

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE held in the the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 24th November 2021

PRESENT: Councillor R J West – Chairman.

Councillors Mrs P A Jordan, D N Keane, C J Maslen, J M Palmer and D Terry.

APOLOGY: An apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor D M Tysoe.

10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15th September 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were received.

12 WORKFORCE INFORMATION REPORT QUARTER TWO 2021-22

The Committee received and noted a report on Human Resources matters impacting on the performance of the Council during the period 1st July to 30 September 2021. The report included the latest position and trends relating to employee numbers, salary costs and sickness absence. A copy of the report is appended in the Minute Book.

The Committee was informed that the total number of employees at the end of the last quarter was lower than at the end of the previous quarter and that the total spend on pay costs for employees in 2021/22 was forecast to be £174k higher than the year's budget.

In response to a question by Councillor Jordan, the Strategic HR Manager outlined measures services were taking in response to the level of individuals leaving the Council, including back filling and adopting alternative ways of working. Following a further related question, the Strategic HR Manager confirmed that the Planning, Corporate Resources and ICT sections had experienced the highest levels of leavers. All leavers were sent a questionnaire requesting their views on working for the Council and their reasons for leaving. Leavers also were offered personal interviews. The results were analysed and used to inform future decision-making. The Council's position compared with other local authorities was discussed.

During further discussion on recruitment and retention it was established that the level of leavers was partly the result of unique factors such as internal structure changes and partly caused by the pandemic and market demand for particular roles. Various initiatives were being employed to fill vacant posts and introduce new ways of working to ensure services were delivered.

Regarding future demand for services, the Committee was informed that detailed planning took place using Council Tax data and projections for new dwellings. Members commended the refuse collectors for the speed at which they completed their rounds.

The report indicated that five employees had retired in the quarter. Members recognised the employees' achievements and conveyed their congratulations to them. Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

- a) that the contents of the report be noted, and
- b) that the Council place on record its recognition of and gratitude for the excellent contributions made by the five employees who have recently retired from their employment in the local government service and convey its best wishes to them for long and happy retirements.

13 IR35 STATUS DETERMINATION DISAGREEMENT PROCESS

With the aid of a report by the Strategic HR Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Committee considered a new procedure to determine disputes relating to the status of employees under on/off payroll working rules. The procedure was required by updated Regulations, which were introduced in April 2021 and would ensure the Council complied with the new Regulations. Having reviewed the Terms of the proposed procedure, it was

RESOLVED

that the IR35 Status Determination Disagreement Process be endorsed.

14 EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES POLICY

Consideration was given to a report by the Strategic HR Manager to which was attached a proposed new Policy on receiving and giving employment references. A copy of the report is appended in the Minute Book. In response to a question by a Member, it was confirmed that the Council would only provide factual information. It was then

RESOLVED

that the Reference Policy be endorsed.

15 EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES GROUP

No matters had been identified for consideration.

Chairman