
Employment Panel

Report of the meeting held on 11th February 2015

Matters for Information

16. STAFF COUNCIL

The Chairman of Staff Council has introduced a proposal to review the Terms of Reference for Staff Council. The Panel has indicated its support of the proposal and has agreed to delegate the review and agreed amendments to the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Employment Panel, Executive Councillor for Organisational Change and Development and the Managing Director to the Staff Council's Terms of Reference after consultation with Staff Council.

17. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Further to Item No. 5 of their Report to the meeting held on 19th November 2014 the Panel has received and endorsed the Workforce Development Strategy which is an overarching document that sets out the type of organisation the Council wants to become by taking forward the strategic aims as set out in the Council's Corporate Plan 2014 - 2016. The Strategy outlines how the Council will support and develop the workforce in order to meet the needs of a smaller, agile and more resilient Council. The Panel has noted that the Strategy will be made available to employees of the Council and implementation will begin. Progress on the Strategy will be reported back to a future meeting.

18. NEW APPRAISAL PROCESS

The Panel has reviewed and endorsed the contents of a new appraisal process. As a result of the introduction of a new pay and grading model from 1st April 2014 it has been necessary to ensure that progression relating to performance is aligned to the new pay scales. In response to Members concerns about the lack of opportunity for employees to feedback on their manager's performance during the appraisal process, the Panel has been assured that there is an opportunity for the employees to feedback during the process. The Managing Director has assured Members of the commitment of the Senior Management Team to the appraisal process to ensure a consistent approach across the organisation.

19. SOCIAL MEDIA, NETWORKING AND BLOG POLICY

The Panel has reviewed and endorsed the contents of a Social Media, Networking and Blog Policy for the Council which details the procedures for employees to ensure that the content of blogs and

social networking sites do not bring the Council into disrepute or breach their obligations under the Code of Conduct.

Arising from a Members' concern regarding the enforcement of the policy, the Panel has been assured that the ground rules for employees are explicit enough to ensure that a breach of policy is easier to recognise. Furthermore the Policy informs the employees how to use social media thereby making a breach less likely to happen.

20. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

With the assistance of a report by LGSS (the report is reproduced as Item No. 4 on the Council Agenda) the Panel has endorsed for submission to the Council, the content of a proposed Statement of Pay Policy for 2015/16. The Pay Policy Statement provides information about the Council's policies relating to the pay and reward of Chief Officers and other employees, as required by Sections 38-43 of the Localism Act. The Statement will be published on the Council's website together with data on senior salaries required by the Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency.

21. WORKFORCE REPORT (QUARTER 3)

The Panel has received a quarterly report on Human Resource matters impacting on the performance of the organisation during the period of 1st October to 31st December 2014. The report included the latest position and trends relating to:-

- ◆ employee numbers;
- ◆ salary costs; and
- ◆ sickness absence reporting.

In reviewing the workforce information, Members have been informed that the number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) posts within the establishment has continued to decrease and that the monthly salary cost has decreased by £25k in the third quarter. Members have also been informed of the omission of the breakdown of reasons for voluntary resignations and further information on this will be presented with the next quarter report.

In terms of sickness absence, the Panel has noted that the annual average days sickness per FTE has increased to 11.1 days in the third quarter however the Executive Leader has reminded the Panel that the figures include two terminally ill employees which the Council undertook to support.

The breakdown of Long Term Sickness and Short Term Sickness is 61% compared to 39% and Members have been reassured that the HR Team will work towards bringing all long term sickness cases to resolution.

Finally, the Panel has placed on record its recognition of, and gratitude for the excellent contributions made by Sharyn McNalty, Frederick Goodship, Ronald Jeakins and Martyn Sturges during their

employment in the local government service and has conveyed its best wishes to them for a long and happy retirement.

22. LGSS MONITORING REPORT

The Panel has considered the performance of LGSS Human Resources, Payroll and Organisational Workforce Development services across the key service measures agreed under the current contract during the period 1st October to 31st December 2014. LGSS performance is measured in four areas namely:

- ◆ General Service Standards;
- ◆ HR Strategic and Advisory;
- ◆ Recruitment and Payroll; and
- ◆ Organisational workforce development.

Members have been pleased to note that there are no issues to report for the Strategic and Advisory, Transactional Human Resources and Payroll elements of the contract.

With regard to the organisational workforce and development element of the contract, the Panel has been informed that the Council have yet to use the full allocation of training places provided by LGSS. There was concern that if the 500 places provided are not utilised then the Council will not be receiving value for money. Members were assured that the Council have been working hard to ensure that all the training places provided by LGSS were allocated by the end of the financial year.

23. EMPLOYEE OPINION SURVEY PROGRESS REPORT

Further to Item No. 12 of their Report to the meeting held on 17th December 2014, the Panel has been updated on progress with the action plan developed in response to the results of the Employee Opinion Survey. In noting the actions that are on track for delivery, the Panel has endorsed the proposed amendment to remove the reference to an achievement or employee of the month scheme. In response to Members comments on the unsuitability of the employee of the month scheme and suggestions for replacement with a performance recognition scheme, the Managing Director assured Members that employees are recognised for their efforts through the allocation of appropriate training and project management courses.

R J West
Chairman