

---

# **Employment Panel**

## **Report of the meeting held on 17th June 2015.**

---

---

### **Matters for Information**

---

#### **1. WORKFORCE REPORT (QUARTER 4)**

The Panel has received a quarterly report on Human Resource matters impacting on the performance of the organisation during the period of 1st January to 31st March 2015. 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 organisation has decreased and this has led to a decrease in the monthly salary cost of £63.5k. As a result of a request from the Panel the report now shows the reasons why employees have left the Council.

The Panel has noted that even though the number sickness days per FTE figure has increased, the number of sickness days has reduced by 473 days. Members were acquainted with the reason for this, largely as a result of a fall in the number of employees, the number of sickness days has been divided between fewer employees therefore resulting in an increase in the average.

The Panel has placed on record its recognition of, and gratitude for, the excellent contribution made by Peter Hobbs, Senior Ranger, during his employment in the local government service and conveyed its best wishes to him for a long and happy retirement.

#### **2. LGSS QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE AND 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 January to 31st March 2015. 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 informed that LGSS will be working more closely with Mr Dobbyne, the Corporate Team Manager so that actions can be identified and addressed with expediency. There will also be a brief audit of the e-recruitment system to assess its performance. Following a concern by a Member it was confirmed that the format of the report is evolving so that data gathered is more meaningful.

### **3. EMPLOYEE OPINION SURVEY PROGRESS REPORT**

Further to Item No. 23 of their Report to the meeting held on 25th February 2015, the Panel has been updated on progress in response to the results of the Employee Opinion Survey. The Panel has been advised that Service Plans have been introduced, the appraisal process has been overhauled and 360 degree feedback forms have been introduced. In addition the 'Meet SMT sessions' which are sessions where staff can attend to receive news from the Senior Management Team, will continue. A further survey will be carried out again this Summer.

Furthermore Members have been advised that a Code of Conduct has been launched and the development of an Employee Handbook is currently in production. Arising from a Members' concern on the confidentiality of the results, the Panel has been assured that the electronic confidentiality of the survey can be guaranteed. No breach of its contents has ever taken place, the information stays in a secure area of the IT network and there are only three people within the authority with access to the information.

### **4. SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

The Panel has reviewed and endorsed the updated Safeguarding Policy. The Policy is necessary as the Council has a statutory obligation under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. The Panel has been informed that the process of data collection to determine both the level of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks required and training needs of each Council post is due to commence shortly.

Members have been advised that the Policy is shorter than previous policies as the electronic version of the document contains links to the latest most up to date forms that can be downloaded from Cambridgeshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) website. The Lead Safeguarding Officer is currently looking into introducing an e-learning module for all staff to complete.

### **5. LEAVE POLICIES**

The Panel has reviewed and endorsed the contents of new employment policies and policy updates in the light of best practice and changes in statutory regulations.

The Adoption Leave Policy is a new policy for use to demonstrate how the District Council complies with the statutory provisions around adoption leave and is designed to support parents through employment matters relating to adoption, surrogacy and child fostering.

Members have been advised that the Shared Parental Leave Policy is a new policy which has been introduced as a result to a change to legislation to allow for employees to share parental leave and pay.

The Panel has been acquainted with progress on the Flexible Working Policy and has been informed that the Policy has been revised to take account of changes in legislation and a request from Corporate Management Team for a review. It has amalgamated 11 different policy documents and includes a review of the flexi time arrangements. Two amendments to the Policy have been presented to the Panel which included a rewording to the section on time carried forward to '14.8 hours is the maximum debit/credit that can be carried forward from one 4 week accounting period to the next' and a rewording to the time off in lieu (TOIL) policy which can only be agreed by a member of Senior Management Team.

The Panel has been advised that the Leave Arrangements Policy has been updated to reflect changes in the unpaid leave section and career breaks to allow greater flexibility to support employees in a range of circumstances.

## **6. SENIOR OFFICER DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

In light of new regulations to amend the statutory dismissal procedures for the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and the responsible Financial Officer, the Panel has endorsed proposed changes to the Council's Disciplinary procedures. This item appears elsewhere on the Council Agenda.

J W Davies  
Chairman