
NOTICE OF MEETING

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, 16 SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 12.15 PM

THE EXECUTIVE MEETING ROOM - THIRD FLOOR, THE GUILDHALL

Telephone enquiries to Vicki Plytas 02392 834058

Email: vicki.plytas@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Membership

Councillor Donna Jones (Chair)
Councillor Luke Stubbs (Vice-Chair)
Councillor John Ferrett
Councillor Darren Sanders
Councillor Lynne Stagg
Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson

Standing Deputies

Councillor David Fuller
Councillor Hugh Mason
Councillor Linda Symes
Councillor Rob Wood

(NB This agenda should be retained for future reference with the Minutes of this meeting.)
Please note that the agenda, minutes and non-exempt reports are available to view online on the Portsmouth City Council website: www.portsmouth.gov.uk

Deputations by members of the public may be made on any item where a decision is going to be taken. The request should be made in writing to the contact officer (above) by 12 noon of the working day before the meeting, and must include the purpose of the deputation (for example, for or against the recommendation). Email requests are accepted.

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of Interests

3 Minutes (Pages 1 - 8)

RECOMMENDED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Employment Committee held on 17 June 2014 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

4 Senior Management Structure (Pages 9 - 14)

The purpose of the report is to seek Members' approval to conduct a review of the council's senior management structure.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee asks the Chief Executive to carry out a review of the council's senior management structure, and report back to a future meeting with options for a new structure and a timetable for implementation.

5 Sickness Absence Quarterly Report (Pages 15 - 20)

The purpose of this quarterly report is to update and inform the Employment Committee on actions being taken that have an effect on the levels of sickness absence across Services.

RECOMMENDED that the Employment Committee continues to monitor sickness absence, on a quarterly basis, and to ensure appropriate management action is taken to address absenteeism.

6 Apprenticeships Progress Report (Pages 21 - 26)

The purpose of the report is to update members of the Employment Committee on the progress of the action plan to recruit apprentices to the City Council.

RECOMMENDED that Employment Committee

(1) note the positive progress to date in promoting apprenticeships within the Council

(2) approve the current Employment Committee target to recruit 25 new apprentices each year for the next 4 years, or suggest an alternative target.

7 Verbal update on the Living Wage

The purpose of this item is to update the Committee.

8 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next scheduled meeting is 4 November 2014.

Members of the public are now permitted to use both audio visual recording devices and social media during this meeting, on the understanding that it neither disrupts the meeting or records those stating explicitly that they do not wish to be recorded. Guidance on the use of devices at meetings open to the public is available on the Council's website and posters on the wall of the meeting's venue.

Agenda Item 3

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Employment Committee held on Tuesday 17 June 2014 at 3.30 pm in the Executive Meeting Room, third floor, The Guildhall, Portsmouth.

(NB These minutes should be read in conjunction with the agenda and reports for the meeting which can be found at www.portsmouth.gov.uk.)

Present

Councillor Donna Jones (Chair)
Councillor Luke Stubbs (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Darren Sanders
Councillor Lynne Stagg
Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson
Councillor John Ferrett

Officers Present

Michael Lawther, City Solicitor
Jon Bell, Head of HR, Legal & Performance
Gemma Limburn, Assistant Head of Human Resources - Strategy
Shaun Tetley, Payroll & Pensions Manager
Chris Ward, Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer
Mark Folkes, HR Business Partner

8 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from David Williams, Chief Executive.

9 Declarations of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of members' interests.

10 Minutes of the Meeting held on 10 March 2014

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Employment Committee held on 10 March 2014 be confirmed and signed by the chair as a correct record.

11 Job Evaluation

(TAKE IN REPORTS FROM UNIONS - item 4A
FROM HEAD OF HR, LEGAL and PERFORMANCE - item 4B)

The chair of the committee invited Mr Richard White to introduce the report from the unions. Mr White said that if the intention was to continue with the existing scheme, the unions suggested that

- Greater levels of transparency around the scoring of job evaluation questionnaires (JEQs) should be provided

- The process of submitting JEQs should be reviewed
- The level of involvement of Felt Fair Panels in the evaluation process should be reviewed and
- If greater levels of transparency cannot be achieved due to current contractual arrangements, the future use of JESS should be reconsidered.

Mr White explained that since the imposition of the JESS scheme on PCC staff in 2009, both Unite and Unison have experienced a number of issues regarding job evaluation. These issues mainly revolve around the transparency of the scheme, particularly in the scoring process.

Details of cases that the unions felt demonstrated their concerns had been included in the report.

Mr Chris Pickett said that he attended a recent Felt Fair Panel where he questioned a job role but the manager stated at the end of the meeting that if the person received an upgrade, that person would have to lose hours because the post could not then be afforded.

Councillor Donna Jones thanked the unions for the report and asked for Chris Pickett to send an email to herself and to Jon Bell outlining exactly what had been said at the Felt Fair Panel referred to.

The chair then invited Mr Harry Williams to make his deputation. Mr Williams spoke about job evaluation and his experiences as part of the Green and Clean team and expressed his view that the JESS scheme is not transparent enough as it does not provide any information on how jobs were scored.

Mr Mick Froggatt was then invited to give his deputation. He also said that more transparency was needed about how jobs were scored as there seemed to be many instances where very similar looking jobs had been placed in different job categories.

Councillor Jones thanked those who had made deputations.

Jon Bell introduced his report. He explained that at the Staff Joint Committee on 3 April 2014 a request was made to bring a report to the Employment Committee to provide a review of the job evaluation system, trade union involvement in the process and recommendations to address what trade unions perceive to be a lack of transparency around the JESS scheme. He said that they had also been asked to include in the report a review of trade union facilities time for trade unions to attend the Felt Fair Panel.

Jon Bell said that there was agreement on some of the points raised - for example transparency and feedback and also on the Felt Fair Panel. He said that there were contractual limitations on disclosing scoring information but that even if these were not in place, he would not support disclosing information on how jobs were scored as in his view that would lead to job evaluation questionnaires being written to "chase scores" rather than to accurately describe the job. He said that he thought the recommendations listed in paragraph 2 of his report should be adopted.

He said that in relation to market pay rates, PCC generally pays less than neighbouring councils, but if there are problems with recruiting and retaining staff, market supplements were paid subject to certain rules.

During discussion the following matters were clarified:

- With regard to the Reward Partnership, this has been rebranded and it is operating as a consultancy. Jon Bell said that he could provide details on how to look this up on the website and agreed to circulate details of how this could be done to the members.
- Mr Bell said that that he felt that the scheme covered all legal requirements and that there were enough checks and balances to enable fair evaluation to take place. He said that there was a need to ensure that those carrying out the evaluations are suitably skilled. He said that the reason for the Felt Fair Panel was to provide a sense check. He said that all evaluations were moderated by a different person. He confirmed that if there was no change in the grade, under the current system, that job would not go forward to the Felt Fair Panel. If the person receiving the grading was unhappy about it, then this could be dealt with via the grievance route. However the Employment Committee could not consider individual cases.

Mr Richard White said that when a grievance is raised, there is a refusal to provide scoring details.

The chair of the panel said that individual cases could not be discussed specifically at this committee but that there were forums outside the committee that could consider matters such as these.

- Jon Bell confirmed that although the actual scoring mechanism could not be disclosed, members of HR held meetings with staff to explain how the gradings had been arrived at. He said that the way the system works is factor-based and scores were given within those factors. It was important that those who were more familiar with the scheme did not receive an unfair advantage over those who were less familiar. For that reason, only a small number of people in HR are trained to carry out evaluations.

The City Solicitor said that overall his view was that the scheme is a fair scheme and that this is borne out by the lack of challenge in industrial tribunals and that the city council has fared well as compared with other authorities. He said that it was a difficult balance to strike.

Councillor John Ferrett said that he shared concerns raised about the JESS system and whether it was still fit for purpose. He said it seemed that participation seems to be lacking in Portsmouth as compared with what happened elsewhere in similar schemes.

Jon Bell confirmed that there were a number of schemes available but said that they were all very similar. JESS was settled on some time ago and had been through a procurement process. He said there would be significant costs involved with introducing a different scheme.

The City Solicitor said that a consequence of changing the scheme is that everyone would have to go through a job evaluation again and there would probably also be issues around pay protection.

A discussion took place as to whether or not the JESS should be formally reviewed. Jon Bell said that the system had served PCC reasonably well and has operated for some years now and had been mainly successful.

Jon Bell confirmed that PCC purchased the licence up-front to use the JESS scheme and therefore in theory, PCC could move to a different scheme at any time. However the costs and disruption of doing so would be significant.

A discussion took place about the Felt Fair Panels as the union report referred to the representatives on these panels having a limited understanding of the posts being presented as well as a lack of knowledge of other comparable posts.

The unions put forward their view that job evaluation schemes have a shelf life and given the amount of change that has occurred over the years since the JESS scheme was introduced, then if greater levels of transparency cannot be achieved due to current contractual arrangements, the future use of JESS should be reconsidered.

The chair of the committee said she was pleased to see that there was so much common ground in the two reports. She said that the timescale between the JEQ being agreed and achieving a final outcome should be a specific period and suggested that four weeks should be put forward as a suitable timeframe. The chair agreed that officers would be instructed to look at how often other councils had reviewed the JESS scheme after introduction.

Members agreed to amend recommendation (i) of the report from the Head of HR, Legal and Performance to introduce a requirement for managers to deal with requests for re-evaluations within 4 weeks, by either determining (with advice from HR if necessary) that a post does not require re-evaluation, or by passing a completed Job Evaluation Questionnaire to HR.

RESOLVED that

- (i) Managers are provided with guidance as to when it is appropriate to review a post that needs to be re-evaluated, to ensure that re-evaluations are undertaken within a relevant timescale for the completed Job Evaluation Questionnaire to be passed to HR) and includes input from the appropriate people.**
- (ii) Job Re-evaluations are taken to Felt Fair Panel for consideration, even if the evaluation has resulted in no change to the current band.**
- (iii) Employees are offered feedback to explain the outcome of a re-evaluation where the outcome has resulted in no change to the band of the job.**

- (iv) The communication process is improved to inform employees of the outcome of the re-evaluation request, via written communication to both the employee and line manager.**
- (v) A wider review is undertaken of trade union facilities time and how this is put to best use to enable trade union representatives to have the time to attend the Felt Fair Panel.**
- (vi) Training is provided to the trade union representatives that will be present on the Felt Fair Panel process and the role of a Felt Fair Panel member.**

12 Sickness Absence - Quarterly Report

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Gemma Limburn introduced the report and said that it updates the Employment Committee on actions being taken that have had a positive effect on the levels of sickness absence across services. She said that from 1 June 2013 to 31 May 2014, the level of sickness absence has decreased from 9.92 to 8.21 average days per person per year. This is against a corporate target of an average eight days per person per year. Ms Limburn advised that two services still have an average of over 10 days sickness absence per person per year. Gemma Limburn said that at the last Employment Committee meeting on 10 March 2014 members had asked for an analysis of the sickness absence at the Port. She said that the outcome of the review and the activities being taken to reduce sickness absence levels were shown in Appendix 2.

Members of the committee were pleased with the reduction in sickness absence levels generally and wished to record their thanks and congratulations to managers in achieving this. Members also looked forward to the predicted reduction in sickness absence levels at the Port being realised over the next year.

A discussion took place concerning the reasons for the reduction in sickness absence levels. The City Solicitor said that specific interventions, for example in the Port, had resulted in very impressive improvements being made. Members felt that health and wellbeing interventions with the close involvement of Dr Janet Maxwell had made a significant difference. The chair of the committee, Councillor Donna Jones said that as an employer she felt that PCC could do some things to make staff feel more motivated and that this could perhaps be addressed by providing more facilities on site for example making space on the ground floor for facilities such as a coffee shop or a hairdressing salon or similar. She suggested that a report could be brought back to the committee at a future date to look at these issues.

The chair said that she still had concerns about sickness absence levels at the Port and that she asked that Martin Putman be invited to attend the next meeting to answer questions from members about the sickness absence at the Port - unless the average sickness absence is at 10 days or below. Councillor Jones said that she wanted to be convinced that the strategies introduced at the port were working.

At Councillor Stagg's suggestion, Councillor Jones said that she would write to Councillor Wylie, the Lord Mayor, to ask whether he would continue to arrange formal thank you meetings on a quarterly basis in the Lord Mayor's parlour for staff nominated by their line managers who are deemed to have gone above and beyond their call of duty.

RESOLVED that the Employment Committee

- (1) Continue to monitor sickness absence on a quarterly basis, and to ensure appropriate management action is taken to address absenteeism;**
- (2) Implement the actions for improving sickness absence at the Port; and**
- (3) Congratulate managers on the significant drop in sickness absence levels and the strategies that have been put in place to achieve this improvement.**

13 Discretionary Pension Policy Statement Review

(TAKE IN REPORT)

Mr Chris Ward introduced the report and said that the introduction of the new Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) from 1 April 2014 requires all scheme employers to review their existing discretionary pension policy statements and publish new policy statements effective from 1 April 2014. He advised that the report summarises the pension policies that need reviewing and makes recommendations for the adoption of a new pension policy statement. He said that the report also summarises the main provisions of the LGPS and provides a comparison with the existing scheme.

RESOLVED that the Employment Committee

- (1) approve the discretionary policy statement set out in appendix 1 of the report with effect from 1 April 2014;**
- (2) note the main scheme changes arising from the introduction of the new LGPS from 1 April 2014. Appendix 2 of the report provides a summary of the changes.**

14 Portsmouth City Council and Staff Joint Committee - Constitution - Provision for Changes to the staff side union representation to allow Unison to give up one representative to Unite

(TAKE IN SUGGESTED REVISED CONSTITUTION)

Members were advised that the purpose of this item is to seek authority to change the constitution of the Portsmouth City Council and Staff Joint Committee as agreed with the unions at a meeting of that Committee on 3 April 2014. The change would mean that instead of Unison having six representatives with a right to attend and vote they would in future have five

and Unite would have two representatives rather than one.

RESOLVED that the constitution of the Portsmouth City Council and Staff Joint Committee be amended with immediate effect (as attached to the agenda for the meeting) to allow a change in the representation of the unions as currently set out in the constitution so that Unison give up one representative to Unite.

15 Hampshire Pension Fund Panel Appointment

The chair of the committee, Councillor Donna Jones said that she had asked Councillor Hugh Mason to take on this role with immediate effect and that he had agreed to do so.

RESOLVED that Councillor Hugh Mason be appointed to serve on the Hampshire Pension Fund Panel to September 2015 (subject to his remaining an elected member).

16 Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next scheduled meeting is 16 September 2014.

The meeting concluded at 5.15 pm.

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Agenda Item 4

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Employment Committee

Date of meeting: 16th September 2014

Subject: Senior Management Structure

Report by: Chief Executive

Wards affected: N/A

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to seek Members' approval to conduct a review of the council's senior management structure.

2. Recommendations

Members are **recommended** to ask the Chief Executive to carry out a review of the council's senior management structure, and report back to a future meeting with options for a new structure and a timetable for implementation

3. Background

3.1 The council's senior management structure is currently as shown on the chart at Appendix 1. This structure was last fully and formally reviewed in 2012, although this was, in itself, part of a gradual process of reduction in the number of senior management posts from 33 to 20 now.

3.2 Although the last review of the structure was relatively recent, the environment in which the council operates continues to change rapidly. The need to identify financial savings is intensifying, new responsibilities are arising (and some reducing), different models of service delivery are emerging, and working arrangements with partner organisations are changing. It is important for the senior management structure to reflect the council's current and future priorities. It is also right, in the current climate, that reductions in the cost of senior management are sought.

4. Process

4.1 Subject to Members' approval, the Chief Executive will carry out a review of the senior management structure, taking account of the factors referred to above. Once completed, the Chief Executive will propose his recommended structure to this committee.

- 4.2 Proposals are likely to have a direct impact on existing post holders and will identify post/s that may be deemed 'at risk' as a consequence. The council will therefore have an obligation to consult unions and employees. Consultation must commence 'in good time', which will mean a minimum of either 30 days or 45 days, depending on the overall number of redundancies across the council at that time.
- 4.3 Proposals in relation to the senior management structure will inevitably be of wider interest to the council's staff and unions and therefore consideration will need to be given to both the method and length of consultation.
- 4.4 Following consultation a period of 'cooling off' will need to take place to consider feedback and representations, we could anticipate this taking 2-4 weeks depending on the number of responses received during consultation. A proposed structure will be finalised and taken to Committee for approval. A detailed recruitment/selection timetable will be developed as part of the consultation process and approval sought from Committee regarding this.

5. Equalities Impact Assessment

A full equalities impact assessment will be carried out in respect of the proposed new structure and its implementation

6. Legal implications

The legal implications in terms of consultation are contained within the report. Implications of any new structure will be considered at the time the structure is proposed to members at a future meeting.

7. Finance comments

The financial implications of any new structure will be provided when proposals are reported back to the committee. Members should note that savings arising from a reduction in senior management posts would be reduced by any consequent uplift required below that level.

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Signed by:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

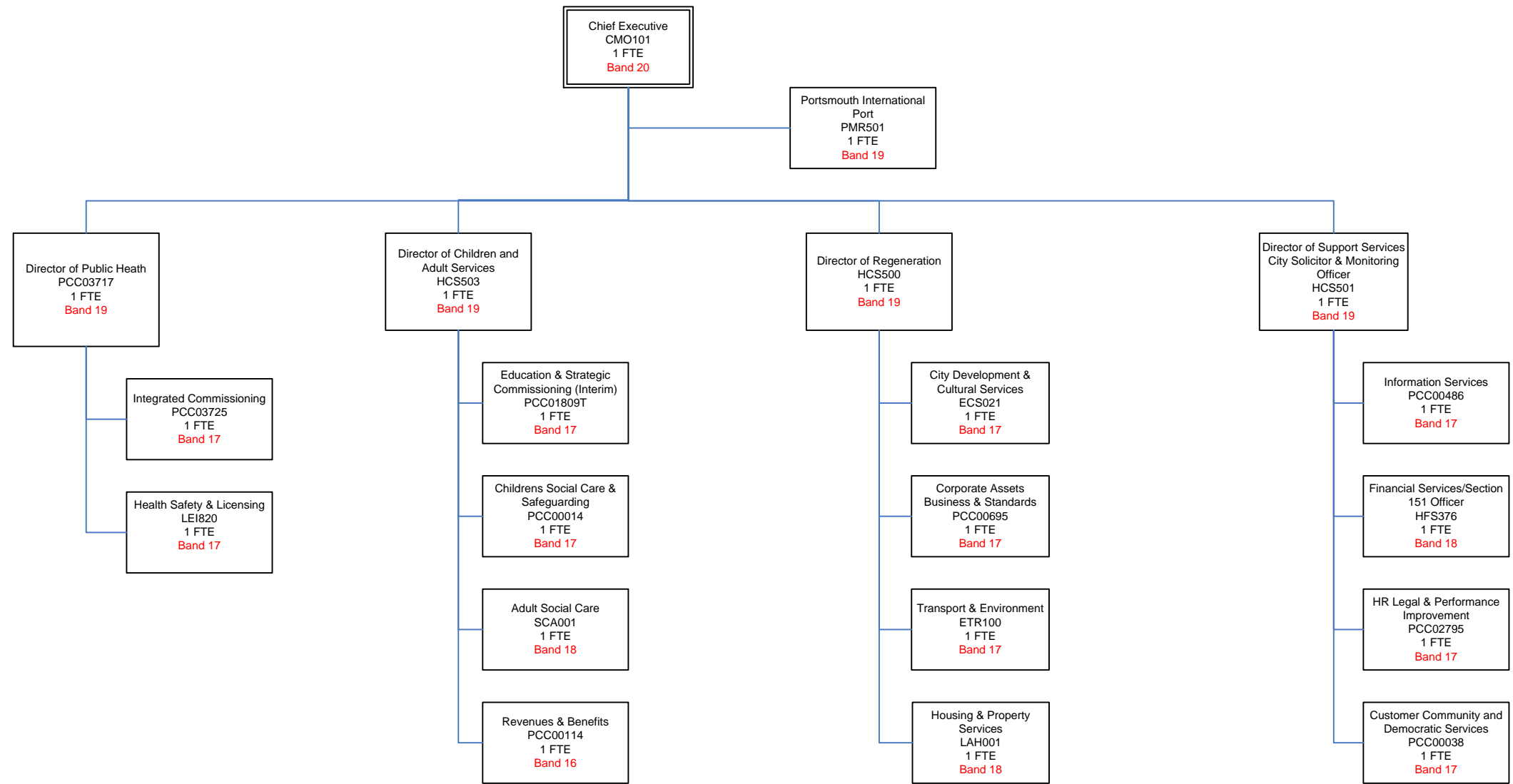
The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Agenda Item 5



Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Employment Committee
Date of meeting: 16th September 2014
Subject: Sickness Absence - Quarterly Report
Report by: Jon Bell - Head of HR, Legal & Performance
Wards affected: N/A
Key decision: No
Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this quarterly report is to update and inform the Employment Committee on actions being taken that have an effect on the levels of sickness absence across Services.

2. Recommendations

To continue to monitor sickness absence, on a quarterly basis, and to ensure appropriate management action is taken to address absenteeism.

3. Background

- 3.1** In the period from 01 September 2013 to 31 August 2014 the level of sickness absence has slightly increased from 8.26 to 8.97 average days per person per year. This is against a corporate target of an average 8 days per person per year.
- 3.2.** Absence levels by Services for the period from 01 September 2013 to 31 August 2014 compared to figures prepared in June 2014 are attached in Appendix 1.
- 3.3** 6 of the 16 Service areas are over the corporate target of an average 8 days per person per year. 5 Services are over 10 days per person per year.

4. International Ferry Port

At the previous Employment Committee on 17 June 2014, a full review of activities to reduce sickness absence levels at the Port was presented to members. Port management predicted that due to a range of interventions the average sickness absence levels would reduce from 12.37 average days per person in June 2014 to within the range of 8.4 to 9.4 by November 2014.

In September 2014 the average sickness absence levels has decreased to 11.79 average days per person, and is progressing as expected towards the projected target.

The Employment Committee has requested that Martin Putman be invited to attend in the future to answer questions from members about the sickness absence at the Port - unless the average sickness absence is at 10 days or below.

5. Discussions with Unions

Following the Staff Joint Committee on 03 April 2014, the Unions have provided a joint response of their proposals for absence management to the regular monthly meeting with HR for discussion.

A response has been given by HR to the points raised.

6. Occupational Health training

Both managers and HR staff have been given an opportunity to meet with our new provider (NHS) to discuss the service and how both parties can work together and to fully utilise the service,

Sessions are continuing to be booked, with a further 3 sessions due to take place in September 2014.

7. Health and Well Being

7.1 Flu Jabs

Public Health will be co-ordinating the flu jabs vaccination campaign for Winter 2014/15. The cost of vaccinations will be covered by Services.

The campaign hopes to increase on 981 (11.9%) members of staff, including schools, who took advantage of the vaccination during the winter 2013/14 campaign. This promotion will also assist in working days lost to viral illnesses, especially if there is an increased level of flu infections over the winter.

8. Reasons for recommendations

The continued monitoring of sickness absence and the identification of good management practices is an important part of maximising attendance, which will in turn increase productivity, improve engagement and build resilience.

9. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

A preliminary Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

10. Legal implications

There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

11. Finance comments

There is no significant cashable saving resulting from the reduction in sickness absence. However there will be an improvement in productivity in terms of total days worked.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Sickness Absence by Service

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by:

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Appendix 1: Sickness Absence by Service

Sickness Absence Summary for the period 01/09/2013 to 31/08/2014.

Services	Average HeadCount	Working Days Lost to Sickness	Total		Long Term		Medium Term		Short Term		Average Number of Occasions per Person Per Year	Average per Person per Year (Previous Report)
			% Working Time Lost To Sickness	Average per Person per Year	Working Days Lost To Sickness	Average per Person per Year	Working Days Lost To Sickness	Average per Person per Year	Working Days Lost To Sickness	Average per Person per Year		
Adult Social Care	806	8313	5.25%	10.31	4787.80	5.94	1376.24	1.71	2148.98	2.67	5.44	9.35
Chief Executive Service	19	27.4	0.60%	1.44	0.00	0.00	17.40	0.92	10.00	0.53	1.26	0.95
Children's Social Care and Safeguarding	333	3825.1	5.03%	11.49	2052.32	6.16	663.95	1.99	1108.84	3.33	6.04	10.74
City Development and Cultural Services	221	886.26	2.26%	4.01	351.43	1.59	76.32	0.35	458.50	2.07	4.08	3.84
Corporate Assets, Business and Standards	171.5	1975.5	5.23%	11.52	1371.05	7.99	175.51	1.02	428.98	2.50	4.43	9.09
Customer, Community and Democratic Services	126.5	857.18	3.20%	6.78	476.66	3.77	127.94	1.01	252.58	2.00	3.97	6.59
Education and Strategic Commissioning	283	1406.8	3.14%	4.97	689.02	2.43	214.99	0.76	502.82	1.78	3.81	5.58
Finance	183	1241.6	3.16%	6.78	599.24	3.27	218.49	1.19	423.87	2.32	4.93	7.85
Health, Safety and Licensing	138.5	898.44	2.84%	6.49	367.43	2.65	165.11	1.19	365.90	2.64	5.25	7.06
Housing and Property Services	749.5	6682.2	3.95%	8.92	3476.11	4.64	1123.75	1.50	2082.30	2.78	5.79	9.26
HR, Legal and Performance	143	441.09	1.38%	3.08	198.36	1.39	57.30	0.40	185.43	1.30	3.34	4.28
Information Services	118.5	434.47	1.55%	3.67	164.00	1.38	77.50	0.65	192.97	1.63	4.62	3.65
Integrated Commissioning Unit	17	98.422	2.67%	5.79	32.00	1.88	6.00	0.35	60.42	3.55	6.24	2.39
Internal Agency	139.5	104.99		0.75	0.00	0.00	17.84	0.13	87.15	0.62	1.21	12.37
Port	87.5	1031.5	4.76%	11.79	624.36	7.14	157.18	1.80	249.94	2.86	4.08	8.75
Revenues and Benefits	133	1363.1	4.60%	10.25	555.42	4.18	311.26	2.34	496.40	3.73	8.04	8.81
Transport and Environment	332	2461.8	4.67%	7.42	1371.61	4.13	402.30	1.21	687.90	2.07	4.25	6.39
Schools	3968.5	24149	4.29%	6.09	10893.29	2.74	3776.06	0.95	9479.84	2.39	4.86	8.21
Grand Total	7901	59442	4.16%	7.52	29515.82	3.74	9438.27	1.19	20487.42	2.59	5.33	7.27
Total (exc Schools)	3932.5	35292	4.07%	8.97	18622.53	4.74	5662.20	1.44	11007.58	2.80	5.79	8.26

(Long term absences are those that total or exceed 21 days, Short term are those up to and including 7 days in total)

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Agenda Item 6



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Employment Committee
Date of meeting: 16th September 2014
Subject: Apprenticeships - Progress Report
Report by: Jon Bell - Head of HR, Legal & Performance Improvement
Wards affected: N/A
Key decision: No
Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

To update members of the Employment Committee on the progress of the action plan to recruit apprentices to the City Council.

2. Recommendations

Members are **recommended** to:

- (i) note the positive progress to date in promoting apprenticeships within the Council
- (ii) approve the current target to recruit 25 new apprentices each year for the next 4 years, or suggest an alternative target

3. Background

- 3.1 The Regeneration Strategy 'Shaping the Future of Portsmouth' sets out the overall vision for Portsmouth to become 'a great waterfront city', with a leading edge economy supported by a highly skilled workforce. Recognising that the successful regeneration of the city will be dependent on how successful the city is in developing a strong skills base, a Business Growth and Skills Plan for Portsmouth was developed and approved by Cabinet in November 2013. This plan supports the Shaping the Future agenda with a two pronged approach which includes training, skills and access to employment as one of its main themes.
- 3.2 The delivery of apprenticeships and other work based opportunities has been identified as a core component of the skills growth agenda of the City Council and local partnerships, including Solent LEP (Local Economic Partnership), Shaping the Future of Portsmouth and PUSH (Partnership for Southern Urban Hampshire). There is a key role for the Council as an employer to lead by example in offering a sufficient range and number of apprenticeships. As a

community leader and policy maker within the city, the Council also has an influencing and enabling role to encourage and support the development of increased opportunities across the city. An example being the Employment and Skills Plans which are now part of the planning requirements for all major developments in the city.

3.3 An options paper has been considered by the Strategic Directors Board in order to select the 'best fit' option for the organisation and the following was recommended:

- All vacancies at Bands 1 - 5 would be considered for an apprenticeship and any opt out would need to be justified by the recruiting manager
- For level 2 apprenticeships** Band 1 would be paid
- For level 3 apprenticeships** Band 2 would be paid
- Priority would be given to eligible young people living in the City of Portsmouth or local authority housing in Leigh Park and Weacock Farm with special regard to those not in education, employment or training (NEETS)
- Portsmouth's looked after children and care leavers would be guaranteed an assessment for any apprenticeship posts in the City Council
- A target of 25 apprenticeships each year for the next four years was agreed

This approach was later discussed and adopted at the Corporate Projects Board.

***Level 2 is described as an Intermediate level Apprenticeship, the qualification taken is equivalent to 5 GCSE A*-C Grades and usually takes 12 months to complete.*

The Level 3 is described as an Advanced level Apprenticeship, the qualification taken is equivalent to 2 A Levels and usually takes 12-18 months to complete. The length of qualification is dependent on the apprenticeship being undertaken.

An Apprenticeship is made up of the following elements:

- *A qualification from the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) (formerly NVQ)*
- *A Technical Certificate to underpin the knowledge requirements of the QCF*
- *Functional Skills (Adult Literacy, Numeracy and IT)*
- *ERR (Employment rights and responsibilities)*

4. Progress to date

4.1 Appendix 1 shows a detailed breakdown of the posts and services where apprentices have been recruited or are in the process of being recruited. The table below show a snapshot of this.

Apprenticeship Numbers		
Service	Number of Apprentices in recruitment	Number of Apprentices employed
Adult Social Care	1	5
Children's Social Care & Safeguarding	1	0
Customer, Community & Democratic Services	0	4
City Development & Cultural Services	2	0
Education	0	1
Finance	3	2
Housing & Property Services	6	1
HR, Legal and Performance Improvement	1	1
Totals	14	14

- 4.2 Interest in the apprenticeship opportunities within the City Council has been strong with on average 50 - 100 applicants per post. In most cases the qualification provider carries out an initial 'sift' of applicants to ensure those applying are eligible and are suitable. This usually results in 25 - 30 applicants for the recruiting manager to shortlist. HR are working closely with the Integrated and Targeted Youth Support Service (ITYSS) and the Young Person's Support Team (YPST) to identify any looked after Children or Care Leavers to ensure these young people are offered an opportunity to attend an assessment. Vacancies are notified to these teams to ensure they are advertised as widely as possible and young people in the city are supported with their applications. Each apprenticeship recruitment has an assessment with around 8 - 15 young people invited (this is dependent on the number of posts available) to determine those going forward for interview. All those who are unsuccessful at assessment or interview stages are offered feedback and signposted to resources; such as CV writing and interview skills available through Pride in Pompey and the 'Go for it' centre.
- 4.3 HR have been successful in recruiting three Care Leavers into apprenticeships commencing in September 2014. These posts are supernumerary and funded through a grant obtained by the ITYSS Manager from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office.
- 4.4 At the date of this report the City Council has 28 Apprenticeships employed or in recruitment.

5. Issues

- 5.1 The recruitment process can be quite challenging for some care leavers and there is evidence of one applicant leaving the assessment after finding it too stressful. HR is working with the ITYSS and the YPST to ensure applicants are prepared for the recruitment activities and receive constructive feedback. Where apprenticeships have been ring-fenced for care leavers (as in the case of the

funded posts from the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office grant), the assessment and interview process has been modified to take account of their needs. Although the City Council should not treat Looked after Children and Care Leavers any differently to other applicants they do often need additional support which they can get via the ITYSS, YPST and their Social Worker.

6. Legal implications

There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

7. Finance comments

7.1 Detailed below is an exemplar to indicate the savings to services in recruiting apprentices to a Band 4 post.

7.2 The cost of a Band 4 post plus employment on-costs is £18,569.00

- A Level 2 Apprenticeship is paid at Band 1 which, with employment on-costs, is £14,832.00 giving a saving of £3,737.00
- A Level 3 Apprenticeship is paid at Band 2 which, with employment on-costs, is £15,833.00 giving a saving of £2,736.00

7.3 Additional costs per apprentice are determined by age and the qualification being undertaken. In the main apprentices between 16 & 18 years of age will receive full funding resulting in no additional charges to the service for the qualification being undertaken. Apprentices between the ages of 19 and 23 years attract a lower level of funding and the costs of the qualification can vary between £100 per person to around £3,000 dependent on the level and type of qualification being undertaken and the training provider being used.

7.4 Apprenticeships are subject to their own arrangements in terms of minimum pay and it is not anticipated that they would be subject to the Living Wage, if adopted. However, Members have previously agreed to pay apprentices above the National Minimum Apprenticeship wage (this varies dependant on age). This decision was taken to promote apprenticeships as a positive recruitment and retention option for the City Council and provide a role model to employers in the city. The interest shown in the apprenticeship vacancies and the quality of applicants further supports the decision to use Bands 1 and 2 for the Apprenticeship wage.

8. Conclusions and next steps

8.1 HR is continuing to work with services to identify apprenticeship opportunities. Positive responses have been received from all services as can be seen from the recruitment figures detailed in section 4. The apprenticeship programme is being closely monitored and will be evaluated at the end of year one to ensure it continues to develop and provide the best possible outcomes for young people and for the City Council.

- 8.2 It may be possible to increase the numbers of apprenticeships within the City Council. As stated above, a target has been proposed of 25 new apprenticeships per year, but this has already been exceeded. However, this is dependent on the availability of vacancies, the nature of these vacancies and the costs of providing an appropriate qualification for them. There are also 'hidden' costs attached to apprenticeships such as time out of the workplace for study and the additional management time that an apprentice may need.
- 8.3 The next area of work will be to identify apprenticeships within the City Council that would meet the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) agenda as this is a key element for the 'Shaping the Future' Skills work-stream. HR will be working to identify any external funding streams to support this agenda. Case studies will be developed from the current cohort to enable HR to support the promotion of apprenticeships throughout the City Council and employers across the city.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Tables showing the Apprenticeships in recruitment and recruited by Service, Qualification and Number.

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Shaping the Future of Portsmouth	Strategy Unit
Business Growth & Skills Plan	Strategy Unit
Apprenticeship Strategy	Strategy Unit

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

.....Signed by:

Apprenticeships in recruitment			
Service	Team	Qualification	Number of Apprentices
Adult Social Care	Recovery Hub	Business Administration	1
Children's Social Care & Safeguarding	ITYSS Participation	Customer Service	1 (Care Leaver)
City Development & Cultural Services	Museums	Customer Service	1 (Care Leaver)
City Development & Cultural Services	Museums	Awaiting confirmation	1
Finance	EBS, ASC Payments team, Income & Payments	Business Administration	3
Housing & Property Services	Green & Clean	Gardening	2
Housing & Property Services	Housing Area Offices	Housing	4
HR, Legal and Performance Improvement	Learning & Development	Customer service	1 (Care Leaver)

Apprenticeships Recruited			
Service	Team	Qualification	Number of Apprentices
Adult Social Care	Transformation & Business Development	Business Administration	2
Adult Social Care	Portsmouth Day Service	Health & Social Care	3
Customer, Community & Democratic Services	City Help Desk	Customer Service	4
Education & Strategic Commissioning	Education Information Services / Admissions	Business Administration	1
Finance	Corporate Finance & Housing Finance	Business Administration	2
Housing & Property Services	Communities and Play	Personal Training & Instruction	1
HR, Legal & Performance Improvement	HR Admin	Business Administration	1