

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 JULY 2009

Councillors: Paul Bryant (*Chairman*) (P), Adrian Edwards (P), Tony Linden (AP), Keith Lock (*Vice-Chairman*) (P), Quentin Webb (P)

Substitutes: Brian Bedwell (SP), Owen Jeffery, Andrew Rowles, Julian Swift-Hook

Also present: Robert O'Reilly (Head of Human Resources – Item 6), Jane Milone (HR Manager – Policy and Strategy), Nicola Bailey (Human Resources Officer) and Moira Fraser (Democratic Services Manager)

PART I

4. APOLOGIES.

An apology for inability to attend the meeting was received on behalf of Councillor Tony Linden. Councillor Brian Bedwell substituted for Councillor Linden.

5. MINUTES.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20th March and 12th May 2009 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest received.

7. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION POLICY, PROCEDURE AND GUIDANCE.

Nicola Bailey sought the Committee's final approval of the recruitment and selection policy, procedure and guidance (Agenda Item 4).

Nicola Bailey explained that the document sought to ensure that the range of existing documents was incorporated into a single policy with associated procedures and guidance. Members undertook a thorough review of the policy and noted a number of minor amendments and typographical errors to be corrected. It was agreed that the amended version be circulated to the Chairman for approval.

Members noted that the procedures and guidance were very thorough and officers explained that the document would be used by a range of line managers across the Council, some more experienced at recruitment than others, and as a consequence needed to be very explicit.

RESOLVED that the Recruitment and Selection Policy, Procedure and Guidance be approved subject to the minor amendments being incorporated into the document.

8. UPDATE THE COMMITTEE ON HR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES UNDER DEVELOPMENT.

Jane Milone updated the Committee on going initiatives in Human Resources (Agenda Item 5).

9. WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2009-11.

Robert O'Reilly introduced the Workforce Strategy 2009-2011 (Agenda Item 6) to discuss the five themes contained within it and the targets and activities attached to each theme. The Head of HR noted that although the adoption of this strategy did not fall within the terms of reference of the Personnel Committee (the strategy would be approved via an Individual Decision by the Portfolio Holder for Strategy and Performance) he felt that it would be useful for this Committee to discuss it.

The Workforce Strategy had five themes and one overall vision of 'Building Capacity'. The five themes were:

- Organisational development;
- Leadership and management development;
- Skills development;
- Recruitment and retention; and
- Pay and reward.

Members noted that this was not a refreshed document, it had been completely revised, but requested that where documents were refreshed that the changes were 'tracked' which would make them easier to identify.

Officers explained that the workforce strategy for schools was set out in a separate document. The School Workforce Strategy was an overarching document as each school was responsible for its own workforce planning. The appointment of headteachers was the responsibility of each individual governing body. However, HR was involved in advising governing bodies on the process and provided a recruitment administration service for these posts.

Members made the following comments or requested that the strategy be amended as set out in the table below:

Agenda Pg No	Paragraph No	Amendment/ Comment
69	2.3.1	It was noted that joint working arrangements were already in place with Wokingham District Council on Trading Standards.
71	3.7.2	In response to a query about whether it was possible to recruit more locally (in order to reduce the council's carbon footprint) Officers explained that this practice would not be lawful.
71	3.7.3	Members asked what relevance there was between a growing ageing population and the workforce. Officers explained that this was one of the biggest areas of change for the Council. The Council would need to change the way in which it delivered care (This was being assessed through the Transformation Efficiency Programme) and would therefore need more staff working in different ways.
71	3.7.5	Officers noted that a task group had been set up to undertake further analysis of staff's sickness

		absence. Robert O’ Reilly confirmed that long term absence was defined as a continuous period of absence of 28 days or longer.
72	Timelord Programme	Members queried whether consideration had been given to permitting staff to work hours such as a 17:00 to 01:00 work pattern. Officers explained that various patterns had been looked into; it was however essential to take operational need into consideration. Other considerations such as staff safety would also need to be taken into consideration.
75	5.2.4	Members felt that it would be useful for the Personnel Committee to have an opportunity to comment on the 2009 Employee Attitude Survey prior to it being considered at the Executive 2009.
75	5.3.1	Officers explained that tools were available to managers to undertake numeracy, literacy and IT Skills. These tests were often used at interviews. It was however not possible to introduce mandatory tests for existing employees.
76	5.3.10	Officers explained that women were under represented at Head of Service level within the organisation. A training scheme was therefore being put in place in an effort to redress this. No preferential treatment was however afforded to female applicants during interview processes.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and that comments would be passed to the Portfolio Holder prior to the Workforce Strategy 2009-2011 being approved by Individual Decision on 06 August 2009.

10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee would take place on the 04 September at 2.00pm in the Members’ Boardroom.

(The meeting commenced at 2.00pm and closed at 4.15pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature: