

## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE**

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Employment Committee held on Thursday 1 March 2012 at 12.15 pm in the Executive Meeting Room, Guildhall, Portsmouth.

(NB These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda and reports for the meeting.)

### **Present**

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson (In the Chair)  
Councillor Leo Madden (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Lynne Stagg  
Councillor Rob Wood  
Councillor Simon Boshier  
Councillor Donna Jones (deputising for  
Councillor Jim Fleming)

### **Officers Present**

David Williams, Chief Executive  
Michael Lawther, City Solicitor and Section 151 Officer  
Jan Paterson, Senior Manager Human Resources  
Stephen Todd, Senior Manager Pay & Policy  
Jeannette Smith, HR Programme and contracts officer

#### **7 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jim Fleming.

#### **8 Declarations of Interest (AI 2)**

Councillor Rob Wood declared a personal, non-prejudicial code of conduct interest in that his son-in-law works for Harbour School.

Councillor Lynne Stagg declared a personal, non-prejudicial code of conduct interest in that her daughter teaches at a Portsmouth school.

#### **9 Minutes from the Meeting held on 10 January 2012 (and Exempt Appendix) (AI 3)**

**RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Employment Committee held on 10 January 2012 (and exempt appendix) be confirmed and signed by the chair as a correct record.**

#### **10 Sickness, Wellbeing and Occupational Health Report (AI 4) (TAKE IN REPORT)**

Mr Stephen Todd introduced the report and outlined its main findings. He explained that an extra column had been added to the sickness scorecard identifying the total number of days lost to long term sickness absence within that quarter. He said that sickness absence appeared to be settling at nine days per employee and that long term health is now being targeted. Part of

this was the recent Wellbeing Awareness Week that was an HR initiative co-ordinated by the Occupational Health and Employee Engagement teams. Mr Todd also drew members' attention to paragraph 10 of the report which sought members' advice on whether the information contained in the bullet points should form part of any future report.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- Members felt that the Wellbeing Day was a worthwhile initiative and supported its introduction as a regular event. It was confirmed that more people applied to attend the sessions than there were places available so the graph contained in the report only showed actual attendance figures rather than the level of interest expressed by individual services. It was confirmed that it was intended that this would be an annual event but that a session of six weekly events had been arranged to take place between 8.30 am and 9.00 am covering issues that people were interested in for example yoga for work.
- With regard to the bullet points in paragraph 10 of the report, members confirmed that they would like each of them to be included as part of future reports.
- It was confirmed that managers viewed individuals' sickness absence records to check whether any employees showed any patterns of sickness absence for example persistent absence on a particular weekday or following, for example, sporting events.
- A discussion took place about whether it would be cost effective to employ a nurse part time and Ms Paterson agreed to investigate this.

**RESOLVED that**

**(1) the sickness absence figures continue to be reviewed on a regular basis;**

**(2) the Occupational Health and Employee Engagement teams continue to work on initiatives supporting employee wellbeing;**

**(3) the Wellbeing Week becomes an annual event supported by a range of initiatives throughout the year. All such initiatives will encourage a healthy and active lifestyle. Any costs will be funded from the existing Learning & Development budget;**

**(4) future reports to Employment Committee include the extra information contained in the bullet points at paragraph 10 of the report.**

**11 Workforce Matters Review (People Management Strategy 2010-2013) (AI 5)  
(TAKE IN REPORT)**

Mr Stephen Todd introduced this report and explained that Workforce Matters, the People Management Strategy 2010-2013 was developed by the Head of Human Resources following two workshop sessions with the Strategic Directors Board who considered the issues facing the council in the

short, medium and long term and how these would impact on employees. Mr Todd explained that this report seeks to update members on the People Management Strategy in 2011/12 and the impact it has made in assisting services in the delivery of its priorities through employees. Mr Todd explained that Appendix B of the report details the progress made against each of the original objectives from 2010 to date.

During discussion the following points were raised:

- Members accepted that cultural change is difficult to achieve and has not yet happened across the whole of the city council. Members did however feel that significant progress is being made.
- In respect of the request to nominate a member representative from the Employment Committee to participate in the review of the People Management Strategy at a future workshop, members felt that this should be deferred until after the May election. Members also felt that it would be better to have two representatives from the committee and that one should be from the administration and one from the opposition.

**RESOLVED that the Employment Committee**

- (1) noted the progress made so far, as detailed in Appendix B;**
- (2) supported the ongoing People Management Strategy as detailed in Appendix A;**
- (3) agreed to nominate two representatives from Employment Committee, one from the administration and one from the opposition, to participate in the review of the People Management Strategy at a future SDB workshop, but that this be delayed until after the May 2012 election.**

**12 Localism Act – Pay Policy Statement (AI 6)**  
(TAKE IN REPORT)

Mr Stephen Todd introduced this report and explained that under the Localism Act 2011, the council is required by Section 38(1) to prepare a pay policy statement. He explained that a pay policy statement must articulate the council's policies towards a range of issues relating to pay of its workforce, particularly its senior staff, chief officers and its lowest paid employees. He explained that pay policy statements must be prepared for each financial year beginning with 2012/13, approved by full council no later than 31 March of each financial year and published on the council's website.

Mr David Williams, the Chief Executive, explained that this report not only fulfils the council's obligations under the act but actually goes further than the act requires with a view to answering any additional questions that may be raised.

Members considered Appendix 1 and suggested the following changes should be made:

- On page 5 of Appendix 1 the list of Heads of Service should be amended in bullet point 3 to delete the word “transforming”.
- From 2013, under paragraph 1.5 on page 6, the Director of Public Health should be listed with the strategic directors and Heads of Service.
- References to members’ appointment committee should be changed to members appointment panel
- Page 6 should be amended to make clear that all employees will be required to comply with UK taxation regulations and to include those employed through an agency.

Members thanked officers for the report which they considered to be clear and concise.

**RESOLVED that the Employment Committee approves the draft pay policy statement attached to the report at Appendix 1 to go forward for approval by the full council on 20 March 2012 subject to the following amendments:**

- (a) On page 5 of Appendix 1 under the lists of Head of Service the word “transforming” should be deleted from the third bullet point.**
- (b) Reference to “Members’ appointment committee” should be changed to “Members’ appointment panel” throughout the document.**
- (c) The wording on page 6 of Appendix 1 should be amended to clarify that all employees will be required to comply with UK taxation regulations and to include those employed through an agency.**

The meeting concluded at 1.00 pm.

Chair

VJP/DMF  
5 March 2012  
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