

Personnel and Development Committee Minutes

Date: 7 November 2016

Time: 7.00 - 7.55 pm

PRESENT: Councillor M Harris (in the Chair)

Councillors Mrs S Adoh, G C Hall, M Hanif, M Hussain and S K Raja, C Whitehead

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors: Mrs W J Mallen and G Peart.

2 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 9 March 2016 be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

4 WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2016-2019

A report was submitted which sought comments feedback and approval of the revised Workforce Strategy, the themes of which had largely remained consistent with previous one, but which had been changed to reflect economic and political developments. The primary aim of the Strategy was to ensure that the Council had in place the most effective people to deliver current and future priorities.

The report stated that a Workforce Strategy refresh had been conducted in May 2015 leading to three agreed areas of focus. The new Strategy 2016-2019 attached at Appendix A was aligned to the priority areas of LGE's National Workforce Strategy for Local Government. The priority areas consisted of Organisational Development, Leadership Development, Skills Development, Recruitment and Retention and Pay and Awards.

Each of the focus areas and the strategy itself was considered by Members. Some Members reinforced the view that wider engagement with young people was essential, and suggested contact be made with a number of schools/colleges in the local area which could help advance the aim of attracting more young people to accessing careers within Local Government. The presenting officer explained that

some of those links had already been made but more work was planned in this area.

A member raised a query as to whether the Council had considered the National Graduate Scheme. The presenting officer explained that this was being explored to see whether it was a viable option for the Council. The proposed mentoring scheme was also discussed with options being explored for staff to become mentors or mentees.

In general Members were happy with the work that had been undertaken so far and wished to approve the new workforce Strategy 2016-2019.

RESOLVED: That the Workforce Strategy 2016-2019 be approved.

5 WORKFORCE REPORT 2015/16

A report was submitted which requested approval of the Workforce Report 2015/16. The document which was published annually, provided relevant information on the Council's workforce thereby assisting to identify key issues.

The Workforce Report attached at Appendix A included information on organisational structure, Workforce, Recruitment and selection, Sickness absence, Training and Development and Diversity issues.

The main findings from the current year were highlighted within section 5 of the report. Some areas of concern and challenges presented included the need to develop new approaches to recruiting individuals to fill critical positions within a shrinking organisation in order to mitigate the risk of loss of critical skills. Another challenge was that of recruiting and retaining younger people into the workforce in an increasingly aging organisation. Figures for 2015/16 indicated that the largest percentage age range was 50-54.

Members considered the document in considerable detail, noted the information provided and then;

RESOLVED: That the Workforce Report be approved.

6 DRAFT REDEPLOYMENT POLICY & PROCEDURE

A report was submitted which sought agreement to the new Draft Redeployment Policy & Procedure which was attached at Appendix A of the report. The Policy would then be referred to Full Council for its endorsement.

Members were informed that this was a newly drafted policy which had been covered within other documents for example sickness and redundancy policies. The intention was to consolidate the Redeployment Policy within a central document for ease of reference, and as such amendments to other related documents also

referring to the policy would need to be made to align them with the new Redeployment Policy.

The report went on to explain the main circumstances in which redeployment was likely to occur. These included Redundancy, Medical Capability, Performance Capability and where team relationships had irretrievably broken down. It was emphasised that there was an expectation within the policy that “at risk” employees were to take a proactive approach in securing alternative employment. Members also noted that by law, employees at risk of redundancy during a period of maternity leave would take priority over any other potential candidate seeking redeployment.

RECOMMENDED: That the Redeployment Policy be agreed.

7 REVISED CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

A report was submitted which requested approval for the revised Conduct and Discipline Policy & Procedure. The Policy & Procedure attached at Appendix A had been reviewed as part of the timetabled review of key HR policies following which a number of amendments had been proposed. Taking account of this, the main revisions to the policy were set out at point 9 of the report.

Members` attention was drawn to the discussion held by Joint staff Committee (staff side) who had expressed some concern with regard to the proposed revision at point 3(f) within the policy. They had felt that staff under investigation should not be prohibited from discussing the matter with those not involved in the investigation. Meanwhile, managers wished to ensure that the investigation was not in any way prejudiced by discussions taking place. It had been agreed therefore that the onus would be upon the individual to avoid prejudicing the investigation, and those managing the disciplinary matter would also preserve complete confidentiality.

Subject to this amendment the Joint Staff Committee agreed to the Policy and Procedure. It was considered a sensible way forward to review the Policy and Procedure within a 12 month period.

The Presenting Officer highlighted the proposed key revisions to the Policy as detailed within the report. Some of these included a greater emphasis on resolving issues informally and managers and employees working together. Another change included a removal of the expectation that investigations would be completed within a 15 day time period. Instead, the policy would state that “the investigation should be conducted in a timely manner and the employee would be advised at the outset when the investigation was expected to be completed”. As such the individual would still have some expectation of time scales which would not be left completely open ended.

RESOLVED: That;

- (i) subject to the re wording of paragraph 3f on the issue of confidentiality of manager and employee the

Conduct Discipline Policy and Procedure be approved

- (ii) the Conduct Discipline Policy and Procedure be reviewed after a 12 month period of time.

8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Members were informed that the Joint Staff Committee meeting originally scheduled for 14 December was to be cancelled due to its close proximity to the one which had just taken place. As such it would also not be necessary to hold a Personnel & Development Committee meeting which was due to take place on 16 January.

It was agreed therefore that the meeting of the Personnel & Development Committee would be moved to the next Committee cycle to a date yet to be agreed during March/April 2017.

RESOLVED: That the next meeting of the Personnel & Development Committee due to be held on 16 January 2017 be cancelled.

Chairman

The following officers were in attendance at the meeting:

John McMillan	- Head of HR, ICT & Customer Services
Jo Whiteley	- Human Resources Manager (Operations)
Iram Malik	- Democratic Services