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## **Employment Panel**

### **Report of the meeting held on 21st September 2011**

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#### **Matters for Information**

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#### **5. UPDATE ON 2011 PAY NEGOTIATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS**

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

The Panel has considered the outcome of the consultation on a range of employee allowances. As a consequence of which, the Panel has endorsed a number of amendments to employee mileage, subsistence and remuneration allowances. On the recommendation of the Managing Director, Resources, and as part of these changes, the Panel also has agreed that no further cars would be leased for staff, including Heads of Services and Directors, with immediate effect. Details of all changes can be viewed on the District Council Intranet site.

Preliminary consideration also has been given to a review of the Council's pay structure. The proposals which are currently the subject of a 90 day consultation with employees are designed to make a substantial contribution to the Council's £2 million target for unidentified savings and potentially:

- ◆ maximise job security;
- ◆ protect existing salary levels;
- ◆ provide a financial incentive for on the job learning and development;
- ◆ reduce the bureaucracy of the current appraisal system;
- ◆ continue to provide an attractive proposition to prospective employees; and
- ◆ ensure fair rates of pay across the workforce.

Given the complexity of the proposals, the Panel has received a detailed briefing by the Managing Director (Resources) arising from which comment was made by Members on a range of issues including sanctionable pay and absence management, rewards for learning and development and matters relating to incremental points and salary scales. Members have been assured about the legality of the proposals and the undertaking of appropriate risk assessments and sought clarification as to the relative and absolute savings which could be achieved from the proposals.

Having regard to the complex nature of the subject and the serious implications of the proposals, the Employment Panel has requested the opportunity to discuss all relevant issues in detail prior to making any formal resolutions on the matter. This will be accommodated via a Panel Briefing and a special meeting on 3rd October 2011.

The Panel has noted the contents of a cost of living pay claim which has been submitted by Employees Side representatives for 2011/12. However, the Panel was of the opinion that it would not be appropriate to agree an award whilst the consultation on the pay structure was continuing. This will be discussed further at the Panel's next meeting.

## **6. EMPLOYMENT REPORT**

In response to a request at a previous meeting, the Panel has considered a range of information relating to the management of the Council's workforce and the workload of the Human Resources Team. This has included the latest position and trends relating to:-

- ◆ Employee numbers;
- ◆ Retention of new starters;
- ◆ Performance Development Review scores;
- ◆ The impact of the Voluntary Release Scheme;
- ◆ Human Resources caseload; and
- ◆ Sickness absence reporting.

In considering the information which has been provided, the Panel has expressed concern about the increasing number of days lost to sickness per full time employee during the course of the previous year. Members have noted that that it was hoped that the situation would be improved following the implementation of a new Sickness Absence Policy which had been adopted by the Panel in February and further training for Managers which was expected to take place in October. The Panel has suggested that the Council should adopt a corporate target for sickness absence and that Heads of Service should be reminded to follow the process for managing absence consistently. In view of their continuing concerns, the Panel will discuss the issue further at a future meeting.

A copy of the full report is available from Democratic Services on request and has been published on the District Council's website.

## **7. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY**

To reflect recent changes in the organisational configuration of the District Council and the roles and responsibilities of some employees, the Panel has endorsed the contents of a new Health and Safety Policy for the Council.

The Policy sets out the District Council's core health and safety values and provides employees and Members with guidance on their health and safety roles and responsibilities. To reflect the pace of change in local government, the policy has been drafted in such a way to account for minor updates if necessary.

Having noted the details of the organisational chart for Health and Safety, the Panel has been reminded that all Members have a responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of the Council's employees and for ensuring that suitable resources are available to discharge these responsibilities.

#### **8. RETIREMENT OF EMPLOYEES – ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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.

<b>Name</b>	<b>Division</b>	<b>Local Government Service</b>
Mr D Monks	Chief Executive	36 years
Mrs B Stewart	Development Management	2 years
Mrs J Pavitt	Benefits	25 years
Mr J Dawson	One Leisure	36 years
Mr T Day	Accountancy	41 years

P A Swales  
Chairman