

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
Meeting – 11 April 2003

Present: Mr Adams (Chairman) Mr Walters (Vice-Chairman)
Mrs Barton, Mr Reed, Dr Scott and Mr Somers

14. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2003 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

15. **DEVELOPMENT OF LONG-TERM PEOPLE STRATEGY**

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Chief Executive on a broad set of themes upon which a more detailed People Strategy and action plans could be developed to support the delivery of the Council's Corporate Plan.

At the previous meeting Members requested that

- the work of the Committee should be structured and focused on strategic personnel issues avoiding too much involvement in detailed personnel matters.
- a framework document be produced in preparation to agree a long-term people strategy to tie in with the Council's Corporate Objectives.

Members noted that in a recent report from the Leader to Cabinet on the Corporate Plan, it had included the three to four year broad objectives for adoption by the Council: -

- ◆ The need to maintain and further strengthen the Green Belt.
- ◆ At the same time, to plan for a thriving and sustainable South Bucks, with vibrant town and villages.
- ◆ A clean, decent district where there was pride and therefore "ownership" of surroundings and public space.
- ◆ Help residents feel safer in their homes and in the community and encourage a strong community spirit.

The challenge would be for these priorities to be translated into tangible outcomes that the residents of South Bucks could see. The achievement of this would depend to a large degree on the Council's employees working in partnership with Members, with motivated and competent workforce being essential if the Council was going to reach the corporate objectives.

The report detailed the main factors that would influence the People Strategy for 2003/04 as follows: -

- ◆ Comprehensive Performance Assessment (February 2004)
- ◆ Investors in People re-assessment in February 2004
- ◆ Difficulties in the Recruitment and Retention of good quality staff
- ◆ The relatively small size of the Council (in staffing terms)
- ◆ Increasing service demands e.g. greater community consultation, govt. initiatives
- ◆ Additional and more complex employment legislation requirements
- ◆ Specific and added responsibilities (as a public body) re: Equal Opportunities

The values to which the Council aspires to were suggested as: -

- ◆ improving services and our performance, being open to new ideas;
- ◆ valuing diversity, and treating everyone fairly, with honesty and with respect;
- ◆ fostering supportive working relationships within the Council and with our partners;
- ◆ making services available in ways which suit the Council's customers;
- ◆ getting the best from and developing Council staff, and rewarding good performance.

Members noted that in order to achieve the Council's Corporate Objectives and aspire to the values, the work would have to be carefully prioritised and that in certain service areas an increase in the current staffing capacity/resources may be needed.

It was further noted by Members that the categories of activities which the Personnel and Training function had worked to since 1998, were as follows:

1. Pay and Non/Pay Benefits

2. Organisational
3. Training and Development
4. Recruitment and Selection
5. Employee Performance and Motivation
6. Employee Relations
7. Health, Safety and Welfare
8. Equal Opportunities

These were considered to be functional and not outcome based and did not capture the overlap and priority between the various functions.

The Committee noted that the starting point should be an objective based approach with themes linked to and driven by:-

- the Corporate Plan
- national requirements (promotion of good race relations)
- compliance with employment law (increasingly requiring greater documentation and regulation of employment policies and practice)

with the themes needing to be flexible to meet unforeseen demands.

Members requested that the term People Strategy be re-titled to the Human Resources Strategy.

The Committee recognised that although it reported independently to the Council, it would nevertheless wish the Human Resources Strategy to have the full support of the Cabinet. After this interim report had been agreed, it would be necessary to work in conjunction with the Cabinet in the development and agreement of the final Human Resources Strategy, to particularly ensure that the said Strategy fully related to the corporate aims of the Council.

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) the report be noted
- (2) the development of a long term Human Resources Strategy be based on the following themes:-
 - (a) Recruitment and Retention (creating a working environment which would both attract and retain quality staff)
 - (b) Management Development (particularly management of performance and risk management)
 - (c) Training and Development (IIP re-accreditation)
 - (d) Organisational Development (preparing for CPA, new ways of working, e-government, partnerships, customer focus etc.)
 - (e) Equal Opportunities (not just in relation to employment but also service delivery)
 - (f) Employee communications (JSCG, staff survey etc.)
 - (g) Health, Safety and Welfare (Work/Life Balance, managing stress)

16. JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE GROUP

- (a) The Committee received and noted the minutes of the meetings of the Joint Staff Consultative Group held on 13 December 2002 and 14 March 2003.
- (b) Members received an updated Constitution and Functions of the Joint Staff Consultative Group.

RESOLVED that the Constitution and Functions of the Joint Staff Consultative Group be approved and adopted.

- (c) Members considered the E-mail protocol.

RESOLVED that the E-mail protocol be approved and adopted

17. CURRENT POSITION ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive which gave a summary of the action already taken and the plans in place to maintain and improve the Council's Performance Management.

Members noted that:-

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- the appendix summarised the current position and the plans in place
- Training on Business Planning had been delivered but had not been as successful as hoped; this topic would require further action.
- Service Planning and additional Management development sessions were programmed from May 2003.
- The annual appraisal process had been examined with corporate guidance issued to all Managers, and refresher training included in the programme of corporate training and development.
- Job descriptions would be reviewed to ensure performance management was explicitly covered in each Manager and team leaders job description during 2003/04.
- as part of a review of the Council's pay and non-pay benefits various options would be investigated in how the Council could effectively reward good performance.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

18. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

As this was to be the last meeting of this Committee prior to the Elections the Chairman, Mr Adams, thanked everybody for their contributions and hard work to the work of the newly formed Personnel Committee, especially over the last few months. He went on to say that the Committee had covered a great deal in a short space of time and had enjoyed more contact / closer working relationship with the staff.

19. INVESTORS IN PEOPLE

The Assistant Chief Executive reminded Members that the Investor in People accreditation was coming up for renewal in February 2004.

RESOLVED that at a future meeting a presentation be given on Investor in People including how the benefits of accreditation outweigh the non-benefits.

20. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED that:-

- (1) The Joint Staff Consultative Group be held on Friday 27 June 2003 at 11.00 a.m.
- (2) The Personnel Committee be held on Friday 11 July 2003 at 11.00 a.m.

21. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act - (Paragraph 1 - because of information relating to an employee / office holder / applicant of the authority).

22. STAFF TURNOVER BY GRADE AND BUSINESS UNIT AREA

The Committee considered a report of the Assistant Chief Executive on Staff Turnover by Grade and Business Unit Area which gave a list of leavers from 1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003 including date left, job title, Business Unit, age, length of service and reasons for leaving.

RESOLVED that the report be noted

23. TERMINATION OF MEETING

The meeting having commenced at 11.00 a.m. terminated at 11.55 a.m., following which Members toured certain areas of the building to ascertain if any improvements had been made with regard to Health and Safety issues they had noticed on their previous tour.