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NOTICE OF MEETING

EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB COMMITTEE

16 JANUARY 2007

TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB COMMITTEE

You are requested to attend a meeting of the above Committee on **16 January 2007 at 5.30 pm** in the Function Room, Fifth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell, to transact the business set out in the attached agenda.

Alison Sanders
Director of Corporate Services

Members of the Education Employment Sub Committee

Councillor Edger (Chairman)
Councillor Leake (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors Edger, Mrs Beadsley and Grayson

Substitute Members of the Committee

Councillors Mrs Barnard, Beadsley, Jones, Mrs Shillcock, Turrell and Worrall

EMERGENCY EVACUATION INSTRUCTIONS

If you hear the alarm:

- 1 Leave the building immediately**
- 2 Follow the green signs**
- 3 Use the stairs not the lifts**
- 4 Do not re-enter the building until told to do so**

EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB COMMITTEE
16 January 2007 (5.30 pm)
Function Room, Fifth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell.

AGENDA

Page No

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**
To receive any apologies for absence and to note the attendance of any substitute members.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interest, and the nature of that interest, in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.
3. **URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**
To receive any urgent items of business.
4. **MINUTES** 1
To receive the note of an inquorate informal meeting of the Committee held on 18 July 2006.
5. **REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S EARLY RETIREMENT AND SEVERANCE POLICIES FOR TEACHERS** 3
(Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries – Human Resources)
6. **UPDATE ON RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN SCHOOLS** 7
(Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries – Human Resources)

Agenda Item 4

EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB COMMITTEE 18 JULY 2006 (5.30pm - 6.00 pm)

Present: Councillors Edger (Chairman), Mrs Beadsley, Mr G Jackson and Mr T Wheaton

1. Quorum

Under Part 4.1, Paragraph 8 of the Council's Constitution, the meeting was declared inquorate and stood adjourned to a date and time to be advised.

NOTE OF AN INQUORATE MEETING OF THE EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 JULY 2006

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of personal or prejudicial interest at the commencement of the meeting.

3. Minutes

The minutes of the Education Employment Sub Committee held on 11 October 2005 would be considered at the next quorate meeting.

4. Updating the List of Disciplinary Offences

There was a discussion around the report on updating the list of disciplinary offences, presented by the Borough Human Resources Manager.

The Members present agreed with the content of the report.

5. Age Discrimination Regulations 2006

The Borough Human Resources Manager presented a report, and there was a discussion around the implementation of the Age Discrimination Regulations 2006.

The members present were advised that guidance on the changes would be sent to schools in due course.

CHAIRMAN

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EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB-COMMITTEE 16 JANUARY 2007

REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S EARLY RETIREMENT AND SEVERANCE POLICIES FOR TEACHERS (Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries – Human Resources)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 As a result of the Age Discrimination legislation introduced on 1 October 2006 the Council are reviewing the arrangements for access to unreduced pension for teachers prior to the normal retirement date.
- 1.2 The Council operates a system for allowing access to unreduced pension for teachers in the following circumstances:
 - I) Where the teacher is over the age of 58 and is made redundant from their teaching post.
 - II) Under the Early Retirement Policy a teacher over the age of 58 can apply for early retirement on the grounds of efficiency. An application is only considered where this is supported by the governing body and where there are either clear financial savings or on the grounds of organisational effectiveness.
- 1.3 This operation remains an area of significant uncertainty and, in the absence of any relevant current case law, is challengeable under the Age Discrimination legislation.
- 1.4 The Employment Committee have reviewed the Redundancy Severance Policy for the Council as detailed at 4.5

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that, with immediate effect, the following arrangements are introduced:

- 2.1 **Teachers who are made redundant and have unreduced access to their pension will have the redundancy calculated at the statutory (30 week maximum) redundancy calculator.**
- 2.2 **Teachers who are made redundant who do not have unreduced access to their pension will have the redundancy severance calculated at x2.5 statutory redundancy calculator upto a maximum of 104 week's payment.**
- 2.3 **Use actual weekly pay for all redundancy payments.**
- 2.4 **The Early Retirement Policy for teachers allowing teachers to apply to be released under efficiency grounds from age 58 would cease to operate.**

3 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

3.1 Borough Treasurer

Nothing to add to the report.

3.2 Borough Solicitor

The statutory pension scheme rules which allow access at a particular age are subject to an exemption under paragraph 11 of the Age Discrimination law but location variations to the statutory rules have to be substantiated under an objective justification defence and it is by no means certain that the Council are able to do so with the current approach.

3.3 Equality impact assessment

The impact is neutral on gender, race, religion and disability issues. The statutory redundancy payments calculator does use age and length of service in calculations but employers are specifically allowed to use this form of calculation as it provides greater financial assistance to those older workers who may be assumed to have more difficulty in finding suitable employment in the current socio-economic circumstances.

4 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4.1 Early Retirement at age 58

4.11 The Council has operated the arrangements where a teacher can apply for early retirement without any reduction to their pension since September 1999. An application would be considered on the grounds of clear financial savings or on the grounds of organisational effectiveness. Where an application is granted the associated costs of the early retirement are paid centrally and not from the schools budget.

4.12 The current arrangements under the Teachers Pensions scheme for existing employees allow early retirement to be granted by the employer from the age of 50 to 59 years. The retirement age of 58 is a Bracknell Forest interpretation of the Teachers Pensions arrangements for which employers have been able to exercise prior to the introduction of the age discrimination regulations.

4.13 Bracknell Forest is one of a minority of authorities which offers teachers the opportunity to retire early at age 58. The most common approach is for authorities only to allow early retirement where the teacher leaves under the actuarially reduced benefits arrangements. This is a permanent reduction in benefits and has no direct cost for the authority.

4.2 Severance Payments

There are two types of severance payment currently available for teachers:

- (i) Redundancy payments for employees with no access to their pension
- (ii) Redundancy and early retirement payments for employees with access to their pension.

4.3 The basic rules of redundancy/severance payments

Under the Local Government (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006 the Statutory Redundancy Payment calculators can still be used even though they take age and length of service into account. Schemes which use multiples of the Statutory Redundancy calculator can still be used, but any other calculations based on age and length of service are deemed potentially discriminatory. The Government has therefore proposed new rules which set a maximum payment level, but leave it to individual authorities to decide the basis on which the new payments would be applied. It is important that the policy agreed should avoid the risk of costly challenge on Age Discrimination principles. Retaining the Council's existing policy is not an option as the Regulations on which it is based will be phased out by 1 October.

4.4 Current policy

4.4.1 The Council's current policy for those with access to pension is:

- A statutory redundancy payment of up to 30 weeks pay based on actual weekly pay.
- There is no pension enhancement for teachers being made redundant.

4.4.2 The Council's current policy for those with no access to pension is:

- Up to 66 weeks at actual weekly pay.

This policy, agreed in 1999, aimed to give a fair and proportionate but not over generous settlement to employees, and accounts for the sound industrial relations context around severance situations in the past few years and the ease with which major re-organisations are implemented. The logic of the position was that those with access to pension had a tax free lump sum to fall back upon, whilst those without did not, and therefore some discretion was exercised in their favour to give them a reasonable severance package.

4.5 Future policy

The Employment Committee have reviewed the Pensions and Severance Policy for the Council and have resolved the following will apply:

4.5.1 Use actual weekly pay for all redundancy payments

4.5.2 Use the statutory (30 week maximum) redundancy calculator for all redundancy payments for those with access to their pensions.

4.5.3 Use a x2.5 statutory redundancy calculator for all redundancy payments for those with no access to their pensions to a maximum of 104 weeks payment.

4.6 Teachers Pensions

4.6.1 There are arrangements in place for teachers to access their pension before normal retirement date including a new arrangement for a phased retirement from the age of 55.

4.6.2 Phased retirement is a new discretion where a teacher can access part of the pensionable benefits whilst continuing to work in a reduced capacity. This arrangement is available where there is a reduction in pensionable salary by at least 25% for a minimum period of 12 months.

4.6.3 Actuarially Reduced benefits are available for teachers over 55 years and under normal pension age. As this is early access to pension benefits there is a permanent reduction in the pension benefits payable.

4.6.4 There are arrangements in place to consider ill health retirement under the Teachers' Pensions arrangements.

4.7 **Regular Review**

It is recommended that policy statements be reconsidered regularly, and as and when circumstances change.

Background Papers

None.

Contact for further information

Paul Young - Extension 4060

Doc ref

HR/I/educationemploycommittee/early retirement and severance07.doc

EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB-COMMITTEE 16 JANUARY 2007

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION IN SCHOOLS (Director of Education, Children's Services and Libraries - Human Resources)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Education Employment Sub Committee is requested to consider the initiatives underway and plans for the future to aid the recruitment and retention of teachers in the Borough.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **The Committee is invited to note the actions being taken to assist with the recruitment and retention of teaching and other school staff in the Borough.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee needs to be aware of the work undertaken to support this priority area in Bracknell forest Borough Council.

4 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 4.1 Any innovative recruitment and retention measures adopted needs to be in accordance with the Borough's legal powers.

Borough Finance Officer

- 4.2 The financial implications of the report are set out in the supporting information.

Access Implications

- 4.3 There are no access implications.

Borough Personnel Manager

- 4.4 Comments incorporated in the supporting information.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Newly Qualified Teacher Recruitment

- 5.1 As in previous years NQTs are invited to apply to Bracknell Forest's Primary Pool. They complete one online application to be considered by all primary

schools for suitable vacancies. This scheme has benefits for both schools and candidates as it reduces administrative burdens, streamlines and accelerates and increases the number of teachers to consider for each post.

- 5.2 In 2006 102 NQTs applied for the pool. 61 were interviewed by a panel of 3 headteachers, and 18 were appointed to positions in Bracknell Forest. There were some teachers in the pool who were still seeking posts after 1st September. Some of these have filled late arising vacancies, taken positions starting on 1st January or covered for teachers on maternity leave.
- 5.3 For 2007 we are also accepting centralised applications from secondary trained NQTs, which will be forwarded to schools so the applicants can be considered for suitable vacancies.
- 5.4 At Recruitment Fairs, the Recruitment Strategy Team collects contact emails and mobile phone numbers of all NQTs who express an interest in teaching in Bracknell Forest. Whenever the team are made aware of a suitable vacancy by schools, details are sent via text message or email to the NQT, who can access full details of the vacancy on the Bracknell Forest website and apply directly should they wish.

Returning to Teaching

- 5.5 Bracknell Forest is running its third Return to Teaching course in the summer of 2007. The 12 week part time course is designed for qualified primary trained teachers wishing to update their skills and knowledge and return to teaching after a break. The course includes 10 days placement in local schools and specialist training covering all areas of the curriculum, based at the Education Centre.
- 5.6 The course is funded by the Training and Development Agency for Schools and attendees will receive a training bursary. The course is open to teachers living in any area; although it is likely most will be local to Bracknell and will consider taking positions in Bracknell Forest schools on completion of the course.
- 5.7 The course requires 15 attendees before the TDA will give funding for it to go ahead. There has been considerable interest in the course, with 50 application packs sent out and whilst only 12 applications have been received to date, it is expected that the required number of attendees will be met.
- 5.8 We are working with Oxford Brookes University to investigate whether it is possible for this course to be accredited, so that the study involved will count towards an MA, should the teachers involved wish to continue to study for this qualification at a later date.

Housing help for teachers

- 5.9 New schemes offering housing help to teachers and other keyworkers were launched in October 2006. The government funded schemes for Bracknell Forest are now managed by Catalyst Housing. There are now a number of different options available to those eligible.

- 5.10 Grants are available to teachers buying their first home, to those whose present home is too small for their needs, or teachers who need to move into the area, and have a property to sell elsewhere.
- 5.11 The Open Market Homebuy scheme gives teachers the option of buying a home of their choice within reasonable travelling distance of their place of work. The scheme takes the form of an equity loan of up to £50,000 (or 25% of the house price if less) which is repayable on the sale of the house, or shortly after keyworker leaves employment.
- 5.12 The New Build scheme offers shared equity properties, where the teachers can buy part of the home and rent the remainder. At present there are not many of these properties located in Bracknell Forest, but Bracknell Forest teachers can use this scheme for properties in neighbouring authorities. There are a number of major housing developments planned for the near future in Bracknell which will result in more properties becoming available locally on this scheme.
- 5.13 There is also an Intermediate Rental Scheme, where teachers can rent usually new properties at below market rates.
- 5.14 The schemes are useful as a retention tool, as they encourage teachers to settle in this area. It is also helpful when recruiting Newly Qualified Teachers as they often ask about housing schemes at recruitment fairs, before deciding which authorities to apply to.
- 5.15 The Bracknell Forest keyworker housing scheme, which offers low rent properties to newly appointed teachers moving into Bracknell Forest continues to be popular, but has limitations.

Online recruitment

- 5.16 All school based vacancies are advertised on the Bracknell Forest website, where applicants can download application packs and complete an online application form. This ensures everyone who is considering applying for a teaching position in Bracknell Forest schools is aware of all available opportunities. The Bracknell Forest jobs pages are part of the larger Jobsgopublic website. This ensures that any teacher searching for a job on the Jobsgopublic website is also aware of the position.
- 5.17 In order to increase the exposure of secondary advertisements and generate more applications, the Recruitment Strategy Team is also placing all secondary advertisements onto the Eteach website. This is a one year trial, centrally funded. If successful, access to this website will be given to the individual schools to add their own advertisements, and the cost will be passed to schools.
- 5.18 Eteach has established itself as a major teacher recruitment website and offers extensive search facilities and a bulletin service. Advertising with Eteach ensures that any teacher searching for a vacancy in a particular key stage/subject and/or geographic area is made aware of vacancies in Bracknell Forest, even if they had not previously considered working in this particular authority. Applicants can download an application form from the Eteach website, or apply online at the Bracknell Forest website.

- 5.19 Early indications suggest that this will be a successful route to increasing the number of applications for vacancies. For example an ICT vacancy had 183 views on the Bracknell Forest/Jobsgopublic website, with 7 applications downloaded, whilst the Eteach advertisement had 299 views and 14 applications downloaded. Four applications were received, two from Eteach, one via the Bracknell Forest website and one as a result of a newspaper advertisement.

Background Papers

Previous meeting agenda and minutes

Contact for further information

Paul Young, (01344 354060)

Education, Children's Services and Libraries, Human Resources Manager

Jo Rayner, (01344 354098)

Recruitment Strategy Manager