

PERSONNEL SUB COMMITTEE
13 OCTOBER 1997

Present: Councillor Sargeant (Chairman), Councillors Beadsley, Blatchford, Grayson, Harrison, Mrs Shillcock and Ward

Apology for Absence: Councillor Mrs Keene

15. Introductions

The Chairman formally introduced Mr Timothy Wheadon and Mr John Osborne who had recently taken up their positions as Director of Corporate Services and Director of Public and Environmental Services respectively.

16. Minutes

The minutes of the meetings of the Sub Committee held on 13 May and 10 July 1997 were approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman.

17. Minutes - Sub Committees

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Local Joint Committee held on 23 September 1997 be received and noted.

18. Introduction of a No Smoking Policy. (Item 1)

In a detailed report the Borough Personnel Manager reported that in the light of major changes to office accommodation, including the relocation of staff into the new Time Square building in the autumn, the issue of a smoking policy needed to be addressed.

It was noted that the Council had a legal responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work Act to provide a safe and healthy working environment for its employees. The European Workplace Health and Safety Directive required employers to introduce appropriate measures for the protection of non-smokers against discomfort caused by tobacco smoke.

Whatever action the Council determined, consultation with employees would be necessary.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the Council confirms its intention to firm up on the previous "work towards" policy and introduce a Council-wide no smoking policy;
- (ii) the Council imposes a total smoking ban at Time Square with immediate effect; and
- (iii) a Working Party be constituted with appropriate representatives to discuss the implications of the Council's approach and address any practical issues arising therefrom.

19. **Sports and Social Club in a Unitary Context. (Item 2)**

The Borough Personnel Manager reported that at its meeting on 20 January the Local Joint Committee had considered the annual grant application for the Sports and Social Club and, in agreeing to its funding, had requested the Club's Executive Committee to put forward a plan of action to take into account the impact of the influx of staff joining the Council in April 1998.

Accordingly, the Social Club had submitted a report with various recommendations, particularly with regard to the level of service offered by the Club, reviewing of subscription rates and continuing the use of Bracknell Forest Borough Council facilities wherever possible.

The Sports and Social Club had requested a grant of £14,000 per annum to continue to provide the same level of services for employees in the unitary context. In addition to this, an additional sum of £5,300 would need to be set aside to pay for employee concessionary membership of the Leisure Centre. However, it was noted that the Council needed to be aware of the Council's share of the County Council's disaggregated budget for social activities before it could make a judgement on the total cost to the Borough.

RESOLVED:

- (i) the Club continue to offer the current level of service enjoyed by Bracknell Forest employees in the short term, and review and improve on this when the new membership figures were known;
- (ii) the Club increase the members on its Executive Committee to 20, divided into Focus Groups looking at Sports and Social events separately;
- (iii) the grant for the Club be increased in line with the increase in membership, subject to funding being available;
- (iv) the Club be allowed to continue to use Bracknell Forest Borough Council facilities wherever possible;
- (v) the Club be renamed in line with the name for the new unitary authority;
- (vi) the subscription rate for members be reviewed; and
- (vii) the request for the provision of a facility/room for staff that could be used out of hours by the Sports and Social Club be referred to the Office Accommodation Focus Group for consideration.

20. **The Council's Approach to a Salary Strategy. (Item 3)**

In a detailed report the Borough Personnel Manager considered the implications for the various elements of the Council's existing approach to its salary strategy, including the South East Employers Survey, the National Singles Status Agreement, Bracknell's existing "one employee" approach to salary structure, the potential cost implications of continuing the existing strategy, implications for the Unitary Council and Best Value considerations, and remaining job evaluation issues and answered Members' questions thereon.

RECOMMENDED that the Council adopts an approach which, whilst not committing itself unconditionally to the harmonisation of conditions of service, reviews the situation when opportunities present themselves, particularly taking into account the requirements of any Best Value and/or competitive tendering legislation

21. **New Posts. (Item 4)**

The Director of Social Services and Housing reported that at a special meeting of the Social Services Transition and Housing Committee on 30 September 1997, a report was considered on the provision of four new posts which had been identified to strengthen existing teams and to ensure that required service and performance standards were met.

At its meeting on 2 October 1997 the Unitary Structures Sub Committee had considered the report, and whilst noting that all four posts had been approved by the Social Services Transition and Housing Committee, considered that only the following posts should be approved:

Senior Housing Officer (Estates) (permanent contract)
Senior Benefits Assessors (two posts - one year contracts)

RESOLVED that the report be noted..

22. **Prior Consideration Process - Item for Information**

The Committee received and noted an information item on the prior consideration process and the Borough Personnel Manager answered questions thereon.

23. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

RESOLVED that, pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following Items which involve the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

(1) Information relating to employees of the Council (Items 6 and 7)

24. **Early Retirement**

In a report containing exempt information the Director of Planning and Transportation sought the Sub Committees' agreement to allow postholder PAA 010 who had been designated as a Prior Consideration post under the LGR process to leave early from the Council's service, five months in advance of vesting day.

RESOLVED that the Council agree to the redundancy of post PAA 010 with effect from 26 October 1997.

25. **Ill Health Retirement**

In a report containing exempt information the Director of Public and Environmental Services sought the Sub Committees views on whether to exercise discretion on grants and gratuity payments under Part K of the Local Government Pension Regulations to postholder ELS 517.

RESOLVED that discretion be given to grant a gratuity payment of £8,086 under Part K of the Local Government Pension Regulations to postholder ELS 517.

The meeting commenced at 6.00pm and concluded at 7.05pm

CHAIRMAN