

Minutes of Personnel

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 7 June 2023, starting at 6.30 pm
Present: Councillor R Elms (Chair)

Councillors:

K K Barnsley	S Farmer
S Bibby	S Hore
D Birtwhistle	L Jameson
R Corney	D O'Rourke

In attendance: Chief Executive, Head of Human Resources and Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive, and Healthy and Safety Officer.

Also in attendance: Councillor Stewart Fletcher

42 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

43 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

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

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

45 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

46 BRIEFING ON THE WORK OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

The Chief Executive shared key information with Members relating to the remit of the Committee and stressed the importance of non-disclosure and confidentiality where required. The Head of Human Resources also outlined some of the responsibilities of the Committee and current HR projects.

47 APPOINTMENT TO WORKING GROUPS

The Chief Executive submitted a report asking committee to consider the reappointment of the HR working group under the remit of this committee and decide upon the membership.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Approve the following working group and the membership for the 2023/24 municipal year.

HR Working Group - Councillors R Elms, S Farmer, D O'Rourke, K Barnsley, and D Birtwhistle.

48

BUSINESS AND PERSONAL INTEREST POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive submitted and report for Committee to approve a new Business Interest and Personal Interest Policy and an update to the Code of Conduct.

The report explained that the Council's Code of Conduct requested that Private Work (Business Interest) should not be undertaken if it could conflict or have a detrimental effect on the Council's business, whereas Personal interests (non-financial) were to be declared in writing to the Chief Executive.

The report recommended a consistent approach for the approval of financial and non-financial interests, to include processes for new employees, existing members of staff, and staff moving from one role to another.

The new policy and required amendments to the Code of Conduct were included in the report.

It was explained at the meeting that going forward the Register of Interests would provide improved overview of declared interests, and that staff are encouraged to declare any interests as they arise or circumstances change, but going forward staff would be requested to review this annually.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Agree that all Business Interest requests are submitted to CMT for approval.
2. Agree that new employees and also internal employees when their job changes are advised about requesting approval for business and personal interests prior to them taking up their new employment.
3. Approve the Council Business and Personal Interest Policy as noted in the report.
4. Approve the Update to the Code of Conduct in respect of the Council Business and Personal Interest policy as noted in the report.

49

ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

The Chief Executive presented a report that reviewed the Council's management of Health, Safety and Welfare over the period April 2022 to March 2023.

The report noted the Council's significant hazards in relation to Health and Safety, and the measures in place to manage the associated risks.

The report noted that during the 2022-2023 period there had been 84 accidents recorded, 19 of which involved staff, 61 at the pool and 4 involving a member of the

public. In addition there had been 1 RIDDOR reportable accident involving a member of staff.

A rise in the number of accidents this year compared to 2021/22 was reported, however, this was following the period of the coronavirus pandemic and associated restrictions, where less staff had been in work and some services including the pool were suspended.

The Council's Healthy and Safety Advisor attended and explained the key points in the report. It was noted that waste management and refuse collection continues to be a high risk sector.

50 MINUTES OF WORKING GROUPS

There were no minutes from Working Groups.

51 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from representatives on outside bodies.

52 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the next item of business being exempt information under Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

53 CHANGES TO ESTABLISHMENT - HOUSING ADMINISTRATION ASSISTANT

The Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report reference from Health and Housing Committee seeking approval for proposed changes to the Council's establishment in respect of Housing Administration Assistant within the Economic Development and Planning Directorate.

The existing post was part-time and had been subject to several temporary changes to contract to extend the hours of the post in response to capacity issues related to the pandemic, and additional workloads around housing services. It was considered that there was a need to create the post as full time on the establishment, which had been approved at Health and Housing Committee 20 October 2022.

The report explained the financial implications and it was proposed that this would be funded from existing administration funding in respect of Domestic Abuse Support and Homelessness prevention.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Approve the change to the Establishment to alter the post of Part-Time Housing Administration Assistant to a full-time post as set out in the report.

54 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO FACILITATE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DOMESTIC ABUSE ACT

The Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report reference from Health and Housing Committee seeking approval for proposed changes to the Council's establishment to temporarily increase an existing member of staff's hours in order to implement changes under the Domestic Abuse Act.

The report included some of the Council's responsibilities as a Tier 2 authority in respect of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and the associated cost of staffing to support implementation the Act.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Approve that the Housing Strategy Officer's post is increased by 3.42 hours until 31st March 2024.

55 PAYMENT OF HONORARIA

The Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report that Committee consider payment of an honoraria to staff who are covering duties of senior posts.

The factors and financial implications to be considered when assessing the application were set out in the report.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Agree to Honorarium payments to 2 members of staff as set out in the report.

56 ANNUAL ABSENCE MANAGEMENT UPDATE

The Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive submitted the Annual Absence Management Review for 2022/2023.

Members were reminded that the report is brought to the Committee on an annual basis and provides information and analysis on sickness during the year. The report noted that the Council's Performance Plan has a target of 10 days absence per employee per year and that the Bradford Formula is used as a tool to identify staff whose level of absence is a cause for concern.

It was noted that covid related absences continued to affect overall figures, however staff were able to work from home if fit and able, and if appropriate to do so.

The report provided a range of information:

- Comparison data showed that long term (20+ days) and medium term (6-19 days) sickness were at the lowest point over the last 5 years, although short term sickness (1-5 days) had risen more recently.
- Overall absences had reduced significantly over the past year with the average number of days lost per employee reducing from 9.98 days in 2021/22 to 7.62 days in 2022/23.
- The average cost of absence had decreased from £265k in 2021/22 to £222k in 2022/23.

The welcome introduction of the Employee Assistance Programme in August 2022 was noted, which would help employees to manage their health and wellbeing and be a valuable resource for managers.

57

GENERAL STAFFING UPDATE

The Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive 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 5 new staff had been appointed between 16 March 2023 and 15 May 2023 and that there had been 2 leavers in the same period. The report also noted that 3 members of staff had commenced Qualification training. Letters of thanks were to be sent to the staff who have left the Council, where appropriate.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm

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