to other services where appropriate.

Revd Thomas stressed that the clergy did not provide a counselling service.

In addition to confidential meetings, the chaplaincy team would be available in staff rest areas for informal discussions, the dates for which would be publicised in *The Wire*, on posters and on fliers. Staff were able to access the service during working hours without having to make up the time.

Members acknowledged the importance of this service and thanked Revd Thomas and his team of clergy for the valuable work they so willingly and enthusiastically undertook.

38 **Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) and Trust Schools Status within the Pension Fund**

Consideration was given to a report by the Service Director, HR & OD which sought agreement to allow co-operative trust schools continued access to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) for their current and future non-teaching employees.

After some discussion during which some concern was expressed concerning the cost of implementing the proposals,

Resolved:

- a. **To agree that all non teaching staff employed by the governing bodies of Longleaze Primary, Lyneham Primary, Noremars Junior and St Sampsons Infants schools are eligible for continued membership of the LGPS following a change in the school's category.**

- b. To agree that schools who change from community/voluntary controlled to foundation category in the future, are granted eligibility for continued membership of the LGPS for existing non teaching staff (and future employees).
- c. To request that a fundamental look be made of the Local Government Pension Scheme membership in conjunction with the Wiltshire Pension Fund Committee and that report on the outcome be made to the next meeting of this Committee on 6 November 2013.

(Note: Cllr David Pollitt requested that his vote against the motions be recorded.)

39 **Proposed Amendment to Senior Manager Pay Scales**

Consideration was given to a report by Cllr Jane Scott, Leader of the Council which outlined a proposal to apply the current median market pay rate to scale point 2 of the pay scales for the roles of corporate, associate and transformation programme directors, in line with the Council's current pay policy statement.

In introducing her report, Cllr Scott explained that recent pay data had indicated that the pay scales for these senior officers were now significantly adrift of the median pay rates for similar sized posts in other public sector organisations and this had highlighted significant pay related issues for the Council's most senior officers. Furthermore, retention of some staff at this level was becoming problematic and there was a serious possibility if the current situation was allowed to continue that there would be a serious threat to the delivery of vital services to the people of Wiltshire.

Cllr Scott explained that the re-alignment of senior management pay scales had been independently reviewed by an external body of professional advisors; the Hay pay benchmarking group. It stated that the pay scales, at median level were not competitive and not reflective of the changes in the wider market place. The advisors also highlighted that for the Council to deliver service excellence and its innovative programmes, it needed to be able to recruit and retain high calibre staff with the right skills and expertise.

It was noted that since 2009, the senior management structure had reduced from 33 senior managers (cost of around £3.5 million) to 21, which was a significant saving of almost £1.2 million. It was proposed to further reduce the number of senior managers to reflect the priorities agreed in the business plan for the next four years (approved at council earlier that week). Consultation on these proposals was due to start on 11 September. If the Committee approved these proposals, then this restructure would save up to £500,000, in addition to the £1.2 million already saved. It was intended that following this restructure,

the pay scales for the remaining senior managers would be adjusted so as to be equitable and in line with the agreed policy to pay at the median level.

After a lengthy and thorough discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To apply the current median market pay rate to scale point 2 of the pay scales for the roles of corporate, associate and transformation programme director, in line with the Council's current pay policy statement.**
- (2) To agree that the payment of any nationally agreed JNC annual pay award to corporate, associate and transformation programme directors ceases with effect 31 March 2014, and that a periodic review of the market pay data only is used to determine the pay levels for this role.**

40 **Delivering the Business Plan - June 2013**

The Committee received a quarterly workforce report, excluding fire, police and schools staff, for the quarter ended 30 June 2013 concerning:-

Staffing Levels
Sickness Absence
New Health and Safety RIDDOR related injuries
New Disciplinary and Grievance Cases
Voluntary Staff Turnover
Employee Costs

During discussion the following points were highlighted:-

- The headcount during this quarter had decreased by 106 to 5159, largely due to Highways & Streetscene in Neighbourhood Services being outsourced. However, the headcount in full time equivalents had increased by 14 to 3903, an increase of 0.4%. This was due to Children & Families Social Care and Adult Care & Housing Strategy both increasing their FTEs by 50 and 37 respectively and also the introduction of staff from Public Health which increased the headcount by 40 (36FTE).
- Sickness rates during the quarter had decreased to 2.2 FTE days per FTE, this being 0.2 FTE days lower than for the same quarter in 2012. The sickness rate for the period 1 August 2012 to 30 June 2013 was 8.9 FTE days per FTE, this being 0.9 days lower than the benchmark rate.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report.

41 **Seasonal Flu Vaccinations for Staff**

The Committee considered a report by the Service Director, HR & OD which outlined the intention to extend the offer of seasonal flu vaccinations to all staff who undertook critical service delivery roles.

It was explained that in previous years, and in line with the Council's vaccination policy and advice from the Department of Health, a free flu vaccination had been offered to those staff who provided personal care to service users, this amounting to about 350 staff. Staff had been advised of their eligibility, arranged their own vaccinations and claimed the cost back from the Council. Any claims had been funded from service budgets but the take up had been low.

Following on from the integration of public health, a working party was set up comprising public health, occupational health, emergency planning, communications & human resources to review this process. The working party recommended that this scheme should be extended to include all staff considered to be critical to business continuity in order to minimise the risk to the Council in the event of a major flu outbreak.

The Committee noted that initial estimates suggested that 950 staff would be eligible but this figure would need to be confirmed.

The preferred approach would be for the Council to purchase vouchers at a discounted rate of about £6.75 per employee, which would then be given to eligible staff who could receive their vaccinations at various high street providers such as Boots, Tesco or Sainsbury's in exchange for their voucher.

During discussion, Members expressed support for such a scheme but considered that thought should be given to offering the service to all staff at the discounted rate of £6.75 per vaccination.

Resolved:

- (1) To approve the proposal to extend the offer of seasonal flu vaccinations to all staff who undertook critical service delivery roles.**
- (2) To request the officers to look into the possibility of offering the service to all remaining employees of the Council at a discounted rate of £6.75 per vaccination and to report back.**

42 **Senior Officers Employment Sub-Committee**

Resolved:

To receive and note the minutes of the Senior Officers Employment Sub-Committee meeting held on 16 July 2013.

43 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next meeting of this Committee was due to be held on Wednesday 6 November 2013 in the Pratchett Room, County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

44 **Urgent Items**

There were no urgent items.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 am - 12.35 pm)

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