

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE held in the Civic Suite, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 9 February 2022

PRESENT: Councillor R J West – Chair.

Councillors D N Keane, C J Maslen, A Roberts and D Terry.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors P A Jordan, J M Palmer and D M Tysoe.

16 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24th November 2021 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

17 MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations of interests were received.

18 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED

that Councillor A Roberts be appointed Vice-Chair for the remained of the Municipal Year.

19 WORKFORCE INFORMATION REPORT - QUARTER THREE 2021-22

The Committee received and noted a report on Human Resources matters impacting on the performance of the Council during the period 1st October to 31 December 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 higher than at the end of the previous quarter but that the total spend on pay costs for employees in 2021/22 was forecast to be £230k higher than the year's budget.

The Committee discussed the proportion of the workforce that was made up of contractors and the number of leavers during the period. It was confirmed that the latter did not include employees who had joined through the Kickstarter Scheme. However, the annual turnover figure was higher than normal partly because it included Kickstarter leavers together with changes following the review of One Leisure.

In response to a question by a Member, the Strategic HR Manager outlined measures being taken to recruit to the Development Management section. Comment was made on the need to recognise the additional workload experienced by remaining employees during periods of high turnover. Some turnover was desirable, but it was also necessary to build a structure that promoted succession.

Further discussion took place on sickness absence and the difficulties associated with confirming stress as a reason for absence when employees worked from home. Members then noted that the Employee Survey was being redesigned to reflect changed ways of working and employee needs.

The report indicated that two 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 two 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.

20 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2022-23

With the assistance of a report by the Strategic HR Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Committee considered the draft 2022/23 Pay Policy Statement. The Statement provided information about the Council's policies relating to the pay and reward of Chief Officers and other employees, as required by the Localism Act. The Statement would be published on the Council's website together with data on Senior Officers' salaries as required by the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency.

Having the requirement for the Statement to be approved by the Council, it was

RESOLVED

that the Council be recommended to approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23.

21 EMPLOYEE REWARD UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report by the Strategic HR Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) outlining the terms of a review that would ensure the system of employee benefit and reward contributed towards securing an efficient and effective establishment. During her introduction, the Strategic HR Manager corrected the report by confirming that employees were not entitled to purchase parking permits at a discounted rate.

The Committee discussed various potential features of the benefits and reward package, particularly buying and selling annual leave. Members noted the

benefits of such a policy to some employees and the parameters that would be imposed by the Council. They then agreed that the themes of well-being, appreciation and development should be features of the review. Having noted that engagement with the Employee Representatives Group would form part of the review process, it was

RESOLVED

that the terms of the review of employee benefits and reward as set out in the report and the process to update relevant policies be endorsed.

22 EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATIVES GROUP

In response to a question about the Staff Survey, the Strategic HR Manager reported that a draft of the Survey had been produced and that detailed aims and the process through which it would be administered were being worked on.

Chair