

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
02 MAY 2008**

Councillors: Paul Bryant, Adrian Edwards, Manohar Gopal, Keith Lock, and Quentin Webb

Also present: Jane Milone (Human Resources Manager), Moira Fraser (Democratic Services Manager)

PART I**45. APOLOGIES.**

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

46. MINUTES.

The Minutes of the meeting held on 06 March 2008 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

47. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest received.

48. MANAGEMENT OF SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY.

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4) seeking approval of West Berkshire Council Management of Sickness Absence Policy and associated procedures and advice notes for managers and employees. Jane Milone in introducing the report noted that this policy constituted good practice. An informal policy had been successfully piloted and the principles identified in the pilot had been incorporated into this document.

One of the key features of the policy was that every employee would be interviewed by their manager on their return to work irrespective of the length of absence due to sickness. This had helped to reduce short term absence in other organisations. The interview could either be undertaken face to face or via the telephone. Managers would need to record that the interview had taken place on the self certification form which was completed and signed by both the employee and their manager.

In response to a query Jane explained that sickness absence of consultants and agency staff would be dealt with contractually. Employees did not need to disclose details of their sicknesses to their manager. The Policy made allowances for these matters to be dealt with by Occupational Health or other medical practitioners.

Jane explained that the launch of the Policy would be promoted through Reporter, would be included on the HR website, training sessions would be arranged for managers and leaflets were being produced for both employees and managers.

Jane noted that the Trade Unions had been fully consulted on the Policy and the Policy had been amended to reflect the changes that they had requested.

RESOLVED that:

1. the Management of Sickness Absence policy be approved;

- 2. the procedures and advice notes for managers and employees be approved;
- 3. the trigger points should be used as an indication of when formal action should be considered.

48. RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT POLICY.

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 5) concerning the proposed West Berkshire Council Dignity at Work Policy. Jane explained that both the Health and Safety Executive and ACAS recommended that organisations adopt a policy setting out the organisations approach to bullying and harassment.

This Policy did not have a procedure attached to it as it was anticipated that these matters would be dealt with using the existing Grievance and Disciplinary Procedures. The notes provided options for dealing with the matter informally where appropriate. The Committee noted that the Council had a duty to record discriminatory incidents. Jane noted that following consultation with colleagues in legal a minor adjustment to the policy was required setting out that in certain circumstances it might be necessary to refer incidents to the police where a criminal offence had been committed. Councillor Edwards stated that it was imperative that any investigation undertaken by the Council should not prejudice the police investigation or corrupt any evidence that they might require.

The Committee noted that the Trade Union had approved the Policy.

RESOLVED that the Policy and associated procedures be approved subject to the minor amendment in respect of criminal offences being incorporated.

(The meeting commenced at 2.30pm and closed at 3.00pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature:

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
THURSDAY 8 MAY 2008**

Councillors: Paul Bryant, Adrian Edwards, Tony Linden, Keith Lock, Quentin Webb

PART I

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

RESOLVED that Councillor Paul Bryant be elected Chairman of the Personnel Committee for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

Paul Bryant in the Chair.

2. APOLOGIES.

There were no apologies for absence received.

3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN.

RESOLVED that Councillor Keith Lock be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Personnel Committee for the 2008/09 Municipal Year.

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature: