

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 JANUARY 2014 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chair), Cllr Peter Evans (Substitute), Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr David Jenkins, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Bill Moss (Substitute), Cllr David Pollitt and Cllr Stuart Wheeler

Also Present:

Cllr Terry Chivers, Cllr Helen Osborn and Cllr Jeff Osborn

1 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr John Smale, who was substituted by Cllr Peter Evans and Cllr Jane Scott OBE who was substituted by Cllr Bill Moss.

2 **Minutes of Previous Meeting**

Resolved:

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the Committee meeting held on 6 November 2013.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

4 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

5 **Public Participation**

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

6 **Pay Policy Statement**

Consideration was given to a report by the Associate Director, People & Business Services which presented the updated Pay Policy Statement for approval prior to agreement by Council and publication on the Council's website.

It was explained that under chapter 8 of the Localism Act 2011, every local authority was required to prepare an annual pay policy statement. Wiltshire Council originally published its pay policy statement in February 2012 and the Council was now required to publish an updated policy on its website by 1 April 2014.

It was noted that the policy had now been updated to include:

- A revised introduction setting the context of the Council.
- Updated figures on the budget, number of employees and pay ratios.

The Pay Policy Statement set out the Council's policies for the financial year relating to:

- The remuneration of chief officers
- The remuneration of the lowest-paid employees
- The relationship between the remuneration of chief officers and employees who are not chief officers

Reference was made to the review of the pay of staff at senior management level undertaken in 2013 which included employees on the upper HAY grades and Members were informed that the salaries of those remaining HAY graded employees would be reviewed shortly.

After further discussion, during which a few minor amendments to the Pay Policy Statement were made,

Resolved:

To approve the draft Pay Policy Statement which would be presented to Council at its February 2014 meeting for agreement after the budget figure had been reviewed and updated, subject to the following amendments:-

Para 27 to read:

“The Council's policy is to apply the nationally negotiated JNC pay award for HAY graded employees, except for corporate and associate directors, and NJC pay award for GLPC graded employees which takes effect from 1 April each year.”

Para 70 to read:

“The table below shows the relationship between the basic pay of the highest and lowest paid employees in the council, excluding pensions and allowances. The figures include all staff in non schools and are based on annual full time equivalent salaries.”

7 Equality and Diversity Monitoring Report

Consideration was given to the updated annual equality and diversity employment monitoring report as prepared by the Associate Director, People & Business Services. It was noted that the Council was required to produce this information annually as part of the Public Sector Equality Duty in line with the Equality Act 2010.

It was noted that this updated report outlined the work the Council continued to take in relation to positive action and also outlined work which had been identified for consideration or action based on data analysis which included:

- Measures to increase the recruitment and retention of under 25's
- To improve the rate of unknown's for all categories – including consideration of further data cleanse exercises or targeting particular areas where information was low ie paper based checks for those who did not have a pc etc.
- To give consideration to increasing the number of protected characteristics monitored.
- Dignity at work – further analysis of the staff survey indicated that disabled staff were twice as likely to indicate that they had been bullied. Dignity at work training would be included in the programme of Manager briefings for 2014.

After discussion,

Resolved:

- (1) To endorse the contents of the draft Equality and Diversity Employment Monitoring Report, subject to the following amendment:**

Para 53 to read as follows:

“The council has a single countywide appraisal system. The appraisal process enables staff to discuss issues relating to barriers to access and progress at work with their manager and is primarily used for developmental purposes.”

- (2) To request a report for the next meeting outlining work being undertaken to encourage the recruitment and retention of young people under the age of 25 years.

8 **Delivering the Business Plan July to September 2013**

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

Staffing Levels

Sickness Absence

New Health and Safety RIDDOR related injuries

New Disciplinary and Grievance Cases

Voluntary Staff Turnover

Employee Costs

Additional Financial Information

Employee Diversity

During discussion the following points were highlighted:-

- The headcount during this quarter had decreased by 116 to 5043, largely due to 58 employees being TUPE transferred out in Adult Care and Housing Operations and a large reduction in Schools & Learning due to a structure review. This had resulted in a saving of £140,000.
- Sickness rates during the quarter had slightly decreased to 2.0 FTE days per FTE. The sickness rate for the rolling year 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013 was 8.9 FTE days per FTE, this being 1.0 day lower than the benchmark rate. It was noted that Waste Management Services and Adult Care & Housing Operations had the highest rates of sickness at 5.0 (+0.6 days per FTE) and 3.4 (-0.2 days per FTE) days per WTE respectively. 36.1% of all absences in Waste Management Services were due to stomach complaints. These absences were being investigated in conjunction with Public Health colleagues. A comparison with similar staff in other local authorities had shown that these absences in Wiltshire were not greater.
- The spend on agency staff had increased this quarter by £240,905. This was largely due to an increase in Adult Care & Housing Operations. Without this cost there would have been a reduction of £124,829 during the quarter, the largest reduction (£129,942) being in Children's & Families Social Care.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report.

9 **Implementation of the Living Wage**

Consideration was given to a report by the Associate Director, People & Business Services from which it was noted that at the Council meeting held on 12 November 2013, Cllr Jeff Osborn and Cllr Terry Chivers presented a Motion that the Living Wage should be adopted by the Council. Council had agreed to refer the Motion to Staffing Policy Committee for consideration.

It was explained that the Living Wage was an hourly rate set independently by the Centre for Research in Social Care at Loughborough University and had increased on 4 November 2014 from £7.45 to £ 7.65 per hour, an increase of 2.7%; in 2012 the Living Wage had increased by 3.4%. Members were informed that 16 local authorities had adopted the Living Wage approach but seven of these were London Boroughs.

It was noted that Cabinet had agreed to investigate the implementation of a job family modelling approach to replace the current job evaluation system. The job family modelling approach had been piloted successfully when the corporate and senior management reviews were implemented. This approach was now being scoped for the rest of the organisation and as part of this project the current pay and grading structure would also be reviewed.

It was explained that consideration could be given to applying the principles of the Living Wage to the new pay and grading structure when this project was implemented.

After discussion, during which Cllrs Jeff Osborn and Terry Chivers supported this suggested approach,

Resolved:

- (1) To note that the Staffing Policy Committee was responsible for making key decisions about the implementation of job families.**
- (2) To agree that, as part of this project, this Committee would review the pay and grading structure, and would consider if it were appropriate, to implement the Living Wage, taking into account the cost pressures.**
- (3) To invite Cllrs Jeff Osborn and Terry Chivers, the mover and seconder of the Motion at Council, to the appropriate meeting of this Committee when the matter would be considered.**
- (4) To request that a time-line for this project be presented to the next meeting of this Committee.**

10 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next meeting of this Committee was due to be held on Wednesday 5 March 2014 in the Kennet Room at County Hall, Trowbridge, starting at 10.30am.

11 **Urgent Items**

There were no items of urgent business.

(Duration of meeting: 10.30 - 11.55 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

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