

Minutes of Personnel

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 26 October 2022, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor S Bibby (Chair)

Councillors:

S Atkinson
R Bennett
A Humpheys

D O'Rourke
D Peat
J Schumann

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Human Resources and Director of Resources

405 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies from the meeting were received from Councillors S Rainford and R Thompson.

406 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 31 August 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

With reference to minute number 248 Update on National Pay Consultations 2022/23, The Head of Human Resources updated Committee. Following consideration, Unison and GMB members had voted to accept the pay offer, however, Unite members had voted to reject. A meeting of the Joint Trade Unions was scheduled on 1 November 2022 to agree a final decision.

407 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY, OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary, other registrable or non-registrable interests.

408 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

409 EU POLICY CHANGES

The Director of Resources submitted a report updating members on the impact of EU Policy Changes.

Following the UK's departure from the EU, new guidance from the government was expected on how employment laws would change. The report explained that under the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill, all retained EU law contained in domestic secondary legislation would be revoked on 31 December 2023 unless a decision had been made to preserve it. Over the coming months government departments would decide which retained EU law could expire, and which should be incorporated into domestic law. Employers would then have a fixed period of time to change and implement new policies.

Over the next 15 months there would be a stream of updates which HR would track and manage accordingly. This would be a large task, with any changes requiring ratification by CMT, and Committee to approve new policies.

The report explained that although the Council's expert HR advice was provided by North West Employers (NWE) approval was sought to purchase CIPD inform for 5 years at a members cost of £55 per month, funded from the Subscriptions budget. This would provide access to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) and their instant employment law updates, policies, templates, and podcasts, which would be up to date in line with changing legislation. This would also provide pay calculations which would potentially change under REUL, enabling us to enact instant change.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Note the impact of the EU Policy changes as set out in the report.
2. Agree to purchase CIPD inform for 5 years at a members cost of £55 per month.

410 WORKFORCE PROFILE 2022

The Director of Resources submitted a report updating members on the Workforce Profile 2022 which was published annually in compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

The report listed the protected characteristics that it was unlawful to discriminate against under the Equality Act and explained the duties that those subject to the equality duty must have due regards to. The latest Workforce Profile Report as at 31 March 2022 was included in the report, and had been published on the Council's website in accordance with the requirements of the specific duty. The data provided a comprehensive overview of the current workforce and was useful for workforce planning as well as meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

411 IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW RECRUITMENT SYSTEM AND REVIEW OF CURRENT RECRUITMENT PRACTICES

The Director of Resources submitted a report informing members regarding the implementation of a new e-recruitment system.

In March 2019, the Council had approved a capital bid for a new e-recruitment system at a cost of £22,500 for implementation in the financial year 2023/24. The report noted that, in regards to procurement, the Council were in the process of investigating possible systems in line with Contract Procedure Rules.

As part of the implementation of the new system, review would be required of current HR processes, candidate specifications, and job descriptions, for consistency. Training would also be needed for managers. Undertaking the process would provide the Council with a future proof provision and a robust system for auditing. Further information would follow in due course.

412 MINUTES OF WORKING GROUPS

There were no minutes from working groups.

413 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from representatives on outside bodies.

414 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the next item of business being exempt information under Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

415 REQUEST FOR HONORARIUM

The Chief Executive submitted a report requesting that Committee authorise a payment of honorarium to a member of staff in the Council's Legal Team.

The report explained that following a period of absence from 7 February 2021, the Council's Legal Officer left the Council on 4 April 2021. The post had since remained vacant. The report listed the work and service improvements that had been carried out by the member of staff, and the exceptional service that had been provided. There had been a significant saving to the authority, and the report provided the basis for calculation of the payment of Honorarium that was proposed.

It was noted at the meeting that the member of staff was still continuing to cover the additional duties.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Agree to an honorarium payment to the member of staff as set out in report, in recognition of exceptional service during the period 23 March 2021 to 30 September 2022.

416 REVIEW OF LEGAL SERVICES

The Chief Executive submitted a report requesting Committee approve the proposed restructure of Legal Services.

The report explained that the Council had two posts within the legal department, Legal Officer and Legal Assistant, which dealt with all property related issues, Section 106 agreements for planning, debt collection, Freedom of Information Act and Environmental Information Regulation requests. The report explained that a review had been conducted which confirmed there were insufficient resources and/or expertise within the two posts to provide the appropriate level of service.

A bid for growth had been submitted in November 2021 proposing that the vacant post of Legal Officer be deleted and replaced by a new post of Lawyer (Property and Commercial) and that the Legal Assistant post be made a full-time position. Due to financial constraints when setting the current year's revenue budget all bids for growth were set aside. Since then however it was agreed bids could proceed if savings could be identified to finance them.

Consideration was then given to a new Lawyer (Property and Commercial) post on a part time basis instead of full time along with the proposal to make the Legal Assistant

post full time from part time. The report explained the responsibilities and proposed responsibilities of each position and set out the financial implications in detail. Overall the result would be a saving of £5,440 to the Council. CMT had considered and supported this proposal on 12 October 2022.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve the deletion of post of Legal Officer from the establishment;
2. Approve the inclusion of new post of Lawyer Property and Commercial (0.5FTE) within the establishment;
3. Approve the increase of contractual hours for the post of Legal Assistant from 18.5 to 37; and
4. Approve the creation of a job share for the post of Legal Assistant.

417

GENERAL STAFFING UPDATE

The Director of Resources submitted a report informing members of general staffing matters since the last committee meeting. The report included information on appointments and resignations, internal movements, establishment changes, training and retirements.

The report noted that 6 new staff had been appointed between 16 August 2022 and 15 October 2022 and that there had been 4 leavers in the same period. The report also noted that 3 members of staff had commenced Qualification training.

The meeting closed at 6.52 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, Rebecca Tait rebecca.tait@ribblevalley.gov.uk.