

**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE
14 DECEMBER 2016
7.30 - 9.10 PM**



Present:

Councillors McLean (Chairman), Allen (Vice-Chairman in the Chair), Angell, Mrs Temperton, Virgo, Worrall and Brossard (Substitute)

Apologies for Absence were received from:

Councillors Heydon, Leake and Ms Miller

17. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

18. Minutes from previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5 October 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19. Urgent Items of Business

The Chairman reported that the Chief Officer; Information Services, Pat Keane had left the Council's employment on 30 November 2016. An Interim Consultant, Paul Day had been appointed to start on 12 December. The Interim Consultant would assist in shaping the ICT strategy and help facilitate the direction of travel for ICT services.

20. Update from the Chairman of the Local Joint Committee

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that as none of the trade union representatives had been present, the meeting had been cancelled. Members expressed disappointment that Members and officers had all taken the time to be present and none of the trade unions had been present or sent their apologies for the meeting.

The Committee agreed to continue with scheduled Local Joint Committee meetings, but only have meetings if they were requested by trade union representatives. This would entail an agenda being despatched to all involved but a meeting would only take place if having had sight of the agenda papers, trade union representatives requested a meeting.

21. Minutes of Sub Groups

The Committee noted the minutes of the Local Joint Committee's held on 6 July 2016 and 5 October 2016.

The Committee received the notes of the Health & Safety Panel held on 9 November 2016.

The Committee considered the tabled recommendation before them and it was:

RESOLVED that the Employment Committee agreed:

- i) that the Health & Safety Panel be disbanded and that trade union safety representatives be given the right to attend the Departmental Safety Groups and Teacher & Support Staff Association meetings to raise issues of concern in a timely manner.
- ii) to assume the function of consulting with recognised trade unions, through the Local Joint Committee, about any health and safety issues which are not resolved at departmental levels and that any health and safety issues arising from Local Joint Committee are referred to Employment Committee.
- iii) that the function set out above be recognised as part of the Committee's existing terms of reference under 'Employment Related Policies and Procedures'
- iv) that teaching/support staff trade union representatives be invited or co-opted to meetings of the Local Joint Committee where matters relating to teaching/support staff are to be discussed.

22. **Annual Update of the Council's Pay Policy Statement and Annual Review of the Bracknell Forest Supplement**

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that in accordance with the 2011 Localism Act the Council was required to publish a Pay Policy Statement. In addition, the report also addressed the third annual assessment of the Bracknell Forest Supplement which would take effect from 1 April 2017.

In response to the Committee's queries the following points were made:

- The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that there had been some pressure put to bear on local authorities to adopt a Living Wage and that this had now become a common practice almost amongst local authorities nationally.
- The Committee noted that the Director of Public Health's salary was out of keeping with local authority pay scales. It was reported that NHS pay scales were more generous and these had been carried over.
- A number of Members expressed concern that the multiplier of 1.75 relating to payments on termination of employment was too generous and that in the current climate this should be considered further. Members felt that this generosity would not be offered in the commercial sector and nor should it be offered by local authorities. The Committee agreed that an informed decision should be made based on all the relevant information. The Committee asked that the Chief Officer: Human Resources bring a report to the Committee as soon as possible on the impact of reducing the multiplier by 0.25 or by 0.75.

RESOLVED that the Employment Committee::

- i) Recommended that Council agreed the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18.

- ii) Agreed that the level of the Bracknell Forest Supplement from 1 April 2017 be aligned with the non-statutory "Living Wage" which was now £8.45ph.
- iii) that the Chief Officer: Human Resources bring a report to the Committee as soon as possible on the impact of reducing the multiplier for payments on termination of employment by 0.25 or by 0.75.

23. Amendment to Relocation Policy

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that following the Committee's request that some amendments be made to the Relocation Policy to ensure clarity, these amendments had now been made.

Some Members expressed concern that this policy was overgenerous and that these benefits would not be available to those in the commercial sector. The Chief Officer: Human Resources stated that the policy was only accessible to those posts that were difficult to recruit to and had not been used to a very limited extent in previous years. Further, the policy acknowledged the higher cost of living in the region and the relatively higher costs of property which may create a disincentive to prospective candidates.

RESOLVED that the changes to the Relocation Policy attached as Appendix A of the agenda papers, be agreed.

24. Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (1) Information relating to any individual (Minutes 25 and 26).

25. Environment, Culture & Communities Regulatory Services

The Chief Officer: Environment & Public Protection reported that the shared service for Regulatory services would move away from a service that was struggling to recruit and towards a service where staff had career opportunities. The shared service would also bring savings to the Council. The new service was due to commence on 9 January 2017.

Staff would continue to work as three teams however the management structure would be changed. There would be a Member led joint Committee which would be responsible for running the service.

In response to queries from the Committee the following points were made:

- The service was likely to evolve and expansion to other local authority areas may be pursued in the future, this would be a decision for the Joint Committee.
- The new service would follow an intelligence led approach, this differed from the approach taken at present.
- The Committee noted that the pest control service would no longer continue.
- All three councils involved would make savings as a result of this shared service.

- It was reported that there had been some anxiety amongst staff as a result of the changes but that this was inevitable with any large scale change. Majority of staff recognised that there could be career opportunities in the new service.
- Local knowledge would be brought to the service through officers and the Members on the Joint Committee.
- The Committee recognised that the cross fertilisation of practices could often be beneficial to all involved.
- All staff would be employed by West Berkshire Council, staff would be located within their local areas to begin with, but this could change.

RESOLVED that the Employment Committee:

- i) subject to any redeployment opportunities offered to those affected, agreed the three post holders be declared redundant in accordance with the dates and terms set out in Exempt Appendix 2 of the agenda papers.
- ii) Noted that the posts identified in Appendix 3 of the agenda papers would be transferred under TUPE provisions to West Berkshire from 9 January 2017.

26. **Legal Services**

The Borough Solicitor reported that this report was the result of a review within the Council's legal services team. The report proposes the deletion of one of the three existing Assistant Borough Solicitor posts.

The Committee expressed concern that it was important to ensure there was sufficient resource to support contracts and procurement work. The Borough Solicitor reported that he was confident that there remained sufficient resource to tackle these areas and it was confirmed that this proposal would not impact legal support provided to the Council's Planning process. Further, much contracts and procurement work was now being carried out by the Procurement team.

This proposal would lead to reducing management overheads and allow more resource at a less senior level, which was much needed.

RESOLVED that the Employment Committee approved the deletion of an Assistant Borough Solicitor post by reason of redundancy on the terms set out in exempt Annex 1 of the agenda papers.

CHAIRMAN