

## Minutes of Personnel

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 28 August 2024, starting at 6.30 pm  
Present: Councillor R Elms (Chair)

Councillors:

K Barnsley	S Farmer
S Bibby	G McCrum
D Birtwhistle	D O'Rourke
D Brocklehurst	

In attendance: Chief Executive and Director of Resources & Deputy Chief Executive

### 198 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies from the meeting were received from Councillor S Atkinson.

### 199 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 200 DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY, OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

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

### 201 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

### 202 APPRENTICESHIPS

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee to consider whether to increase the number of Apprenticeship posts within the Council.

The Council had two existing apprenticeship posts, one in the IT section and one in the Accounts section. Members had requested information on creating additional apprenticeship posts specifically in non-office based services. The Council's Corporate Management Team had recommended that the Council recruit two apprentices within the Grounds Maintenance Team who would study for an appropriate horticultural qualification. The direct costs of employing the apprentices would fall on the Council, whilst the cost of training and assessments would be chargeable against the Apprenticeship Levy Fund.

The full year cost to the Council would be between £26,980 and £46,440 depending on the age of the Apprentices.

At the meeting, Members were asked to approve one Apprentice Mechanic post at the Depot and one Grounds Maintenance Apprentice instead of two Grounds Maintenance Apprentices. It was explained this was due to difficulties recruiting qualified HGV mechanics.

Members were supportive of this and were pleased to see non-office based opportunities for training being created which would also support Council services. The proposal would require approval from Policy and Finance Committee for a Supplementary Estimate.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Approve the creation of two new apprentice posts within the Garage and Grounds Maintenance service areas, subject to budgetary approval by Policy and Finance Committee.

203

#### CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP - CARBON LITERACY TRAINING

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee to consider and approve carbon literacy training for the Climate Change Working Group (CCWG).

The report noted that the CCWG had met on 19 August 2024 to discuss the identified options, which included:

- Option 1: Local Government Association (LGA)
- Option 2: Climate Guide - Rachel Coxcoon
- Option 3: APSE - Carbon Literacy for Elected Members
- Option 4: Climate Emergency UK - Local Climate Academy

The CCWG felt that in person training would be of most benefit and recommended that Committee approve option 2, to explore in person training with Rachel Coxcoon with a session for all Members preceding an in-depth training session for the CCWG.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Approve that the Council arrange carbon literacy training with Rachel Coxcoon as recommended by the Climate Change Working Group.

204

#### UPDATE ON NATIONAL PAY CONSULTATIONS 2024/25

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report to advise Members of the latest position with the pay negotiations for 2024/25 for Council staff.

Nationally, only the Chief Officers group had accepted their pay offer which was 2.5%. The other groups had all rejected the latest offer which was for £1,290 on all spinal column points up to and including scp43 and 2.5% thereafter.

It was explained that the cost of the latest pay offers was slightly higher than the 4% provided for in the 2024/25 budgets, however, a pay contingency of £200k had been set aside when setting the budget at the beginning of the year. Members would be kept up to date regarding any future developments in regard to pay settlements for 2024/25.

205

## 2024 STAFF SURVEY REPORT AND ACTION PLAN

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report providing Committee with the action plan developed following the Employee Survey carried out in 2024.

A total of 117 responses had been received, which was a response rate of 40%. The report provided an overview of the staff responses and the topics raised by staff in their additional comments. CMT had considered the action plan provided in the appendix to the report and would oversee the implementation of the actions.

Committee discussed the responses, which had been largely positive, and ways in which the response rate could be improved. Despite reassurance, the confidentiality of the survey had been a concern for some staff, and this would be taken into consideration for the next survey.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Accept the 2024 Staff Survey report and approve the Action Plan.

206

## ANNUAL WORKFORCE MONITORING PROFILE 2024

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report updating members on the workforce data that was published in compliance with the Equality Act 2010, the Local Government Act 1972, the Localism Act 2011, and the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) Regulations 2017.

A new Annual Workforce Monitoring Report had been developed for 2023/24 workforce data which included:

- Section 1: The Workforce Profile as of 31 March 2024
- Section 2: Gender Pay Gap Reporting
- Section 3: Pay Policy Statement (including the Pay Multiple)
- Section 4: Trade Union Facility Time

The report would be published on the Council's website and/or intranet.

207

## MINUTES OF WORKING GROUPS

There were no items under this heading.

208

## REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from representatives on outside bodies.

209

## 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.

210

#### AUTHORISATION TO SUPPORT AND FUND A PART-TIME POST-GRADUATE PLANNING DEGREE

The Director of Economic Development and Planning submitted a report to seek authority from Committee to support and fund a part-time (typically 2 year) post-graduate Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Accredited Planning Degree for a member of staff in the Economic Development and Planning section of the Council.

The report included the proposed arrangement and costs to the Council for Committee's consideration, which would be subject to approval by Policy and Finance Committee.

#### RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Authorise the Assistant Planning Officer (Development Management) to undertake a part-time 2-year post-graduate Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) Accredited Planning Degree, subject to approval by Policy and Finance Committee of the additional budget.

211

#### AUTHORISATION TO FUND A PART-TIME HNC IN CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

The Chief Executive informed Committee of a further training request and to seek authority from Committee to support and fund a part-time HNC in Construction Management over a period of 2 years for a labourer within the Works Admin section.

He informed Committee of the proposal with the course commencing in September 2024. The course was for two years with a cost of £4,500 a year. He explained that given this, the request would also be subject to financial approval by Policy and Finance Committee.

#### RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Authorise a labourer within the Works Admin Section to undertake a part-time 2-year HNC in Construction Management, subject to approval by Policy and Finance Committee of the additional budget.

212

#### CHANGES TO THE COUNCIL'S ESTABLISHMENT

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report to request that Committee approve a number of changes to the establishment.

The report provided the rationales and financial implications in regard to three proposed changes to the establishment which had been approved by the Council's Corporate Management Team.

#### RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Endorse the decisions of CMT to change the Council's Establishment as follows:

1. The addition of a temporary part-time Homelessness Prevention Officer until the end of March 2025.

2. Redesignate post COM764 from Building Surveyor to Trainee Building Surveyor at Scale 4-6 (scp 10-24) with access to Scale 6 restricted to HNC qualification.
3. Increase the hours of the two part-time toilet cleaners from 22.5 hours per week to 30 hours per week.

213

#### CHANGES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT - PAYROLL OFFICER

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report to seek approval from Members for a proposed change to the establishment within the Financial Services section of the Resources Department.

The report provided Committee with the details of the alternative staffing structure which was being proposed in the Financial Services section following the recent retirement of a member of staff. The proposals within the report would alleviate capacity issues, which had been flagged as part of the Annual Governance review and would help build resilience from a business continuity perspective.

The full details and financial implications were included for Committee's consideration.

#### RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve the proposed structure changes of:
  - 1.1 Deletion of the Part Time Job Share Payments Assistant (18.5 hours/week) on Scale 3 from the establishment
  - 1.2 Addition of a new Payroll Officer (37 hours per week) on Scale 4/5/6 in to the establishment, with a qualification requirement to progress to Scale 6.
2. Refer the proposal to Policy and Finance Committee in order for consideration to be given to the approval of the additional budget required.

214

#### PAYMENT OF HONORARIUM

The Chief Executive submitted a report for Committee to consider payment of honorarium to a member of staff who had covered the duties of a more senior post. The factors and financial implications to be considered when assessing the application was set out in the report.

#### RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Agree to the honorarium payment to the member of staff as set out in the report.

215

#### FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT APPLICATION - FURTHER CONSIDERATION

The Chief Executive submitted a report to update Committee regarding a previously agreed Flexible Retirement request and to consider the protections surrounding pre 2008 service and associated pension strain costs. He provided members with the latest estimated pension strain costs.

The report included the implications for Committee to consider. The Chief Executive explained that, if approved, the cost of the pension strain would be funded by delaying filling the vacancy created in the other half of this role

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

Approve meeting the pension strain cost of the flexible retirement request arising as a result of the individual's 85-year rule protection.

216

#### UNISON TRAINING REQUEST

The Unison Branch Secretary submitted a request to Committee to approve that two members of Council staff who were Unison Stewards attend the Employment Rights Act (ERA) Representation Skills course and approve a temporary request for an hour per week to mentor both Stewards. The training and mentorship would prepare the Stewards to legally represent Members and allow for succession planning.

RESOLVED THAT COMMITTEE:

1. Approve that the two members of staff attend the Employment Rights Act (ERA) Representation Skills course as Unison Branch Stewards, and
2. Approve the Unison Branch Secretary to mentor the Stewards for one hour per week.

217

#### GENERAL STAFFING UPDATE

The Director of Resources and Deputy Chief Executive submitted a report informing members on 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 eight new members of staff had been appointed between 16 May 2024 and 15 August 2024 and that there had been nine leavers in the same period. The report noted that there had been 11 work experience placements in the reporting period. Letters of thanks were to be sent to the staff who had left the Council, where appropriate.

The meeting closed at 7.46 pm

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact the committee clerk, Rebecca Hodgson [rebecca.hodgson@ribblevalley.gov.uk](mailto:rebecca.hodgson@ribblevalley.gov.uk).