

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Wantsum Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 4 November 2015.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter, CBE (Chairman), Mrs A D Allen, MBE (Substitute for Mrs P A V Stockell), Mr L Burgess, Miss S J Carey (Substitute for Mr J D Simmonds, MBE), Mrs T Dean, MBE, Ms A Harrison, Mr P J Oakford (Substitute for Mr G Cooke) and Mr B J Sweetland.

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr I Allwright (Employment Policy Manager), Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director Engagement, Organisation Design & Development), Ms J Cudmore (Workforce Development Manager), Ms D Fitch (Democratic Services Manager (Council)) and Mr C Miller (Reward Manager).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

74. Minutes
(Item A3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

75. Employment Value Proposition
(Item A4)

(1) Mr Allwright introduced a report on the findings of the 2015 Employment Value Proposition survey and outlined the key improvements in the levels of employee engagement.

(2) It was noted that the survey results showed that staff had a strong relationship with their managers but felt that the corporate body was more distant to them compared to last year. Mrs Beer undertook to take this outcome to Corporate Board for further discussion..

(3) RESOLVED that the Employment Value Proposition survey results and the improvements in levels of employee engagement be noted.

76. Employment Policy Update
(Item A5)

(1) Mr Allwright introduced a report which updated the Committee on a range of items which were informing the County Council's employment policies and processes. The Committee were invited to note for information the intended and proposed statutory changes and an update on Kent County Council's Resolution Policy. In addition the Committee considered a proposed revision to the flexible working policy, Work Smart.

(2) In relation to the proposed cap on exit payments at £95k including pension release, Mr Allwright informed the Committee that draft regulations had just been published but there was not an implementation date. An assurance was sought that the LGA was campaigning to highlight the impact that this could have on long serving staff, 55 or over, taking voluntary or compulsory retirement.

(3) Members supported the proposed revision to Work Smart and acknowledge the benefits to the County Council whilst also supporting staff.

(4) Mrs Beer undertook to take forward the issue raised in relation to customer enquiries regarding Blue Badges with Contact Point.

(5) RESOLVED that

- a) the intended and proposed statutory changes and the action being taken to ensure the authority will comply be noted, and
- b) the update on the progress of the Resolution Procedure be noted, and .
- c) the revised flexible working policy, Work Smart, be approved.

77. Workforce Planning, Retention and New Joiners Survey.

(Item A6)

(1) Ms Cudmore presented a report which set out how the Workforce Planning Strategy 2015 – 2020 was being delivered. The report summarised findings from the full year analysis of the New Joiners Survey and considered turnover levels, including comparisons with other local authorities.

(2) In response to a suggestion, Mrs Beer undertook to look at inviting staff leaving the authority and not taking up other employment, to indicate whether they would be willing to be called upon in extreme situations

(3) RESOLVED that the report and appendices be noted and that an annual report be submitted to the Committee on key issues in relation to workforce planning.

78. Apprentice Pay Rates

(Item A7)

(1) Mr Miller introduced a report on the impact on other pay points and the wider competitive position of the pay rates following the increase in the national minimum pay rate for apprentices. This provided the opportunity to review the pay scale more widely and to consider an annual pay review mechanism.

(2) RESOLVED that

- a) Option 4 outlined in 3.4 of the report be accepted, and
- b) the apprentice salaries be adjusted annually in accordance with the Kent Scheme award and subject to review on an ad-hoc basis, and
- c) should the subsequent increases in the national minimum pay levels overtake KCC rates, KCC would match these pending any wider review of the scales, and
- d) a report be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee on KCC apprentices, including the retention rate, successes, hosting

departments and different levels, this information to include an indication of how many KCC apprentices are from postcodes in areas of deprivation.

79. Employee Voluntary Benefits
(Item A8)

(1) Mr Miller reported that, following a suitable procurement process, a new contract has been awarded for the employee benefits platform that would provide an opportunity to enhance awareness of our reward strategy and its component elements.

(2) Officers noted the points made by Members in relation to the need to promote this scheme widely amongst eligible non County Hall based colleagues

RESOLVED that the success of the scheme to date be noted and approach and timescales set out in the report be endorsed.

80. Relocation Assistance Scheme
(Item A9)

(1) Mr Miller introduced the report on the Relocation Assistance Scheme which had been rationalised to ensure it was 'fit for purpose'. It was proposed to have a single and flexible scheme to be used only when specifically required.

(2) Mrs Beer confirmed that the qualifying relocation expenses up to a maximum of £8k were tax free. Payments above £8k would be taxed but, in accordance with the Policy, these payments would only be made in exceptional circumstances.

(3) RESOLVED that the revised Relocation Assistance Scheme in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

81. Meeting dates 2016/17
(Item A10)

The Committee noted the following dates for meetings in 2016/17:

Tuesday 26 January 2016
Wednesday 8 June 2016
Thursday 13 October 2016
Tuesday 24 January 2017

All meetings would start at 2.00pm

82. Motion to Exclude the Press and Public
(Item A11)

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and 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.

83. Director Appointments

(Item B1)

(1) The Chairman agreed that a report requesting the Committee to consider an amendment to the Personnel Management Rules (PMR's) should be considered as a matter of urgent business due to the need to make these rules consistent with the policies on slotting and flexible deployment.

(2) Mrs Beer introduced the report on the amendment to the PMR's. She also presented a report circulated with the agenda which recommended the appointment of the Director of Specialist Children's Services on a permanent basis and outlined a new senior level role in the Social Care Health and Wellbeing Directorate.

(3) RESOLVED that

- a) the following amendment (shown in bold) is made to paragraph 6 of the Personnel Management Rules:

"In all cases **(except if otherwise agreed by a resolution of the Personnel Committee)** either all qualified applicants or a selected short-list will be interviewed by the Personnel Committee or Member Panel (sub-committee) acting as the Appointing Body, with the Corporate Director Engagement, Organisation Design & Development (or other Senior Manager as determined by the Committee or Panel) acting as adviser to the Appointing Body. When appointing the Head of Paid Service, which is an appointment made by the County Council, the Appointing Body will report to the Council with a recommendation."

- b) the Director of Governance and Law be requested to amend paragraph 6 of the PMR's in Appendix 2 Part 6 to the Constitution in accordance with resolution a) above;
- c) the amendment in resolution a) above is to take immediate effect and to be applied in relation to resolution d) below;
- d) Mr Segurola be appointed to the post of Director of Specialist Children's Services on a permanent basis without recourse to a Member appointment panel.
- e) the County Council be requested to approve the establishment of a new senior level role in the Social Care Health and Wellbeing Directorate

84. Succession Planning

(Item B2)

(1) Mrs Beer introduced a report which updated Members on the work commissioned by Personnel Committee in April and June 2015 to put in place effective succession plans for the most senior roles in the Authority.

(2) RESOLVED that the further work required and agreed by the Committee be undertaken with the outcomes to be reported to the Committee for consideration in

the first quarter of 2016 and, if necessary, a special meeting of the Committee be convened

85. Discretionary Payments

(Item B3)

(1) Mrs Beer referred the Committee to the report which outlined the discretionary payments policy and updated the Committee on specific payments made to individuals.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.