

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2015

Councillors Present: Peter Argyle, 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), Rob Alexander (Policy Officer) and Moira Fraser (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager)

PART I

10. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 28 May 2014 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

11. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

12. Recruitment and Selection Policy Updates (PC2928)

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4) concerning approval for two small changes to the Council's Recruitment Policy in relation to advertising posts. The proposed changes to the policy first adopted in 2009 would allow services to advertise in alternative publications/ websites at their own expense and would allow the Head of HR to approve simultaneous external and internal advertisements of posts. The changes required were a response to the changing economic climate and the ensuing impact this would have on the ability to recruit.

Jane Milone explained that the Council's Recruitment and Selection Policy set out how the organisation recruited and selected candidates to fill vacant posts. The Policy was supplemented by Procedures and Guidance for managers.

Currently all posts usually had to be advertised internally only for two weeks. In exceptional circumstances simultaneous internal and external advertising was allowed provided that the trade unions agreed to the proposal. It was being proposed that in the future the Head of HR (or nominated substitute) would be able to agree to simultaneous advertising where there was good reason to believe that there would be no suitable internal applicants and that delaying external advertising would be unreasonable. The unions would be informed about these decisions and would be able to veto it.

In 2013 it had been agreed that in order to reduce costs a policy of on-line only advertising would be introduced through a subscription to 'Jobs Go Public' site. HR had no funding available to fund additional advertising on other websites or in printed publications. Due to changes in the job market it was now being proposed that the policy be amended to allow recruiting managers to advertise elsewhere albeit that the costs would be met from their own service budgets. HR would monitor and analyse the impact of advertising in other publications and on other websites in order to be able to advise recruiting managers appropriately.

Councillor Andrew Rowles queried whether the removal of market supplements was impacting on the Council's ability to recruit. Officers reported that this did not appear to be the case although it might be necessary to revisit this policy in the future.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 9 FEBRUARY 2015 - MINUTES

RESOLVED that the proposed changes to the policy be approved.

13. **Employee Performance Management: Revised Policies and Procedures (PC2929)**

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 5) concerning changes to policies and procedures associated with Employee Performance Management. The report sought approval for the introduction of performance grades at appraisal for all employees (not schools). It also sought approval for the use of a competency framework for all corporate employees as part of the process. Lastly the report sought approval for the introduction of a new 'enhanced support' procedure for employees who were underperforming but were not yet failing to the extent that they should be subject to a formal Capability Procedure.

Officers explained that the current procedure had been in place since 2006 and it applied to all non-school based employees. In 2012 a new approach had been introduced for Corporate Directors, Heads of Service and those reporting to Heads of Service. The revised approach included scoring of performance for the first time.

The Leader and some Members of the Executive had met with the Head of HR with a view to introducing a system of performance appraisal for all employees which would ultimately be linked to reward. A new form had therefore been developed which would be introduced from the 01st April 2015 and the procedures had been updated to reflect this new approach. An 'enhanced support' procedure had also been produced to support employees that were underperforming.

Performance would be graded from 1 to 5 with 5 being 'excellent performance' and 1 being 'unsatisfactory performance'. Performance would be appraised against agreed objectives, other significant achievements and the competency framework. The Head of HR explained that objectives described 'what would be achieved' and the competencies set out 'how they should be achieved'. The competency framework included eight broad areas which would apply to all employees and an additional set for managers.

The Enhanced Support Procedure would be used to support employees scored a 2 on the new performance scales. The procedure was designed to help these employees raise their performance to be at least satisfactory and would be used in a positive way. These employees would have up to a year to raise performance standards. Employees graded as 2 that were not at the top of their grade would not receive an incremental increase on the 01 April. At the six month review, if performance had improved, this could be reinstated although it would not be backdated. .

Workshops have been set up to train all appraisers and an e-learning package was being developed for those unable to attend the training or requiring a refresh.

Councillor Quentin Webb queried what the Unions' views on the proposal were. Robert O' Reilly explained that discussions on the proposals had been taking place since the spring. They were supportive of the Enhanced Support Procedure but were not supportive of performance related pay. .

Councillor Quentin Webb queried whether the appraiser's line manager would have an opportunity to review the assessment. Officers confirmed that they would have to sign off the appraisals.

The Chairman also queried how these changes would be reported to Members. Officers explained that an article would appear in the next edition of the 'Reporter'. Members were

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 9 FEBRUARY 2015 - MINUTES

included on the circulation list for this publication and the two Group Executives would be asked to highlight the article to Members.

Councillor Adrian Edwards noted that the scheme did not apply to non-teaching school staff. Robert O' Reilly stated that an adapted policy could be sent out to the schools and training could be offered. However it would be up to the individual schools to decide whether or not they wanted to adopt the policy. An article would be placed in the schools' newsletter.

Councillor Adrian Edwards queried what appeal mechanism would be put in place in the event that an employee disagreed with the score they were given. The Head of HR explained that the person being appraised could request a three way meeting involving the appraiser and their line manager to discuss the score. If they were still unhappy with the outcome after that meeting they could take out a grievance.

Councillor Tony Linden highlighted the need to ensure that those that did not have access to the internet have appropriate training in place or that they be able to undertake e-learning at work.

Councillor Quentin Webb queried what timescales were in place for reviewing the scheme. Robert O' Reilly explained that the reward scheme would not be in place until April 2017 and the impact could then be assessed and any ensuing review would need to take that into account; so a review after three years was the best approach.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the introduction of performance grades at appraisal for all employees be approved;**
- (2) the introduction of a competency framework for employees and managers which will be used as part of the appraisal process be approved;**
- (3) the introduction of a new appraisal form be approved;**
- (4) the introduction of a new Enhanced Support Procedure to provide extra help for employees judged to be underperforming but not meeting the criteria for formal Capability procedure be approved; and**
- (5) a revised Employee Performance Management Procedure that takes account of points 1- 4 above be approved.**
- (6) Robin Steel and Gillian Durrant to alert Members to read the article once it appeared in Reporter.**

14. Statutory Pay Policy (C2833)

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 5) which presented the Pay Policy Statement to be published from 1st April 2015 for approval. Jane Milone explained that Section 38 of the Localism Act ("the Act") of the Act required local authorities to publish an annual pay policy statement. Jane Milone explained that the report would be updated regarding the lowest and highest median pay following the recent pay increase. Jane Milone informed Members that the Transparency Report which historically had accompanied the Pay Policy Statement would be published separately on the Council's website.

Councillor Tony Linden said that the Head of Children's Services needed to be changed to the new title of Head of Children and Family Services. Robert O'Reilly commented that this would be done once Corporate Board had approved the change in Head of Service title.

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 9 FEBRUARY 2015 - MINUTES

Councillor Adrian Edwards queried why the gap between Head of Services and Corporate Directors was so large, as well as that between Corporate Directors and Chief Executive. Robert O'Reilly responded that the Corporate Director spinal column points were shortened to make the pay more competitive against other authorities. Robert informed Members that the Chief Executive's salary was not changed due to their pay being assessed by the Joint National Council for Chief Executives, and no pay rise had been agreed this year.

Councillor Edwards commented that the Chief Executive pay was low in comparison to other Local Authorities and suggested a pay review should be conducted. Councillor Edwards alluded to the fact that with added responsibilities, most notably the Care Act, coming into affect that there should be a pay review conducted for the Chief Executive and Corporate Directors. Robert O'Reilly responded that it was not for him to suggest such a measure and that it was a political matter. Moira Fraser mentioned that the paper was due to be discussed at Full Council and Members could suggest a pay review there if they were so minded to do so.

RESOLVED that the Statutory Pay Policy Statement be approved subject to the inclusion of the amended salary figures.

(The meeting commenced at 2.30pm and closed at 3.07pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature