

**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE
13 FEBRUARY 2019
7.30 - 8.56 PM**



Present:

Councillors McLean (Chairman), Allen (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Birch, Leake, Mrs Temperton, Virgo and Worrall

Apologies for Absence were received from:

Councillors Angell and Ashman

29. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

30. Minutes from previous meeting

RESOLVED that that the minutes of the committee meeting held on 12 December 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

31. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

32. Update from the Chairman of the Local Joint Committee

Councillor Allen reported that there had been one Union representative in attendance from UNISON. The meeting had been very positive with few comments, however UNISON were very pleased with the Apprentice report as they felt this was very positive.

33. Minutes of Sub Groups

The Committee noted the minutes of the Local Joint Committee held on 12 December 2018.

34. Monitoring The Council's Workforce Report 2017/18

The Committee received a report on Monitoring the Council's Workforce 2017/18.

The Director: OD, Transformation and HR reported that the Council has a legal duty to advance equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people and to publish this on the Council's website.

Part of this legal duty was to report annually on its workforce composition. There were no major changes to report. The report listed the key performance indicators and detailed whether these targets had been met or not. Almost all of the targets had been met with the exception of three areas, these were staff turnover including schools, staff leaving within one year and sickness absence. However, sickness absence was still below the national average for local government.

The report also detailed redundancies within the Council and the statistics around the gender pay gap which was closing and below the UK national average.

As a result of the members comments and questions, the following points were made:

- The outcome of LO68 was incorrect within the report and would be amended before publishing.
- In paragraph 5.1 the word similar would be replaced to increase.
- Fix term employees had been included with the statistics for staff leaving.
- Page 21 of the agenda detailed how the figure for gender pay gap had been calculated. This was not a direct comparison of job roles as jobs within Local Government were so diverse.
- There was discussion around target setting and where the original targets came from. The Director explained that national/regional benchmarking information was used and previous performance information along with setting a target that was both achievable and stretching. It was felt that some were inappropriate.
- The Director: OD, Transformation and HR commented that target setting was carefully considered by using benchmarking data to set realistic but stretching targets. Many of the comparative performance information was collected by the office for national statistics and other national bodies that shared performance data, others such as the percentage of staff leaving within the first year target were set by the professional lead Director: OD, Transformation and HR with her team, these targets were then subject to challenge and discussion by CMT and members as part of the council planning process.
- The 14.5% at L130 could be high due to the Council going through a significant transformation programme. It was expected that this would decrease in 2018/19.
- The national average sickness figure was 8.5day per employee as stated in the body of the report, this would be also be included in the summary table before publishing for ease of comparison.
- Members raised concerns about the lack of BME staff. this was highlighted as part of the strategy and be looked in to.

It was requested that a mid-point review of the strategies be brought back to the Employment Committee.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the reports and endorses the strategies proposed for 2018/19 set out at 16.1 of the Director: OD, Transformation and HR report.

35. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

That pursuant to Regulation 21 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2000 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 9, 10 & 11 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.

36. New to Bracknell Forest Council Apprentices

The Committee received a report which set out how to improve the Bracknell Forest Council's Apprenticeship offer, whilst enabling the council to attract and retain quality candidates in support of the Government Apprenticeship Reforms 2017-2020.

The report also set out a strategy which would develop the apprenticeship offer for new staff through the exploration of generic apprenticeships that could be distributed across directorates to meet the council's skills shortages.

Councillor Virgo proposed an alternative motion for more research to be undertaken into increasing the pay scales beyond that which was proposed and for the report to be brought back for consideration at the next Employment Committee. Councillor Mrs Temperton seconded the motion which was then put to the vote.

The alternative motion fell at the vote with three member of the Committee voting in favour of the motion and four members voting against.

RESOLVED that

- i. the current pay-scale for new to the council apprentices (including school-based apprentices) as set out in table 2 of the Director: OD, Transformation and HR's report would be revised.
- ii. the Director: OD, Transformation and HR's, would develop the apprenticeship strategy, rates of pay and scheme further to strengthen the approach within the Council to support Strategic Workforce Planning.

37. Disciplinary / Capability Procedure for Assistant Directors / Officers paid on the Senior Salaries Scale

It was reported to the Committee that the Disciplinary / Capability Procedure for Assistant Directors / Officers had been updated and that the Right of Appeal to Members Procedure and guidance on the process to be followed at a Members Appeal Panel had also been amended.

Adaptations had been jointly developed by HR and Legal Services based on ACAS guidance, LGA guidance, principles of natural justice and best practice in disciplinary proceedings.

RESOLVED that

- i. the updated Disciplinary / Capability Procedure for Assistant Directors / Officers paid on the Senior Salaries Scale (Appendix A) of the Director: OD, Transformation and HR's, is agreed.
- ii. the Right of Appeal to a Members Appeal Panel for Assistant Directors / Officers paid on the Senior Salaries scale (Appendix B) of the Director: OD, Transformation and HR's, is agreed.
- iii. a planned review and updating of the relevant procedures for the Chief Executive / Head of Paid Services and Directors by the end of the calendar year was supported.

38. Use of Urgency Procedure to Establish a Members Appeal Panel

The Director: OD, Transformation and HR explained to the Committee the reasons for invoking the Urgency Procedure on 8 January 2019 to set up an Appeal Panel to consider an appeal against dismissal in accordance with provision 6.4 of Part II Section 6 of the Council's constitution.

RESOLVED that:

- i. the reasons for invoking the Urgency Procedure on 8 January 2019 are noted.
- ii. during the first Employment Committee following Annual Council the current terms of reference for a Members Personnel Appeal Panel are extended to include all types and levels of Members Appeals relating to employment matters.

CHAIRMAN