

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING of the Employment Committee held on Tuesday, 11 July 2023 at 5.00 pm at the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Stuart Brown (in the chair)
Councillor Darren Sanders (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Charlotte Gerada

Officers Present

Natasha Edmunds, Director of Corporate Resources
Rochelle Williams, Assistant Director Human Resources
Karen Honeygold, Senior Pay and Policy Officer
Susan Page, Finance Manager

13. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Councillors Dave Ashmore, Simon Boshier and Cal Corkery had offered their apologies for absence.

14. Declarations of Members' Interests (AI 2)

Councillor Charlotte Gerada declared personal, non-prejudicial interest in that she is a member of Unite the Union and GMB Union.

15. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2023 (AI 3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2023 be confirmed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

16. Trade Union Facilities Time 2022/23 (AI 4)

Rochelle Williams, Assistant Director of HR, introduced the report, informing members that the report ensures the Council fulfils its statutory obligations in respect of Trade Unions facility time. She added that Tables 2A and 3 in the report provided information above the statutory duty and has been provided at the request of Members. She noted that Table 3 was presented in alphabetical order. The Assistant Director of HR also commented that Appendix A relates to hours recorded for facilities time and this may be slightly different to funded hours.

Councillor Darren Sanders commented that he was delighted to have additional information set out in the report as it presented a more realistic picture. He added that the work Union colleagues do is essential and helpful, particularly in relation to disciplinary matters. He also added that, in relation to paragraph 5.3 of the report, that he supported the on-going work to provide Unions with a sustainable funding process.

The Assistant Director of HR informed members that there had been a productive meeting with Union leaders and the Leader earlier in the day about funding. This had been very positive and that all parties were working towards sustainable funding for the Unions as this was important for recruitment and retention.

Councillor Charlotte Gerada supported the report and comments made, adding that the Unions provided critical support. In answer to a question, Sue Page, Finance Manager confirmed that until April 2019 the Council provided funding at a total cost of £75,000 per annum. In April 2019, this funding was halved to £37,500 per annum by the then administration. In the light of the Covid-19 pandemic the funding was reviewed and increased to £75,000 from reserves with effect from 1 April 2020 and continued at this level until 31 March 2023. Discussions about embedding funding into the Budget process is on-going and the Unions are developing a business case to support this.

The Committee noted the report which was for information only.

17. Hampshire Pension Fund Panel and Board (AI 5)

The Chair informed the Committee that Councillor Judith Smyth was appointed by the Employment Committee to serve as a full member of the Hampshire Pension Fund Panel and Board last year and is keen to serve as substitute member with Southampton City Council's representative serving as the full member for the forthcoming year. The Chair enquired if there were any other nominations for the role for which there is no remuneration. There were none.

RESOLVED that Councillor Judith Smyth be appointed to serve as a substitute member of the Hampshire Pension Fund Panel and Board for the rest of the municipal year, subject to that person remaining an elected member.

The meeting concluded at 5.10 pm.

Councillor Stuart Brown
Chair

