

**LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE
5 OCTOBER 2016
4.00 - 4.35 PM**



Present:

Councillors Leake (Chairman), Allen, Angell and Worrall
David Allais, UNISON
Lorna Cameron, UNISON
Asia Alison, GMB

In Attendance:

Nikki Gibbons, Chief Officer: Human Resources

58. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

59. Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting on 6 July 2016 were approved as a correct record.

60. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

61. Employment Committee: Agenda and Related Matters

The Committee received and commented on the following reports:

1) Amendment to Relocation Policy

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that some amendments to the Council's Relocation Policy were being proposed as set out in the report. The main change proposed was to remove the requirement of an officer to sell their main home in order to take up their new appointment at Bracknell Forest Council and access the relocation scheme. Instead officers entitled to access the scheme, could claim lodging expenses of up to £80 per week. She reported that the overall limit of up to £8,000 that could be claimed remained unchanged. The Committee noted that this policy was only relevant to difficult to fill posts and that the policy would be applied at the discretion of a Director and/or the Chief Executive. Union representatives noted that the policy was not open to all and the CO:HR confirmed that it was available to hard to fill positions and at the discretion of the Director and or Chief Executive.

2) Code of Practice on English Language Requirement for Public Sector Workers

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that the Government had published a draft Code of Practice which covered a requirement for customer facing workers to be fluent in spoken English. It was anticipated that the Code of Practice would be finalised in October 2016. The Code of Practice was

intended to support public sector organisations to meet the duty, which was part of the Immigration Act 2016, with minimal burden.

The Chief Officer reported that this requirement would need to be met by any new employees. With respect to existing employees, no issues had been identified but if any did come to light then a clear complaints process would be utilised ie the existing employment policies.

3) Annual Performance Report on Retirements and Redundancies

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that this was an annual information report that outlined current policy on severance issues and explained any potential for change. The report also detailed the capital costs and savings on early retirements/redundancies and reported on ill health retirements.

The Chief Officer reported that ill health retirements had remained the same as last year; this reflected the rigorous work of the Council's Occupational Health Team and more stringent ill health retirement regulations.. Redundancy figures were anticipated to be higher next year as a result of current budget pressures.

4) Monitoring the Council's Workforce 2015-16

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that the Council had a legal duty to publish their workforce composition, with the intention of advancing equality of opportunity, eliminating unlawful discrimination and to promote good relations between people. If discriminatory practices were identified, these would be investigated.

The Chief Officer highlighted a number of key performance information including the fact that the figures showed that the gender pay gap was narrowing.

The Committee stated that it would be useful to have some more information on those staff who joined the Council and then left within a year. The Chief Officer stated that more qualitative information could be included in next year's report and could be captured from staff exit interviews. The Chief Officer stated that it was important to ensure that robust processes were in place throughout the Council to ensure that exit interviews were being done. This could be further improved once the new HR system has been implemented as this would enable management information to be more accessible.

The Committee agreed that any new system needed to ensure that the process for exit interviews captured the comments of both the manager and the employee and in those instances where there was a difficult relationship between manager and employee, an option for the employee to have an exit interview with HR.

62. Transformation Update

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that she had met with trade union representatives a number of times since the last meeting of the Committee with the Director of Corporate Services and also the Director of Environment. Culture and Communities. Progress had been made by the Transformation Board and a number of gateway reviews had been undertaken. Trade union representatives had been kept informed of progress throughout and they thanks the CO;HR for the engagement so far.

The Chief Officer reported that Unison representatives had raised some issues around the Council wide Support Services Review; the TUs agreed that these issues had now been addressed.

The Leisure Services Review had been discussed with trade union representatives and Asia Allison (GMB) would be attending these meetings in future. The Chief Officer stated that she would be arranging regular meetings with trade union representatives to ensure that they were kept abreast of all developments. She would also ensure that trade union representatives were also advised of to any staff consultation meetings.

Councillor Leake added that he and Councillor Angell would be involved in the review and were keen to reassure the TUs that the process remained proper, transparent and open.

63. Matters to be Raised by Trade Unions

No issues were raised by trade union representatives.

CHAIRMAN

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