

**CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL
SOUTH BUCKS DISTRICT COUNCIL**

MINUTES of the Meeting of the
JOINT STAFFING COMMITTEE
held on **21 JANUARY 2020**

PRESENT: Councillor N Naylor (SBDC) - Chairman
" I Darby (CDC) - Vice Chairman

Councillors: C Jones (CDC)
P Jones (CDC)
M Smith (CDC)
R Bagge (SBDC)
P Kelly (SBDC)
D Saunders (SBDC)

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Councillors D Phillips (CDC), M Stannard (CDC) and L Sullivan (SBDC).

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Councillor M Titterington (CDC)

66 MINUTES

The minutes of the Joint Staffing Committee held on 4 November 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

67 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

68 HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

The Committee received an update on key employment data and HR projects from the HR Manager, which covered the following:

- The number of joiners and leavers continued to fluctuate, with the most common reason for leaving being cited as the impending transition to the new council. A change freeze had been put in place from December 2019 which meant only business critical roles were being recruited to pre-transfer. As a result, there had been a rise in temporary contracts and agency workers.

- Sickness levels continued to drop with the average number of days lost per employee to date for 2019/20 being 4.13, the projected number for the full year was 6.2 days which was well below the national average.
- The TUPE consultation ended on 17 January and the next step was for a letter to be sent to all staff informing them of their new employer being Buckinghamshire Council from 1 April. All terms and conditions of employment would be transferred unchanged.
- The consultation to change the pay date to the last working day of the month as a result of the move to one finance, payroll and HR system (SAP) ended on 17 January. An email would be sent to all staff on 27 January requesting consent to the change. If any staff wished to withhold consent they would be required to formally put this in writing to the HR Manager by 14 February. As a result of concerns raised during conversations with staff, the bridging loan repayment period would be extended to 11 months. A further range of communications were in the process of being shared with staff to ensure all were prepared for the move to SAP.
- The new corporate directors were recruited in October 2019 and had commenced their roles with the new Council. There remained one corporate director post vacant which was currently being advertised.
- There were five senior managers who had not secured a post in the new council. A detailed report would be presented to the Joint Staffing Committee in February outlining proposals for these post holders.
- A Health and Wellbeing survey took place in December 2019, 13% of Chiltern and South Bucks employees responded and there was some disparity between county council and district council responses. A repeat survey would be undertaken in March which would be supported by a communication strategy to promote responses.
- Chiltern and South Bucks had been named as finalists at the Reward and Employee Benefit Association Wellbeing Awards under 'Best New Wellbeing Strategy' and 'Best Wellbeing Engagement'. This reflected the councils' investment into improving staff wellbeing and the culture of the organisation as had been reflected in the reduced sickness levels.

Members congratulated the HR Manager, HR team and all staff on being nominated for the above awards. Members agreed that holding a small thank you function for staff prior to the end of the Councils should be further explored.

A concern was raised over the figure set aside in the Buckinghamshire Council budget for a staffing agency which caused concern that temporary staff would not buy in to the council culture the same way a full time appointment would, in addition to causing the Council additional fees. It was advised that the aim was to employ to permanent posts where possible, although there were areas such as planning, children's services and adults' services where there were national shortages and a need to run at an established staffing level which

meant the employment of agency staff was required at the current time. It was understood the new council had plans to reduce this.

In response to a query raised by a member, it was confirmed that Heads of Service had been particularly active in managing sickness absence and the sickness levels for 2019/20 had reflected this. There remained a responsibility on Heads of Service to get staff involved with staff surveys, respond to the results of these surveys and stay on top of absence levels.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

69 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC (IF REQUIRED)

RESOLVED that under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

70 PAY AWARD 2020/21

The Committee considered a report on an inflationary pay award offer for April 2020/21 for staff on the Harmonised Contract (all staff below Head of Service level) as well as Heads of Services. Both groups of staff have locally determined pay.

UNISON had submitted its local pay claim and the next step following the Joint Staffing Committee's agreement on the CSB offer was to negotiate with the unions and staff prior to presenting a further report to the Committee in February.

A detailed discussion ensued, and the Committee was in agreement that efforts should be made to ensure that those on the lowest pay scale would be paid an hourly rate of at least £10 per hour, a change which would only affect a minimal number of staff. To reflect this, Councillor R Bagge proposed an additional recommendation (recommendation 3 noted below), this was seconded by Councillor P Jones and agreed unanimously by the committee.

Following detailed discussion, it was **RESOLVED**: -

1. To make a 2% pay award offer for April 2020/21 for all staff on the Harmonised Contract and to Heads of Services who transfer to Buckinghamshire Council.
2. To note that the draft budget for Buckinghamshire Council incorporates a 2% pay uplift for all staff. The cost of a 2% uplift for Chiltern and South Bucks District staff is £279k inclusive of NI/Superannuation.

3. That the Head of Paid Service in consultation with the HR Manager adjust the pay spines as necessary to ensure that all staff would be paid a minimum hourly rate of £10.

The meeting ended at 7.22 pm