

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Wantsum Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 6 June 2013.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mrs A D Allen (Substitute for Mrs P A V Stockell), Mr R H Bird (Substitute for Mrs T Dean), Mr N J Bond, Mr G Cooke, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr J D Simmonds and Mr B J Sweetland.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director of Human Resources), Ms D Fitch (Democratic Services Manager (Council)), Mr C Miller (Reward Manager), Ms T McCarthy (Strategic Business Information Manager) and Mr I Allwright (Employment Policy Manager).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

3. Election of Vice-Chairman

(Item 2)

RESOLVED that Mr G Cooke be elected Vice-Chairman of the Committee

4. Minutes of the Meetings held on 19 March 2013 and 23 May 2013

(Item 4)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 19 March and 23 March 2013 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

5. Annual Workforce Profile Dashboard

(Item 5)

(1) Ms McCarthy presented a report which set out details of the make up of the Authorities workforce as at 31 March 2013 focusing on the changes in staffing levels over the year. The report also included information on the demographics and the diversity the County Council's current workforce and included comparative information from previous years.

(2) Members were invited to ask questions on the dashboard which were answered by Ms McCarthy and Mrs Beer.

(3) A number of suggestions were made for additional information to be provided in future Dashboards these included:

- Exit interview feedback
- Percentage of sickness absence per Directorate.
- Figures for redundancy per Directorate
- Historic figures for agency staff to give a context to the data plus current agency staff broken down into Directorates.

- Number of apprentices – identifying which are high level and showing apprenticeships for KCC broken down into school and non-school.

(4) In relation to question of the reducing level of sickness absence Mrs Beer explained the case management approach that had successfully be adopted.

(5) It was explained that the data for Commercial Services, now that it was a traded company, was reported to Policy and Resources Cabinet Committee and Governance and Audit Committee.

(6) It was suggested that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on increasing the profile of young people in the organisation, this report should include the inhibitors to young people entering the organisation information on KCC school and non-school apprentices, the number of apprentices that obtain permanent jobs in the organisation, plus the number of apprenticeship opportunities created via KCC procurement.

(7) In relation to questions on the number and profile of agency staff within the organisation, Mrs Beer explained that the majority were within the Families and Social Care Directorate, and were filling key roles such as those in Social Work which was a staff shortage area. She emphasised that these were highly regarded quality agency staff. The other main area where agency staff were employed was to fill vacancies in areas that were undergoing restructure where it would not be appropriate to recruit a permanent Member of staff at that time.

(8) RESOLVED that the report be noted and that a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on increasing the profile of young people in the organisation.

6. Employment Value Proposition

(Item 6)

(1) Mr Allwright presented a report which provided a summary of the findings of the 2013 Employment Value Proposition (EVP) survey outlining key improvements in the levels of employee engagement.

(2) Mrs Beer informed the Committee that a staff suggestion scheme was due to be launched shortly, which would be a clear and transparent process for staff with suggestions sent directly to the relevant Director for consideration and response. Members emphasised the importance of building on this successful work to engage with staff in these challenging times of change.

(3) RESOLVED that

(a) the Employment Value Survey results and the improvements in levels of employee engagement be noted and that a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee giving details of the EVP survey including the questions asked, a detailed analysis of the response given and the action being taken by Directors as a result of the feedback from the survey.

(b) a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee on the "Because of you" staff awards giving details of the different ways in which the scheme was being implemented across the organisation.

7. Childcare Voucher Scheme - Deductions during Occupational Maternity Pay

(Item 8)

(1) Mr Miller presented a report which set out options for revising KCC's current approach to making deductions for childcare vouchers when an employee was on maternity leave. Members asked questions and considered each of the three options in the report taking into account the feedback from the Kent Association of Head Teachers.

(2) RESOLVED that the Committee unanimously agree that deductions for childcare vouchers during Occupational Maternity Pay be made in proportion to the half pay that the employee is receiving with effect from 1st September 2013.

8. Salary bands for Public Health Consultants

(Item 9)

(1) Mr Miller and Mrs Beer presented a paper which provided information on the NHS salary bands for Public Health Consultant posts in comparison to Kent Scheme pay bands for senior KCC staff. This paper had been requested at the meeting of the Committee on 19 March 2013 during consideration of a detailed report on the terms and conditions for Public Health Staff joining KCC.

(2) Mrs Beer explained that medically qualified staffed who had transferred to KCC would remain on their current terms and conditions but would be subject to performance monitoring as rigorous as that for KCC Staff. Non medical staff would remain on their current terms and conditions for two years, work would commence after a year to compare these terms and conditions with KCC terms and conditions. This would give time to inform staff of any changes to their terms and conditions at the end of the two year period. It was confirmed that any non medical staff that were recruiting during the two year period would go onto KCC terms and conditions.

(3) RESOLVED that the information provided on pay bands and progression for Public Health Consultant posts be noted.

9. Discretionary Payments

(Item 7)

(1) Mr Miller and Mrs Beer presented a report which indicated how the Market Premium and the Enhancement to Pension Payments policies which allowed the Authority discretion over the level of payments made had been applied in practice.

(2) Members asked questions in relation to these policies which were answered by officers. Mrs Beer emphasised that these payments were reviewed on an annual basis and related to the post not the person. The main area where these payments

were applied was in the Families and Social Care Directorate where there was a national shortage of qualified social services staff. Kent had the additional challenge caused by being so close to London. Mrs Beer reminded Members that details of the posts that were paid a salary of £58,000 or above were published on the County Council's website, which covered the majority of posts that attracted a Market Premium Payment.

(3) Members requested that future annual reports on discretionary payments contain the rationale for these payments and also include comparative data.

(4) RESOLVED that the report and the comments made by Members be noted.

10. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

(Item)

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

11. Discretionary Payments

Mrs Beer answered questions from Members on posts which had attracted a Market Premium Payment.