

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 MAY 2015 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chair), Cllr John Smale (Vice Chairman), Cllr David Pollitt, Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Jane Scott OBE, Cllr Stuart Wheeler, Cllr Bob Jones MBE and Cllr Graham Wright

21 Apologies for absence

There were no apologies for absence.

22 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4 March 2015.

23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

24 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced with pleasure that Barry Pirie, Associate Director for People & Business Services had been elected as President of the Public Services People Managers' Association (PPMA), an association of human resources professionals from across the public sector.

Furthermore, staff in HR/OD won another prestigious national award the previous week in Bristol at the PPMA annual seminar 2015 titled "Our past, our present and our future." Colleagues were available to receive the coveted award, PPMA Excellence in People Management Awards 2015, Excellence in Staff Benefits and Reward.

The Chairman and members of the Committee offered their congratulations to Barry Pirie and his team on this outstanding success.

25 **Public Participation**

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

26 **Social Worker Recruitment**

The Committee received a report by the Associate Director, People & Business, which provided an update on the progress of a targeted recruitment campaign to recruit social workers and social work managers, the lessons learnt from the campaign and details of the steps being taken to retain these key workers.

It was acknowledged that there had been significant difficulties nationally in recruiting social workers, particularly in respect of experienced practitioners and there were a number of recruitment campaigns taking place in councils across the country. In Wiltshire, there had been difficulties particularly in recruiting experienced social workers and social work managers across both adults and children's services. In particular difficulties existed in the safeguarding and assessment teams in children's services and competition for quality candidates in these roles was very high.

To help overcome these problems a recruitment campaign had commenced in August 2014, which had included a number of traditional and new approaches, including more wide scale use of social media in the advertising of the social work vacancies.

The first phase of the campaign ended in September 2014 and delivered some success in the recruitment of social work manager roles but was less successful in the recruitment of experienced social workers.

Phase 2 of the campaign was launched in October 2014 with the aim of recruiting to social worker and social work manager roles across both children's and adult services. At that stage there were 127 vacancies including 49 social work vacancies in the safeguarding & assessment teams.

Since the start of the campaign in August 2014, a total of 459 applications had been received of which 80 candidates had been offered and had accepted a role; 55 of these successful candidates had commenced employment.

A third phase of the campaign would be launched shortly in order to ensure that recruitment continued at a steady pace. The social work recruitment microsite, which had been developed, would remain live and all remaining vacancies would continue to be listed on the Council's careers website. It was noted that further financial investment and resources would be required to ensure that Wiltshire's position in this area of the recruitment market remained prominent as

a number of other neighbouring authorities also ran current social work recruitment campaigns.

Work to improve the retention of social workers had been progressing with the development of an academy for health and social care. The purpose of the Wiltshire Institute for Health & Social Care (WHISC) would be to help attract, recruit, develop and retain health and social care professionals across the county, in order to improve outcomes for our service users.

It was also noted that there might well be a pool of suitable candidates available with the return of military personnel to Wiltshire, particularly in the south east of the County.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report.

27 **Delivering the Business Plan - December 2014**

The Committee received a quarterly workforce report, excluding fire, police and schools staff, for the quarter ending December 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

Resolved:

(1) To note the contents of the report.

(2) To request that meetings of this Committee be put back one month in order to obtain up to date information.

28 **New Careers Website**

A demonstration of the new Careers Website, which was to be launched on Monday 11 May 2015, was provided at the meeting.

It was noted that one of the principal aims of the new website would be to provide an opportunity for young people to discover what choice of careers was available from within the Council and it was planned to bring this new website to the attention of schools.

Members welcomed this new initiative and congratulated the officers on developing such a clear and comprehensive website.

Resolved:

To request a progress report in four months' time.

29 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next meeting of this Committee was due to be held on Wednesday 8 July 2015 at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

30 **Urgent Items**

There were no items of urgent business.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 - 11.20 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

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