

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

**Thursday, 30th September, 2021**

**2.00 pm**

Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall,  
Maidstone







## AGENDA

### PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

**Thursday, 30th September, 2021, at 2.00 pm**    Ask for:    **Joel Cook**  
**Council Chamber, Sessions House,**    Telephone    **03000 416892**  
**Maidstone ME14 1XQ**

#### **Membership (11)**

- Conservative (8):    Mr R W Gough (Chair), Mrs C Bell, Mrs S Chandler,  
Mr P J Oakford, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr C Simkins and  
Mr B J Sweetland
- Labour (1)    Dr L Sullivan
- Liberal Democrat (1)    Mrs T Dean, MBE
- Green &  
Independent (1)    Mrs S Campkin

#### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

*(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)*

- 1    Substitutes
- 2    Membership  
To note that Mr Steve Campkin (Green & independent Group) has joined the committee following the proportionality review agreed at County Council in July 2021.
- 3    Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
- 4    Minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2021 (Pages 1 - 4)
- 5    Future of Work (Pages 5 - 6)
- 6    Exclusion of the Press and Public  
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

paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

**EXEMPT ITEMS**

7 Senior Management Structure and Appointments (Pages 7 - 22)

Benjamin Watts  
General Counsel  
03000 416814

**Wednesday, 22 September 2021**

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 23 June 2021.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chair), Mrs C Bell, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mrs S Chandler, Mr P J Oakford, Mrs S Prendergast, Mr C Simkins and Dr L Sullivan

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director of People and Communications), Mr P Royel (Head of HR & OD) and Mr J Cook (Democratic Services Manager)

### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

#### **2. Membership**

*(Item 1)*

RESOLVED that the Committee membership be noted.

#### **3. Election of Vice-Chair**

*(Item 3)*

1. Mr Oakford proposed and Mr Simkins seconded that Mr Sweetland be elected as Vice-Chair. No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED that Mr Sweetland be elected as Vice-Chair.

#### **4. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.**

*(Item 4)*

No declarations were made.

#### **5. Minutes of meetings held on 26 January 2021 and 27 May 2021**

*(Item 5)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings held on 26 January and 27 May 2021 were correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chair as a correct record.

#### **6. Annual Workforce Profile Report**

*(Item 6)*

1. Mr Royel introduced a report which provided information on the staffing levels in the various parts of the Authority's workforce covering the 2020/21 period, along with comparative data from recent years. He highlighted that the focus of the main report was non-school staff. The information also outlined trends and changes in staff levels and work undertaken with those leaving the organisation to better understand reasons. Mr Royel highlighted that the employment by

KCC of staff to support COVID testing centres had impacted on the overall profile.

2. Mr Royel and Mrs Beer responded to a range of questions and comments from Members in relation to workforce demographics, salary banding, reduced sickness levels and staff management arrangements. Members discussed the potential positive impact of remote working for various staff types.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **7. ER Casework Activity**

*(Item 7)*

1. Mr Royel introduced a report which detailed employee relations casework activity in the 2020/21 period. This covered key issues including highlighting the increasing complexity of cases in recent years and that significant delays in the employment tribunal system had caused inflation of figures for the past year. He commented that the outcomes detailed in the report indicated a healthy organisation that listens and learns.
2. Mr Royel and Mrs Beer responded to questions and noted comments from Members, which included the following:
  - Settlement factors for cases and a request to see aggregated settlement costs.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **8. Staff Survey**

*(Item 8)*

*(Ms Trollope, Head of Engagement and Consultation was in attendance for this item)*

1. Diane Trollope introduced the report detailing the processes undertaken for and the outcome of the latest Staff Survey. She highlighted the extensive feedback received via the survey, noting that the word count of free text response amounted to the entire Chronicles of Narnia book series. She explained that the information gathered was analysed and considered by a range of HR specialists with experience from across the organisation.
2. The development of staff attitudes and experiences during the course of the pandemic had been considered and assessed to help KCC understand how different ways of working had impacted on staff and how that should shape future plans.
3. Members thanks Ms Trollope for the presentation and commended the good work involved in the survey and its analysis.
4. Ms Trollope and Mrs Beer answered a range of comments and noted questions from Members including:
  - Ms Trollope confirmed there was limited change between directorates in terms of workload issues highlighted in the survey.

- Reassurance was provided to Members regarding the communications plan to share survey results and to explain actions being taken to address issues highlighted.
- Officers noted comments about some poor staff experiences and explained the process for working with those leaving or considering leaving the organisation.
- It was confirmed that further consideration of longer term strategies building on the survey results would be considered by Personnel at future meetings.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

## **9. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

*(Item 9)*

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 paragraphs 1 and 2 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

### **EXEMPT ITEMS**

(Open minutes)

## **10. Terms & Conditions of Service**

*(Item 10)*

1. Mr Royel introduced the report detailing proposed updates to Terms and Conditions for staff. This report outlined particular updates in relation to flexible working and modernised arrangements to better reflect the current working environment.
2. Key elements highlighted related to managing the shift toward providing a more flexible working system and reviewing some allowances and employment arrangements which predate the embedding of flexible working arrangements. This included reviewing home-worker and car user allowances and considering potential simplification of holiday entitlements.
3. Mr Royel and Mrs Beer answered questions and noted comments from Members, including:
  - Explaining the limited impact of changes to essential car user allowances for the small number of existing legacy user in view of the alternative casual user arrangements.
4. Members discussed the proposals and the explanations provided. Holiday simplification arrangement suggestions were considered with a further report requested for a future meeting. The allowance changes were put to the vote;

RESOLVED to agree;

- a) the removal of the essential user allowance for the legacy recipients and that those remaining essential users convert to casual user status.
- b) the removal of the Home Worker Allowance from the Council's terms and conditions (with those currently in receipt of the allowance to retain it)

## **11. Discretionary Payments**

*(Item 11)*

1. Mrs Beer introduced the report which set out the different types of discretionary payments paid to staff with explanations as to their frequency, spread across the organisation and their justifications in accordance with KCC's discretionary payment procedures and policies. She advised the Committee that these payments allowed for appropriate recognition of particular responsibilities, gave more flexibility to the organisation and assisted the council in remaining a competitive employer.
2. Mrs Beer responded to questions and comments from Members, including:
  - Clarifying arrangements in relation to payments for senior staff.
  - Explanation of how the role grading system was applied, combined with input from HR advice and exploration of the job market to establish appropriate payment levels.
  - It was confirmed that proximity to London was a factor in the application of some market premium payments.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.



**Item**

**By:** Bryan Sweetland – Cabinet Member for Communications, Engagement, People and Partnerships  
Amanda Beer – Corporate Director People and Communications

**To:** Personnel Committee      **Date:** 30 September 2021

**Subject:** The Future of Work

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Summary**    **This paper introduces a presentation that will be made to Personnel Committee on the Future of Work, including hybrid working at Kent County Council.**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Covid pandemic has resulted in a scale of change and impact that is unprecedented. As restrictions begin to ease but the threat of further outbreaks and variants remain, the impact on the world of work is yet to be fully seen.
- 1.2 KCC has, along with many other organisations, moved to a model of flexible working for its staff, recognising that many of our staff prefer to work more flexibly in terms of where they work, and many customers and service users have responded well to different, more flexible methods of service delivery. The pandemic has given the Authority the opportunity to accelerate implementation of its business change agenda and has proved that flexibility and hybrid working can be successful.
- 1.3 It will be crucial that the right infrastructure, management training, engagement and support are in place to ensure flexible and hybrid working is sustainable and leads to improved service delivery.
- 1.4 Before Covid -19 struck, the need to ensure that as a large employer our HR and Organisation Development strategies took due account of the changing nature of work and people's aspirations was already well understood. After such a significant period of accelerated thinking and changing priorities in the landscape of work, it is appropriate to begin a wider debate about this now as we continue to develop HR and OD policy for the Authority.

## 2. HIGHLIGHTS

- 2.1 A more comprehensive presentation will be shared with Personnel Committee on both KCC's hybrid working implementation and the broader Future of Work.
- 2.2 The Hybrid working presentation will include:

- Our ambition and standard
- Staff responses about future working arrangements in the pulse surveys
- Other organisations' approaches
- Interdependencies
- Risks and mitigations
- Opportunities
- Implications and timetable for office reconfiguration

2.3 The Future of Work presentation will include:

- Issues and Trends – technological; socio-economic; and geographic
- Employment in the future
- Impacts of likely changes
- How is KCC placed to respond
- The skills agenda

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 Personnel Committee are invited to consider and comment on the content of the presentation

**Background papers:** None

**Report Author and Relevant Director:** Amanda Beer  
Corporate Director People & Communications

**Telephone number:** 03000 415835

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Agenda Item 7

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