

**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE
14 DECEMBER 2022
6.30 - 7.05 PM**



Present:

Councillors Leake (Chair), Allen (Vice-Chair), Dudley and Mrs L Gibson

Present Virtually:

Councillors Bhandari and Neil

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Angell, Porter and Wade

Non-Voting Co-optee Present Virtually:

Councillors Heydon

18. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

19. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 12 October 2022 were approved and signed by the Chair.

20. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

21. Update from the Chairman of the Local Joint Committee

The Committee was advised that the Local Joint Committee had discussed items 7, 8 and 9 on the agenda. There had been some complimentary comments but no requests for amendments or adverse comments.

22. Minutes of Sub Groups

The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Local Joint Committee held on 12 October 2022 and the Education Employment Sub Committee on 12 October 2022.

23. COVID-19: Health & Safety Assessment Report

The Committee received and noted a report summarising the results of health and safety assessments undertaken by staff since January 2022 by way of eLearning packages. These included Display Screen Equipment, Home Working Assessments, Returning to the Office Assessment and BAME Vulnerable Assessments. Staff were required to undertake these assessments as the council had a duty of care under Health and Safety legislation for ensuring the wellbeing of all staff. Most had had to change their working environments and ways of working.

According to the NHS' Equality and Health Inequality hub, the coronavirus pandemic had widened the health inequalities across the country, disproportionately impacting on many who already faced disadvantage and discrimination. Evidence showed this has had a particularly negative effect on BAME communities. Therefore, it was important for the Council to be aware of how this may be impacting the workforce and put in place actions to mitigate these impacts.

The following had been undertaken:

- BAME/Vulnerable Assessment: 0 (no new ones)
- DSE e-learning: 38
- DSE Assessments 128
- New Working from Home Assessments:17
- Returning to the Office Assessment: 207

The Committee noted the report.

24. **HR Policy Review - Domestic Abuse and Violence/Abuse at Work**

The Committee consider a report inviting it to review and approve revised policies for Domestic Abuse and Violence/Abuse at Work. The Human Resources (HR) team was undertaking a review of the HR policies with a view to updating and, where applicable, rationalising the number required.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the following amendments which had been made to the policies:

Domestic Abuse:

- Equality section amended
- amendment to scope
- confidentiality section added
- updated domestic abuse definition
- expanded on employee & manager responsibilities
- expanded on responding to disclosure section
- added section for when both victim and perpetrator work for the council,
- added appendix on types of abuse.

Violence/Abuse at work policy:

- Updates to name of organisations/bodies.
- Reference to new policies - Equality and Dignity at Work Policy.
- Added statement about Cyberbullying and approaches to addressing this.
- Links to guidance/policy added for ease of reference.

The Committee was advised that the HR/OD Team would be supporting the effective management of these procedures through a programme of development for managers.

RESOLVED that the revised policies for Domestic Abuse and Violence/Abuse at Work be approved.

25. **Annual Workforce Monitoring Report 2021/22**

The Committee considered the Council's Annual Workforce Monitoring Report. The Council aspired to be an Employer of Choice and live its values of Inclusive,

Ambitious and Always Learning. Under the Equality Act 2010, it also had a legal duty to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people. Part of this legal duty was to report annually on its workforce composition. The aim for the Council's workforce was to reflect the composition of the local population to ensure it was representative of the community, thereby helping to ensure that appropriate services were provided to everyone. There was also a wish to celebrate diversity and ensure everyone was treated fairly and with dignity and respect.

The report provided an update on the actions identified when considering the previous year's report and the ongoing actions that would form the new action plan for 2022-2023 and onwards.

The Committee asked if more could be done to address the disparity between male and female workers within the Council, particularly in social care. It was explained that this was thought to be a reflection that was occurring nationally, and continued work would look to see what could be done to address this including continued recruitment campaigns and offering apprenticeships.

RESOLVED that the Annual Workforce Monitoring Report be noted and approved for publication on the Council's web site.

CHAIRMAN