

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 24 January 2023.

PRESENT: Mr R W Gough (Chair), Mrs S Prendergast (Vice-Chairman), Mrs C Bell, Mrs S Chandler, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Mr P J Oakford, Mr D Robey, Mr C Simkins, Dr L Sullivan and Mr B J Sweetland

ALSO PRESENT: Mr R C Love, OBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs S Hammond (Corporate Director Children, Young People and Education), Mr P Royel (Director of HR & OD), Mr D Shipton (Head of Finance Policy, Planning and Strategy), Mr I Allwright (Employment Policy Manager) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

40. 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 was employed by KCC. At the commencement of item 8 – Local Pay Bargaining Dr Sullivan withdrew from the meeting.

41. Election of Vice-Chair

(Item 3)

1. The Chair asked for nominations for Vice-Chair of the Personnel Committee.
2. Mr Simkins proposed and Mr Robey seconded that Mrs Prendergast be elected Vice Chair of the Personnel Committee. No other nominations were received.

RESOLVED that Mrs Prendergast be elected Vice-Chair of the Personnel Committee.

42. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 November 2022

(Item 4)

In response to a query, Mr Royel confirmed that information from the staff survey would be brought to Personnel Committee in March 2023 allowing for discussions to be had with the Directorates.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2022 were correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

43. Workforce Profile Update

(Item 5)

1. Mr Royel introduced this report which provided an update to the Annual Workforce Profile report and information on changes in turnover across the County Council's workforce to December 2022.
2. In previous workforce reports to the Committee (June and November 2022) it was apparent that turnover of staff had increased from previous levels. In view of the increased turnover Personnel Committee resolved to monitor this on a quarterly basis, this update was the first of those quarterly reports.
3. Turnover varied between Directorates and KCC had seen an increase in turnover from 14.7% at April 2022 to 15.8% in September 2022. At 30 November 2022 this had slightly reduced to 15.6%.
4. Mr Royel responded to questions of detail and noted comments, which included the following:
 - a. A Member suggested that the report should include directorate-based trends.
 - b. Lessons learned – these were in recruitment as well as retention – KCC offered flexible working arrangements as part of the totality of benefits alongside salary.
 - c. What was the situation for other county councils? – indications were that all authorities had seen an increase in turnover post pandemic.

RESOLVED that Personnel Committee note the report.

44. Exclusion of the Press and Public

(Item 6)

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, 2, 3 and 4 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

EXEMPT ITEMS

(Open minutes)

45. Children, Young People and Education Directorate – Top Tier Restructure

(Item 7)

1. Mr Royel introduced the report which set out proposals to realign the senior structure of the Children, Young People and Education (CYPE) Directorate. The current structure had been in place since March 2020 and the appointment of a new Corporate Director had provided the opportunity to review the operation of the senior team and where responsibility of services should lie.
2. Ms Hammond gave an outline of the proposals including the reasons for the changes to the Director roles.

3. Mr Royel and Ms Hammond responded to questions of detail and noted comments, which included the following:
 - a. Reasons for ending the geographical split in the Director – Operational Integrated Children’s Services role – this was seeking to bring together two sets of services
 - b. There was concern that SEND was a huge responsibility in Kent and that this proposal seemed to be condensing four big roles into three even bigger roles.
 - c. Members considered that the structure underneath the proposed director roles was crucial to ensure there was enough support.
 - d. There was general support for the proposal and that this was the right time to undertake these changes, however this was not unanimous and a Member had concerns that the changes were premature and further thought needed to be given to the previous structure and why this had not worked.
 - e. In response to a question about accountability for data and performance management it was confirmed that the Directors would be accountable for quality and performance in their services.
4. The Cabinet Member explained that the proposed structure was aligned with the aims and priorities of the service, transformation of SEND was a key priority.

RESOLVED that the Personnel Committee recommend to County Council:

- The deletion of the posts of Director – Special Educational Needs & Disability and the Director – ICS posts in the Children, Young People and Education Directorate.
- The introduction of new Director – Education & SEN, Director – Operational Integrated Children’s Services and Director – Children’s Countywide Services posts
- Delegation to the Corporate Director and Director – HR&OD the review of the current postholder of Director of Education’s salary within their current grade range
- Continuation of the interim acting up arrangement for the current postholder of Interim Director for Integrated Children’s Services (East) until a permanent appointment is made to the vacant Director post.

Dr Sullivan asked that her vote against, and Mrs Dean asked that her abstention be noted in the minutes.

46. Local Pay Bargaining

(Item 8)

(Dr Sullivan declared an interest in that her husband was a KCC employee and withdrew from the meeting).

1. Mr Allwright introduced the report on Local Pay Bargaining which provided a summary of the position from this year’s Local Pay Bargaining process.
2. Personnel Committee was being asked to endorse and recommend to County Council an increase of £2000 for grades KR3 to KR11 and a reducing tiered

percentage increase for grades KR12 to KR 20. This would supersede TCP pay progression for 2022/23. It also proposed an increase in the basic leave entitlement of staff in grades KR3 – 7 and KR8 – 12 who had less than 5 years' service of one additional day.

3. The proposed pay award, considering the Council's budgetary pressure and recruitment and retention challenge, was considered reasonable and affordable.
4. Mr Shipton confirmed that the pay award, including the cost of the additional annual leave, was in line with the figure published within the draft budget on 3 January 2023.
5. Members asked that it be made explicitly clear that this proposal was for 2023/24 only and that next year the pay award would return to being linked to the performance reward process. Mr Royel confirmed that this would be the case.
6. Members congratulated officers on achieving this proposal.

RESOLVED that Personnel Committee endorse and recommend to County Council:

- An increase of £2000 for grades KR3 to KR11, tapered percentage increases from 4.4% for grades KR12 to KR20, consolidated for all staff with the corresponding adjustment to our pay scales.
- Personnel Committee agree the increase in the basic annual leave entitlement for staff in KR3-7 and those with less than 5 years' service in KR8-12 by one additional day.