

**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE
6 JULY 2016
7.30 - 8.15 PM**



Present:

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

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes from previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10 May 2016 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Urgent Items of Business

There were no items of urgent business.

4. Update from the Chairman of the Local Joint Committee

The Vice-Chairman of the Committee updated Members on the meeting of the Local Joint Committee held earlier in the day at which the two reports forming the Employment Committee agenda had been discussed. The Union side had expressed thanks for being included in the consultation process but recognised that the proposed redundancies were necessary.

5. Minutes of Sub Groups

The Committee noted the minutes of the Local Joint Committee held on 10 May 2016.

6. Exclusion of Public and Press

RESOLVED that pursuant to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of items 7 and 8 which involved the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of that Act:

- (1) Information relating to any individual..

7. Revenue Budget 2016/17 - Employment Implications of Service Changes taken to Public Consultation

The Committee considered a report dealing with additional staffing implications arising from the revised financial position for 2016/17. These arose from the need to

make savings to meet the £2.4m budget gap identified following the budget settlement announcement.

The budget proposals had focussed, as far as possible, on making savings and efficiencies in areas which would have the least direct impact on residents. However, for these services there would be an impact on residents and a twelve week public consultation exercise had commenced on 24 February running until 17 May 2016. No representations had been made during the period. An equalities impact assessment had also been carried out. The savings proposals had been agreed by the Executive on 14 June 2016.

The savings proposed redundancies in two areas:

- a) Youth Services – a saving of £75k from the Youth Service included the deletion of 12 part-time youth worker posts (1.88 FTE) meaning that Centres would be open for less time. Of the 12 posts, four were vacant and two of the remaining eight had been offered redeployment opportunities. The impact was therefore six posts redundant (0.73 FTEs) or, if the redeployment trial was unsuccessful, eight posts redundant (1.48 FTEs).
- b) Childrens' Services – the Council had two Childcare Development Officers in post and the post identified for deletion had responsibility for developing and maintaining the network of home-based childcare provision. The Childminder Network, which had been under review for the past 6 months as it was no longer delivering outcomes for vulnerable families, was due to be wound up and a Development Officer position would no longer be required to support it. The impact was therefore one full time post redundant.

The Committee considered an Exempt Appendix containing schedule of the posts affected, including details of the postholders, redundancy payments, total cost and pay back period for each.

Arising from questions and discussion, the following points emerged:

- Further dialogue was needed with Town Councils that would be affected by the loss of some Youth Centre opening hours with a view to reaching an agreement on a financial arrangement by which the service could be maintained. The Committee was concerned that a final decision on redundancies should not be taken in advance of a conclusion to these discussions, given the important role of Youth Workers in supporting young people in the Borough. The addition of a rider to the recommendation was proposed..
- There was concern that the one remaining Childcare Development Officer may be an insufficient resource to deal with Special Educational Needs duties and provide support where required to the childminders registered within the Borough. Members were invited to take up this concern directly with the Executive Member responsible.

RESOLVED that:

- 1 Authority be delegated to the Director of Children, Young People and Learning, in consultation with the Chairman, to approve the deletion of the posts identified in Exempt Appendix B with effect from the dates indicated, subject to the Council approving the recommendations from the Executive on 13 July.

- 2 Authority be delegated to the Director of Children, Young People and Learning, in consultation with the Chairman, to agree that the post-holders are declared redundant in accordance with the terms set out in that Exempt Appendix with the costs being met from the Structural Changes Fund subject to any appeals, any redeployment opportunities offered to those affected, and the Council approving the recommendations from the Executive on 13 July.
- 3 The Director of Children, Young People and Learning actively pursues discussions with relevant Town and Parish Councils, in order to seek agreement to maintain the Youth Service, before a final decision is made.

8. **Proposed Redundancies - Education Library Service**

The Committee considered a report seeking approval to the redundancy of ten posts arising from the closure of the Education Library Service.

The Education Library Service was a joint service established in 1998 by Bracknell Forest, Reading, Slough and West Berkshire Councils and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead for which Bracknell Forest was the host Authority. The service was funded by schools and due to pressures on school budgets, income from sales had reduced consistently since 2010. Since that time the service had been maintained by reducing expenditure on staffing and stock and meeting the deficit by drawing down on reserves built up in previous years.

Future income projections had shown that the service was not sustainable and the agreement of the five Local Authorities to closure with effect from 31 August 2016 had been obtained. The staff concerned had been fully consulted over the proposals and, as a result of discussions between the partner authorities, one postholder had been redeployed (in Bracknell Forest) leaving nine posts to be made redundant. The total cost of the redundancies set out in the report exceeds £300k, of which the Bracknell Forest share (23.5%) is almost £72k. This would be met from the Council's Contingency Fund.

The Committee considered an Exempt Appendix containing schedule of the posts affected, including details of the postholders, redundancy payments, total cost, BFC cost and pay back period for each.

The Committee received answers to a number of questions from which the following points arose:

- About half of Bracknell Schools currently used the service, although there was a lower take up in most of the other areas.
- Schools were being encouraged to exchange their supply of books so that their stock was as up to date as possible by the time the Service closed. The central stock was expected to reduce to around 12,000 books by the end of August, which would need to be stored until they could be disposed of.
- Discussions were in hand with the Borough Library Service to explore how Bracknell Schools could be supported in the future.

RESOLVED that:

- 1 The postholders, identified in the Exempt Appendix A be declared redundant with effect from 31 August 2016 following the decision of the Executive Member for Children, Young People & Learning to close the Education Library Service.
- 2 Authority be delegated to the Director of Children, Young People and Learning, in consultation with the Chairman of the Committee and Chief Officer: HR to retain two of three posts identified in Exempt Appendix A until 31 October 2016, to finalise the stock disposal and other arrangements post closure.

CHAIRMAN