

**LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE
18 DECEMBER 2019
4.09 - 4.54 PM**



Present:

Councillors Allen, Angell and Wade
David Allias, UNISON (Chairman)
Trish Barnard, Head of HR & Employee Experience

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Leake
Lorna Cameron, UNISON

12. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

13. Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on the 16 October 2019, were approved as a correct record.

14. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

15. Employment Committee: Agenda and Related Matters

i) Monitoring the Council's Workforce – 2018/19

The Head of HR and Employee Experience reported that this was an annual report and that the Council had a statutory requirement to report this data back to the Government on an annual basis. This data was currently reported in two different formats which were quite muddled, the Head of HR and Employee Experience would look into how the data needed to be reported to Government and if it was just the raw data that was being reported then this would give the flexibility to change the format of the report and make it into a more useful report for Member's.

The pay gender gap, which had increased by 2%, had been picked up by the press, however this was still below the nation average of 17%. Schools data was increased within the data set and this fluctuated greatly month to month. The Council was doing what it could to promote and ensure equal opportunity for all and was coming up with new approaches to target previously stereotyped job roles. It was noted that the Council had no direct employer influence over schools.

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

- The equalities group met in November 2019, for the first time in a year. It was important to ensure that the appropriate people were attending to make sure

that momentum was ongoing. The group would be meeting on a 6 weekly basis and would adjust accordingly. A report would be going to CMT to highlight the groups new focus and approach. Abby Thomas chaired the group with different representatives from across the council attending so that the input was a cross perspective.

- The Equalities Group was previously very data heavy very data. It would also be looking at whether EIAs were being undertaken correctly and whether wider training as required.
- It was suggested that the report going to CMT could also be brought to LJC and Employment Committee.
- It was important that the Equalities group was not just a talking shop and was about actions.
- 2/3 years ago HR had move to a centralised structure, it was felt that too much face to face interaction had been removed, this would form part of the review.
- It was requested that comparable data with other unitrees be included within the report as there was nothing showing where we were compared to other authorities nor was there anything to show what the Council was aiming for.
- Government did not provide feedback once the data was submitted.
- A Pulse survey had been undertaken by staff with four main issues being highlighted, these were: Discrimination, communication, recognition and work pressure. Directors were taking on working groups for each of these areas and the outcome would be reported back.
- Temps and consultants were not included within the data.
- The Head of HR and Employee Experience would look at the format that the data needed to be do see if there was any flexibility in there was it could be reported.

ii) **Pay Policy Statement**

The Head of HR and Employee Experience reported that this was an annual requirement and ensured that the **Council** complied with the Department of Communities and Local Government guidance and 2014 Transparency Code requirements. The report provided a factual breakdown of staff salary and senior salary which highlighted the Councils commitment to transparency and equity in pay. This would be formally agreed at Council in January 2020

16. **Matters to be Raised by Trade Unions**

UNISON raised two issues of concern, the first was in relation to the spinal points that had been update on pay grades earlier in the year as Bracknell Forest hadn't taken the national stance and had found a fit for the Council instead. The Head of HR & Employee Experience needed to the check outcome as she wasn't in post at this time and would report back.

The second issue was in regard to the Sickness Policy that had been approved at the last meeting of the Employment Committee. UNISON requested that the policy consider the effect that sickness absence could have on people with disabilities where their phased return was longer than the specified 8 weeks. UNISON felt that this should be longer for cases where the council was not able to secure appropriate reasonable adjustments. The Head of HR & Employee Experience suggested that an addition line be added to the policy which would state that cases would be considered on their own individual merits.

CHAIRMAN