

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 JULY 2017 AT THE KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Allison Bucknell (Chairman), Cllr Tony Jackson (Vice Chairman),
Cllr Richard Clewer, Cllr Andy Phillips, Cllr Ricky Rogers, Cllr Hayley Spencer,
Cllr Tony Trotman and Cllr Mike Hewitt (Substitute)

24 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr David Jenkins and Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE (who was substituted by Cllr Mike Hewitt).

25 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Resolved:

To confirm and sign as a correct record the minutes of the previous meeting held on 1 March 2017.

26 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

27 Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman made the following announcement:-

EPIC impressions launch The Chairman was pleased to announce that this new initiative had been launched that day with stands in the atriums of all three hubs, with members of the #EPIC team on hand to show staff how to send an impression.

Staff would now be able to thank colleagues and highlight their hard work by sending them an EPIC impression via grow.

EPIC impressions was a quick way to send thank you or well done messages to colleagues which would then appear on their grow profiles and could also be added to their annual appraisal form.

Further information and guidance about leaving EPIC impressions, was available at [EPIC impressions workspace](#) on grow.

28 **Public Participation**

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

29 **Appointment of Sub-Committees**

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 Allison Bucknell, Cllr Richard Clewer & Cllr Hayley Spencer.
(Substitute Members: Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr David Jenkins, Cllr Bob Jones MBE, Cllr Andy Phillips, Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philipe, Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, Cllr Ian Thorn & Cllr Tony Trotman.)

(b) **Appeals Sub-Committee**

Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Richard Clewer & Cllr David Jenkins.
(Substitute Members: Cllr Mike Hewitt, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Fleur de Rhe-Philipe, Cllr Baroness Scott of Bybrook OBE, Cllr Hayley Spencer, Cllr Ian Thorn & Cllr Tony Trotman.)

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

Cllr Allison Bucknell, Cllr Tony Jackson & Cllr Hayley Spencer.
(Substitute Members: Cllr Peter Evans, Cllr David Halik, Cllr Jon Hubbard, Cllr David Jenkins, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Andy Phillips, Cllr Ian Thorn & Cllr Tony Trotman.)

30 **Professional Qualification Learning Loans Policy and Procedure**

The Committee considered a report by the Associate Director, People & Business which set out a new professional qualification learning loans policy and procedure to enable employees to access an interest-free learning loan to undertake a professional qualification that supported their career aspirations and development.

It was explained that this proposed new policy and procedure aimed to support employees who would be required to self-fund the cost of a qualification and may not have the means to pay all of the cost of the course upfront. With the current budget constraints placed on service areas, this would enable employees to invest in their own development with support from the Council and still enable them to continue to gain qualifications and develop their career.

It was noted that the policy would require a short term outlay of funds from the Council to pay course providers but this would be recouped from an employee's

salary over the duration of the course. Should the employee leave and the Council was unable to recoup the loan, the outstanding amount would be invoiced to the employee. If the outstanding amount could not be recovered, then it would be charged to the service area budget.

After some discussion,

Resolved:

To approve the proposed Professional Qualification Learning Loans Policy and Procedure.

31 **Quarterly Workforce Report: January - March 2017**

The Committee received a workforce report, excluding fire, police and school staff, for the quarter ended 31 March 2017.

It was explained that this was a new format for the existing quarterly workforce report which aimed to raise awareness of the size and makeup of the workforce and of the issues that affected it. When appropriate it would provide the opportunity to explore and discuss issues identified from analysis of the data arising from workforce transactions.

It was noted that the first section of the new report would provide key observations from the data that had been analysed for the quarter. This would be followed by a themed commentary which would provide a deeper analysis and insight into a specific topic that was current for the Council. The indicators at the end of the report would give an instant view of selected trends over the last year to see the wider picture of what was changing in the workforce. It was proposed that the following key themes be chosen when the most relevant and applicable:-

- Sickness absence
- Employee turnover
- Resourcing and recruitment
- Employee costings
- Apprentices
- Employee engagement
- Under 25s/demographics
- Agency

Attention was drawn to sickness absence during this quarter where it was noticed that 9,472 days were lost. Over the previous four financial years on average there had been a 6% increase in absence days in this quarter due to seasonal factors. The highest absence across the council directorates continued to be in Waste and Environment where work was being carried out to establish reasons for this and if there were any preventive measures which could be undertaken.

Members enquired if there were any comparator statistics available from other local authorities from which this council could compare sickness rates especially in Waste and Environment. It was explained that such benchmarking figures were not available as a significant number of councils outsourced these services. However, Members did wonder how the level of sickness affected service delivery but were pleased to note that the depots were being visited by health & safety and occupational health officers to help ascertain the causes of these problems. It was also noted that workshops on mental health issues were being provided for managers.

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the officers for the new and helpful format for the quarterly workforce reports and asked Members to let her have details of any further changes or additional information they would like to see included which she would pass on to the officers.

Resolved:

To note the contents of the report.

32 **Date of Next Meeting**

Resolved:

To note that the next scheduled meeting of the Committee was due to be held on Wednesday 6 September 2017 at County Hall, Trowbridge starting at 2.00pm, to be preceded by a further training session on staff engagement and workforce development starting at 1.00pm for all Members and substitute Members of this Committee.

33 **Urgent Items**

There were no items of urgent business.

(Duration of meeting: 11.00 am - 11.40 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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