
Employment Panel

**Report of the meetings held on 9th December 2009
and 2nd February 2010**

Matters for Information

12. HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

The Panel has reviewed a draft Human Resources Strategy and reinforced the view that the Council should acknowledge and encourage employees' skills development and that the importance of leadership within the organisation should be recognised. In addition, Members also have requested that the Strategy makes clear that the Employee Liaison Advisory Group is only one of a number of ways in which the Council communicates and engages with employees. Once the terms of the Strategy have been finalised, target dates will be incorporated into the Action Plan. The Head of People, Performance and Partnerships has been authorised to make the necessary amendments for this purpose after consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Subject to any minor changes that may be necessary, the Panel has agreed to adopt the Strategy.

13. POLICY REVIEWS

(a) Season Tickets

The Panel has examined the contents of a policy to provide Council employees with loans for the purchase of season tickets for parking and public transport for the purpose of attending work. As a result the Panel has adopted the policy, which will come into force at the start of the new financial year.

(b) Grievance Procedure

As part of its overall review of the Council's current HR policies and procedures, the Panel has considered the content of a new grievance policy which has been drafted to take into account best practice and legislative changes which have emerged since the procedure was last reviewed. The Panel has asked the HR Manager to reconsider the final appeal process for employees on local grades 7-15 and subject to any changes that may be required to this section, has adopted the Grievance Policy for use with immediate effect.

14. EMPLOYMENT ADVISORY GROUP: INTERIM FINDINGS

The Panel has received at each of its meetings details of progress made by the Employment Advisory Group. Members have discussed a number of employment related issues facing the Council, including the filling of senior management posts when they become vacant in the future, the need to have particular regard to lower salary grades during the next pay negotiations, the nature of the Council's response to changes in local government and management training.

15. REQUEST TO FILL VACANT POSTS

Having been satisfied that it was essential to recruit to vacancies in the Planning Services Division, the Panel has authorised the Head of People, Performance and Partnerships to commence recruitment to the posts identified and to fill any consequential vacancies that may arise as a result of the recruitment process. Both vacancies have been discussed and agreed with the relevant Executive Councillor.

16. RETIREMENT OF EMPLOYEES - ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Panel has placed on record its recognition of, and gratitude for, the excellent contributions made by the following employees during their employment in the local government service and conveyed its best wishes to them for a long and happy retirement.

Name	Directorate	Local Government Service
Mr D Harris	Environmental & Community Health Services	11 years
Mr B Joyce	Environmental & Community Health Services	40 years
Mr M Oakley	Commerce & Technology	13 years
Mr K Gilbert	Commerce & Technology	42 years

17. UPDATE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

The Panel has been acquainted with changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme, which came into effect on 1st April 2008. Particular attention has been drawn to the implications of the changes on the options available to employees on retirement.

18. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DIVISIONAL STRUCTURE AND FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

The Panel has requested the Chairman and Vice-Chairman together with Councillor Mrs K E Cooper to meet with the Executive Councillor for Environment and Information Technology and the Director of Environment and Community Health Services to discuss in more

detail proposals to change the structure of the Facilities Management Section of the Environmental Management Division. Subject to them being satisfied with the information provided at the meeting, the Director of Environment and Community Health Services has been authorised to approve the implementation of the proposed changes.

**19. REVIEW OF ONE LEISURE HOSPITALITY SERVICE:
HUNTINGDON & ST IVES**

The Panel has noted a decision of the Employee Advisory Liaison Group to support changes to the structure of the Hospitality Service at Huntingdon and St Neots Leisure Centres. The review has involved updating the emphasis of the service from bars & catering to hospitality, the deletion of a vacant post and the redesignation and regrading of the remaining posts in the structure which will result in minor savings for the service. In endorsing these proposals the Panel has requested information on the position of St Ivo Leisure Centre within this new service and an indication as to how the Centres will begin to operate collectively.

20. LOW PAY AWARD

The Head of People, Performance and Policy has presented to the Panel the preliminary conclusions of a study undertaken on low pay. By examining comparative median wages per annum paid to employees nationally, regionally and in Cambridgeshire city and district authority areas, the study has defined low pay in Huntingdonshire as those employees on local grade 12 and below. The outcome of the study will help inform the work of the Employment Advisory Group which is currently reviewing all issues associated with employee remuneration.

21. PAY CLAIM 2010

Further to preliminary discussions with the Employees Side and having noted that further negotiations on the 2010/11 pay award would await the outcome of the study being undertaken currently by the Employment Advisory Group, the Panel has requested Members of that Group to assess the workload that remains outstanding and to formulate a timescale for its completion in order to give the Employees Side an indication when pay negotiations might commence.

Mrs B E Boddington
Chairman