

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Wantsum Room - Sessions House on Thursday, 24 January 2019.

PRESENT: Mr E E C Hotson (Vice-Chairman in the Chair), Mrs C Bell, Mr R H Bird, Mr P W A Lake, Mr J P McInroy (Substitute for Mr P B Carter, CBE), Mr P J Oakford, Mrs P A V Stockell and Dr L Sullivan

ALSO PRESENT: Mr D Farrell

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director Engagement, Organisation Design & Development), Ms D Fitch (Democratic Services Manager (Council)) and Mr P Royel (Head of HR & OD)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

71. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.

(Item 2)

Dr Sullivan declared her Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, as her husband is employed by the County Council in the Early Help and Prevention Team. She stated that she would withdraw from the meeting for item 8 (Local Pay Bargaining – 2019/20).

72. Minutes - 13 November 2018

(Item 3)

(1) Mrs Beer confirmed that Members would be briefed about engagement with library staff in relation to the proposed changes to opening hours

(2) RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2018 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

73. Employee Relations Casework Activity

(Item 4)

(1) Mr Royel introduced a report which updated the Committee on employee relations casework activity for the period 1 April to 30 September 2018.

(2) Mr Royel and Mrs Beer answered questions and noted comments from Members which included the following:

- the positive figures in relation to ill health cases were noted
- In relation to the budget book item regarding staff efficiencies savings it was confirmed that this related to increased productivity, by means such as maximising the use of technology, positive use of flexible working arrangements and improvements in recruitment. This budget is

specifically geared to savings from good management practices which are key to ensuring staff were kept well and productive.

(3) RESOLVED that the report of employee relations activity including senior officer appeals hearings and the comments made by Members be noted.

74. Gender Pay Gap Reporting

(Item 5)

(1) Mr Royel introduced a report which referred to the legal obligation for KCC to publish an annual Gender Pay Gap (GPG) statement. A draft of the 2019 GPG statement was circulated as an Appendix. The first annual GPG statement had been published in March 2018 based on data from March 2017. Therefore the 2019 statement which was based on data from March 2018 provides an ability to compare data.

(2) Mr Royel and Mrs Beer answered questions and noted comments from Members which included the following:

- It was confirmed that the national comparator data quoted in the report related to both the public and private sectors.
- It was also confirmed that the KCC data related to staff directly employed by KCC. The importance of ensuring that the statement made it clear that the data did not include school staff was acknowledged.
- Mrs Beer explained that the salary level for Corporate Directors on appointment considered several factors one of which was previous experience with another organisation.
- It was requested that comparator data with other Local Authorities be included in future reports. It was acknowledged that this would need to be treated with caution as not every local authority classified their data in the same way.
- The use of “bonus” payments, called cash awards by KCC, was clarified and examples given. Also, it was noted that in 2018 there had been only 380 cash awards out of a workforce of over 10,000.
- It was explained that staff forums set up to support the equality and diversity agenda were self-managing and were encouraged by Directors and Managers.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted and the proposed Gender Pay Gap statement appended to the report be endorsed.

75. Staff Survey 2018 Results

(Item 6)

(Ms Trollope, Head of Engagement & Consultation, was present for this item.)

(1) Ms Trollope introduced a report which outlined the results of the new whole-KCC staff survey and the next steps to make best use of the data now available.

(2) Ms Trollope and Mrs Beer answered questions and noted comments from Members which included the following:

- Staff's trust and confidence in the survey had been demonstrated by the high level of response.
- Members pointed out that the net response to all of the questions was positive. There were areas for action highlighted by the survey response such as Leadership and managing change, although the survey did show that staff were positive about their line management relationship. The importance of maintaining employee engagement generated via the survey was emphasised.
- Regarding the learning and development offer the variation that appears in Directorate responses would be explained and staff communication would emphasise the package of learning and development available to support managers and staff. In relation to the staff who did not respond to the survey, it was confirmed that managers were being encouraged to have conversations with their teams to understand the results of the survey and highlight action to be taken to address issues identified. It was hoped that this would encourage an even better response to next year's survey.
- The results of the survey demonstrated the importance of Corporate Management Team and Cabinet Members spending time with staff to ensure that KCC's vision was understood.

(3) Ms Trollope and her colleagues were thanked by the Committee for their work on the detailed survey which had achieved such a good response from staff.

(4) RESOLVED that:

- (a) the initial results of the staff survey and the comments made by Members be noted
- (b) an update on the actions taken in response to the survey be submitted to the Committee in June 2019.

76. Exclusion of the Press and Public

(Item 7)

RESOLVED that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

EXEMPT ITEMS

(Open minute)

77. Local Pay Bargaining - 2019/20

(Item 8)

(Mr Shipton, Head of Finance (Policy, Planning & Strategy) and Mr Booth, Principal Accountant (Revenue and Tax Strategy), were present for this item.)

(1) Mr Royel introduced a report which summarised the position on the 2019/20 Local Pay Bargaining process. Endorsement of the proposed action from Personnel

Committee was requested, prior to approval being sought from County Council on 14 February 2019.

(2) Mr Royel, Mrs Beer and Mr Shipton answered questions of clarification from Members. Mr Farrell was invited to participate in the discussion on this item.

(3) RESOLVED that Personnel Committee endorse and recommend the following to County Council for approval:

a) a single pot of 2.8% for 2019/20 pay to be used in accordance with the Total Contribution Pay process.

b) in recognition of the continued aspiration to move toward the Living Wage the entry value of the lowest grade be adjusted to £8.55 per hour which will maintain the Councils position above the national minimum and £9 per hour for April 2020.

c) the Cabinet Member for Corporate & Democratic Services be delegated authority to agree the final award values of the Total Contribution Pay process.

(In accordance with her declared interest Dr Sullivan withdrew from the meeting and therefore took no part in the discussion and decision making on this item)