
Employment Panel

Report of the meeting of the Employment Panel held on 3rd February 2009

Matters for Determination

15. REVIEW OF CENTRAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

(The following item was considered as a confidential item under Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.)

Subject to Cabinet endorsing the necessary budgetary changes, the Panel has endorsed a new staffing structure for the Central Services Directorate. The revised structure reflects the outcome of a recent review of the Directorate following the appointment to the post of Director of Central Services and is intended to address a number of staffing matters, together with new opportunities which have arisen in terms of the structure and management of the Directorate.

In approving the proposals, the Panel has been pleased to note that the review had produced significant savings towards the Council's overall targets and the initial findings of the review of the Democratic Structure Working Group had been taken into consideration.

Having noted that the revised structure provides for the establishment and re-designation of a number of posts within the Directorate, including the deletion of the post of Head of Human Resources and Payroll Services, the Panel also has approved the procedures for appointment to these posts with immediate effect. At the same time, the Panel has agreed to formally delete from the Council's establishment the post of Head of Community Services which had been vacant for some time.

As part of the review consideration also has been given to the role of the Monitoring Officer on behalf of the District Council, which has been undertaken by the Head of Legal & Estates since the retirement of the former Director of Central Services. Having regard to the significant increase in workload associated with ethical standards in recent years and the need to ensure that the Council adequately resources and uses expertise and knowledge in the field to maintain its own reputation and to ensure that Town and Parish Councils have adequate training to reduce the likelihood of future complaints, the Panel

RECOMMEND

- (a) that the Head of Law, Property and Governance be formally appointed as the Council's Monitoring Officer; and**
- (b) that the Democratic Services Manager be formally appointed as Deputy Monitoring Officer.**

A copy of the report by the Director of Central Services and the revised structure is available on request from the Democratic Services Section.

Matters for Information

16. ANNUAL PAY AWARD 2009/10

(The following item was considered as a confidential item under Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.)

Having regard to the Annual Pay Review prepared by Inbucon consultants and the outcome of negotiations with Employees Side representatives, the Panel has agreed an increase of 2.2% in salary scales for District Council employees with effect from 1st April 2009.

As part of this year's award, the Panel also has agreed to review the salaries of those members of staff on the lower salary scales. The exact terms of the review are yet to be determined.

17. HOME WORKING

The Panel has endorsed a Home Working Policy for the Council, which outlines the process and principles in relation to employees undertaking home working on both a frequent and full time basis.

The Policy is intended to address the issues which arose during the recent Home Working Pilot which formed one of several projects arising from the Council's Flexible Working Strategy and has been developed in conjunction with relevant services, managers and employees. Further reviews of the Policy will be undertaken when additional information regarding the management of and take up of the opportunity is forthcoming,

18. RECRUITMENT

The Panel has been provided with details of proposals which were being considered in relation to the process for filling vacant posts, together with the details of the circumstances in which external recruitment advisors are used in the recruitment to senior posts.

In so doing, the Panel has agreed that it would be premature to introduce any changes to recruitment procedures in advance of the review of the Council's People Strategy and other HR policies. However, the Panel has expressed some concerns about the current composition of the Council's Appointments Panel which is used for appointments to senior positions within the Council. Specifically comments were made about the need to establish a pool of Members from which the Appointments Panel could be constituted on an ad hoc basis, such that problems with availability could be avoided. The Panel has agreed that these comments should be included in the current review of the constitution by the Corporate Governance Panel.

Mrs B E Boddington
Chairman