

**PERSONNEL SUB COMMITTEE
20 OCTOBER 1999**

Present: Councillors Sargeant (Chairman), Bailey,
Blatchford, Grayson, Harrison, Mrs Keene, Mills,
Ward and Wheaton

10. **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Sub Committee held on 16 June 1999 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11. **Urgent Item of Business under Standing Order No 7**

The Committee approved the addition of the following item to the agenda under Standing Order 7 in view of the need to fill a vacant post in the Policy Development Unit as quickly as possible.

- Policy Development Adviser – Payment of Market Premium

12. **Local Joint Committee – 12 October 1999**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Local Joint Committee held on 12 October 1999 be received and noted.

13. **Review of Personnel Policies Agreed Since Reorganisation (Item 1)**

The Sub-Committee considered a report on a review of the Council's Personnel Policies and Procedures which had been changed as part of the on-going harmonisation programme. The object of the policy review had been to ensure fairness and consistency, and that all employees operated under the same set of rules governing their employment. The Sub Committee had undertaken to re-examine the new policies after approximately a year of operation to address any issues which had emerged.

The Sub-Committee noted that the policies had generally worked very well and no major changes were proposed. However some small adaptations were suggested to ensure the existing policies remained relevant, accurate and practical. These arose from legislative changes and the practical experience of operating the new policies.

The Borough Personnel Manager answered a number of questions, including in relation to the suggested changes to the policies.

RESOLVED that the following changes to the Council's Personnel Policies and Procedures be approved and implemented with effect from 1 November 1999:

- (a) An additional principle be included in the Capability Procedure as outlined in paragraph 4.2 of the report.
- (b) Changes be made to the text of the Disciplinary Procedure as outlined in paragraph 4.3 of the report.
- (c) A change be made to the text of the Grievance Procedure as outlined in paragraph 4.4 of the report.
- (d) Individual categories of expenses claimable remain the same but that the formal limit on the maximum amount claimable under the Relocation Scheme be changed from £6,000 to £8,000.
- (e) Any employee who has completed 20 years service receive a Long Service Award subject to the Borough Personnel Manager being satisfied that they meet the service requirements of the scheme.
- (f) When dealing with early retirements, service committees be permitted to use the maximum discretions available under the Pension Regulations in exceptional circumstances.

14. **Review of Youth Training Section (Item 2)**

In accordance with Standing Order 25, Councillor Grayson declared an interest in this item and withdrew from the meeting during its consideration.

The Sub-Committee considered a report on the review of the function and operation of the Youth Training Section with a view to constructing a strategic plan for its future in a unitary context. It had been one of the key tasks outlined in the 1999/2000 Service Plan for Corporate Services.

The report set out the essential elements of that review and made recommendations for changes to the strategic direction of the Youth Training Section which were endorsed by the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED that

- (i) with effect from 1 April 2000:
 - (a) Youth Training activities dovetail into the Council's agreed Training and Development Strategy to ensure closer integration with the mainstream of Corporate Training.
 - (b) The scope of the Youth Training Programme be extended by making it NVQ driven instead of focussing exclusively on young people, thereby increasing NVQ's in other Council work areas.

- (c) Whilst honouring existing commitments to trainees, the Council's Youth Training Section withdraw from those areas of operation which do not directly impact on the council's work.
- (ii) a report be presented to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee on the staffing implications of the proposals arising from the review.

15. Leave Entitlements (Item 3)

The Sub Committee considered a report on the ongoing process of harmonising Personnel Policies and Procedures in relation to leave entitlements. The review had covered annual leave and other areas such as compassionate leave/time off for domestic emergencies and examination leave.

The Officers answered a number of questions regarding the background to the current leave entitlements and the proposals.

Having discussed the report, the Sub-Committee decided that DSO managers should not be bound by corporate standards.

RESOLVED that

- (i) a corporate standard of a locally agreed holiday entitlement be fixed for new recruits, which is based on the national minimum for local government employees but which also differentiates according to grade;
- (ii) Directorates employing DSOs and those on local conditions of service continue to be allowed to decide on their own leave entitlement according to the needs of the service;
- (iii) the status quo be maintained for existing employees - an individual's holiday to be treated as their personal entitlement until they leave employment or move to a new post with this Council;
- (iv) those staff whose leave entitlement is considered significantly beyond the "norm" and not supported by national conditions be addressed separately;
- (v) efforts be made to change national leave entitlements in favour of local ones where these are not consistent with the corporate standard and conflict with operational requirements;
- (vi) paid compassionate leave be fixed at a maximum of 5 working days for the death of a defined close relative or 3 working days in the case of other defined relatives;
- (vii) leave for examinations be fixed at ½ day for each subject or major paper;

- (viii) the duration of any one period of continuous leave be fixed at a maximum of 3 weeks; and,
- (ix) the timing of the leave year continue to be based on either 1 April to 31 March or the anniversary of the employee's start date.

16. Team Leader (Systems/Development Support) – Payment of Market Premium (Item 4)

The Sub-Committee considered a report on difficulties being experienced in recruiting to the post of Team Leader (Systems/Development Support) in the Information Technology Section of the Corporate Services Directorate. The previous postholder had been in place since 1996 but had moved to take up a Project Managers post. Attempts to fill the resulting vacant post had been unsuccessful. As the continued vacancy had an adverse impact on service delivery, it was therefore important that the post was filled as soon as possible.

The Director of Corporate Services confirmed that, although one of the difficulties posed in recruiting to this post was that the Council was competing with the private sector, as the skills required were transferable between the public and private sectors, it was considered preferable to recruit directly rather than to employ a contractor.

RESOLVED that the current grade of BGF for the post of Team Leader (Systems/Development Support) in the Information Technology Section of the Corporate Services Directorate be supplemented with a 10% Market Premium payment.

17. Policy Development Adviser – Payment of Market Premium

The Sub-Committee considered an additional item in relation to the proposed payment of a 10% market premium in relation to the post of Policy Development Adviser in the Chief Executive's Policy Development Unit, in view of the failure to fill this vacant post which was considered vital to the Council's work on developing the corporate "Best Value" framework and publication of the Local Performance Plan.

In response to questions, the Sub-Committee was advised:

- That there was no possibility of redeploying other existing staff either from within the Policy Development Unit or any other department;
- That work on the Local Performance Plan would require external support, but employing a contractor to undertake the other duties of this post was not considered practical given the need for in-house expertise to oversee the implementation process.

Having discussed the alternatives and heard the advice of the Officers, it was agreed to accept the proposal to offer a market premium.

RESOLVED that the current grade of BGD for the post of Policy Development Adviser in the Policy Development Unit be supplemented with a 10% market premium payment.

18. **Items for Information**

The following information items were received and noted:

- Local Government Employers – Strategy for Next 10 Years (Item 5)
- Pay Awards 1999 (Item 6)
- Annual Report of Bracknell Industrial Mission (Item 7)
- Deduction of Trade Union Subscriptions from Pay (Item 8)

The meeting commenced at 7:30pm
and concluded at 8:20pm

CHAIRMAN