

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2012

Councillors Present: Adrian Edwards, Tony Linden, Mollie Lock (Vice-Chairman), Andrew Rowles and Quentin Webb (Chairman)

Also Present: Jane Milone (Human Resources Manager) and Robert O'Reilly (Head of Human Resources)

PART I

19. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14th December 2011 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising:

Item 16: Employing Apprentices in the Council

Councillor Mollie Lock asked for clarification as to whether there were any criteria in place to identify failure on the apprentice scheme. Robert O'Reilly explained that success or failure in the associated training qualifications was not the responsibility of West Berkshire Council but of Newbury College or West Berkshire Training Consortium as the awarding body.

Councillor Mollie Lock reminded the Committee that Councillor Quentin Webb had asked whether it could be arranged for an apprentice, on completion of the placement, to attend the meeting and feed back directly to the Committee about their experience. Robert O'Reilly agreed to set this in place.

Councillor Mollie Lock also reminded the Committee that Councillor Adrian Edwards had enquired as to whether West Berkshire Council would cover the travel costs of apprentices. Robert O'Reilly explained that this would be difficult to support as the cost of apprentices were already being covered by the individual services, so asking for further costs to be covered might deter engagement in the scheme. Jane Milone agreed to speak to Steve Duffin as to whether it would be possible to cover travel costs in certain specific circumstances.

Councillor Tony Linden queried whether CRB checks were required for employees working with apprentices. Robert O'Reilly confirmed that this was not a requirement.

Item 15: Recognising Continuous Service for Employees Transferring from Academies

Jane Milone advised that there had been an error in the original paper presented to Committee. School support (non-teaching) employees transferring back into the employment of West Berkshire Council, having transferred to an academy under TUPE, would have their previous continuous service in local government counted for the purpose of entitlements to annual leave, maternity and sick pay, provided they transfer back occurred within five years of the TUPE transfer.

20. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

21. Statutory Pay Policy Statement (C2400)

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4) concerning the Statutory Pay Policy Statement.

Jane Milone explained that, under s38 of the Localism Act 2011, all local authorities were required to publish a Pay Policy Statement for 2012 and that it must be approved by full Council. There was no appetite for a full review of the existing pay policy within the Authority at present, and so it was proposed that the current pay structure for West Berkshire Council be published. Jane Milone also explained that there was a further requirement of The Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency to publish details of the senior salaries within the organisation. These two requirements had been met by the draft Statutory Pay Policy Statement.

Councillor Quentin Webb questioned whether senior salaries needed to be identified by name or post. Jane Milone confirmed that the Code required that names were published.

Councillor Mollie Lock asked whether car allowances and bonuses were included. Jane Milone explained that bonuses were not paid to senior staff. Robert O'Reilly explained that some senior officers would still be eligible for essential car user allowances if they had been in post before November 2007, when automatic entitlement to car allowances on the basis of grade ceased. Essential car users travelling in excess of 2500 business miles a year would continue to receive an allowance.

Jane Milone stated that the senior salaries would also be published in the Statement of Accounts.

With reference to Appendix A, Jane Milone explained that Management Board had requested that an additional column be added to include pension contributions paid by the employer. The Committee agreed to support this.

Councillor Tony Linden questioned the wording of the title of the table in Appendix A, as officers were included who would no longer be employed by West Berkshire Council after 1st April 2012. It was agreed that the wording should be amended.

Jane Milone further explained that the Transparency Code required the Council to publish the job descriptions and responsibilities for senior officers, so these had also been included in the report.

The Committee clarified that only the Pay Policy Statement (pages 13-24 of the meeting papers) would be published.

Councillor Adrian Edwards asked who had written the job purposes and it was explained that they had been written by Human Resources in consultation with the current officers.

Councillor Quentin Webb asked whether the ratios for pay of senior salaries against other staff were defined in the structure of pay. Jane Milone explained that the Localism Act and Code of Transparency required that the Authority state what its actual ratio was and what the ideal would be. The remit for the Hutton Fair Pay report stated that this ratio should not exceed 20:1. The current ratio between the highest paid and lowest paid officers was 11:1 and West Berkshire Council had stated that its ideal should not exceed 20:1.

Councillor Mollie Lock asked if officers would automatically receive an incremental pay rise regardless of their performance. Jane Milone explained that incremental rises were only available until staff had reached the top of their grade. Robert O'Reilly further explained that, should there be issues about an officer's performance, the normal process would be suspended and capability proceedings would commence. In this situation incremental increases would also be suspended.

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Councillor Tony Linden proposed that this document, subject to the agreed amendment of the introductory title of Appendix A, be recommended to full Council. This was seconded by Councillor Adrian Edwards.

22. Social Media Guidance

This item was introduced for information to members of the Committee. Jane Milone explained that West Berkshire Council had various policy documents to which the guidance referred; the code of conduct for officers, the code of conduct for elected members, the disciplinary rules for employees and the ICT policy. This was not an additional policy but was a guidance document to remind staff about the sensible and appropriate use of social media, both inside and outside work. Trade Unions had been consulted and welcomed the introduction of clear guidance.

23. Date of Next Meeting

The Committee agreed to hold the next meeting on 19th March 2012 at 9.00am.

(The meeting commenced at 9.30 am and closed at 10.20 am)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature