

SPECIAL EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Special Employment Committee held at the Guildhall, Portsmouth on Tuesday 26 July 2011 at 3.00 pm.

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

Present

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson (Chair)
Councillor Leo Madden (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Margaret Adair (deputising for
Councillor Rob Wood)
Councillor Lynne Stagg
Councillor Jim Fleming

27 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Simon Boshier and from Councillor Rob Wood.

28 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of members' interests.

29 Report from the Chief Executive on Proposals for Changes to Senior Management Structure

(TAKE IN REPORT)

The Chief Executive, Mr David Williams introduced the report and said that since the Employment Committee's decision on senior management structure in July 2007, the number of senior managers (strategic director or head of service equivalents) has been reduced from 33 to 22. These changes have reduced the cost to the council's senior management structure by over £1.2 million per annum and have been in accordance with the needs of the service and to meet the requirement to reduce organisational costs.

The Chief Executive went on to say that the changes to the senior management structure of the organisation are evolutionary and that further change over the next few years would be inevitable. These changes are being developed collectively within a transformation programme called "Shaping Our Future".

The Chief Executive said that there was already a significant change programme within the council over the next few years as outlined in paragraph 4 of the report. A radical change to the structure was not proposed at this stage as the future is too uncertain and the strategic director/head of service model is performing well in difficult circumstances. The current alignment is set out at Appendix 1 of the report and the proposed revised alignment is set out at Appendix 2.

In response to questions the Chief Executive explained that

- Some services could fit within several different directorates but that the revised structure outlined in Appendix 2 was in his opinion the best arrangement for the time being.
- The changes necessitated by the reduction of one strategic director were in his view significant.
- The realignment of service units to directors in these proposals moves the senior management towards a structure of groupings based around people, place and performance. It acknowledges the importance of continuing to drive the “shaping our future” programme across the whole council. This work is co-ordinated by the Audit & Performance Improvement unit and Mr Julian Wooster will be acting as the lead director over the implementation phase. The Chief Executive said that it therefore made sense to move Audit and Performance Improvement to Mr Julian Wooster’s directorate.

During discussion the following points were made

- Councillor Jim Fleming said that he was disappointed with the proposed changes which in his view were not radical enough.
- Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson said that revolutionary change had been implemented in the past but had necessitated large sums being paid for people leaving the organisation. This was unaffordable in the current climate.

The Chair of the Committee, Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson, suggested that an additional recommendation be added to ask the Chief Executive to bring back to this Committee a further report to advise on the effectiveness of the changes made and this was agreed. The recommendations were then put to the vote and it was

RESOLVED that

- (1) members endorse the realignment of strategic directors and heads of service following reductions in staffing levels and changes to the future role of the council; and**
- (2) the Chief Executive brings a further report to this committee in 12 months time to advise on the effectiveness of the changes made.**

30 Date of Next Employment Committee Meeting

Members were advised that there would be a special Employment Committee meeting on 30 August 2011 at 1.00 pm in the Executive Meeting Room and that this meeting was in addition to the next scheduled meeting on 4 October 2011 at 12.15 pm.

The meeting ended at 3.20 pm.

Chair

VJP/DMF
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