

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Wantsum Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 28 November 2013.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr G Cooke (Vice-Chairman), Mr N J Bond, Mrs T Dean, Ms A Harrison, Mr M Heale, Mr J D Simmonds and Mr B J Sweetland.

ALSO PRESENT: Mr M E Whybrow.

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

#### UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

##### **22. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2013**

*(Item 3)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 September 2013 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

##### **23. Pay Policy for centrally employed teachers**

*(Item 4)*

(1) Mr Miller introduced a report which set out the recommended new provisions in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document 2013 and how these should be applied to centrally employed teachers within KCC.

(2) Mr Miller confirmed that teachers pay progression could be linked to KCC's Total Contribution Pay Scheme. Where teachers worked closely with schools feedback on performance would be sought.

(3) RESOLVED that the implementation of the 'Kent County Council Pay Policy Statement 2013-14 for Teachers covered by the School Teachers Pay & Conditions' document, as set out in Appendix 1 of the report and the statement regarding the discretions available in this document as set out in paragraph 5.1 of the report be endorsed.

*(Mr Sweetland declared that his wife was a teacher employed by a school).*

##### **24. The Living Wage**

*(Item 5)*

(1) Mrs Beer and Mr Miller introduced a report which considered the Living Wage and its potential impact on the wider authority. As part of this, specific feedback had been sought to assess the impact on schools and how other organisations were

approaching this matter. Also circulated at the meeting was an illustration of a potential reward package for someone on the top of KR2.

(2) Mr Whybrow was invited to speak on this item. He acknowledged that Kent County Council was a fair employer and welcomed the useful analysis of the package at KR2. He suggested that the Living Wage in relation to commissioned services should be included in the discussions with the unions and suggested wording along the following lines:

*"KCC would consider favourably a commitment to the Living Wage from bidders for commissioned services, believing this to be in line with the wider considerations allowed for by the Public Services Social Value Act."*

(3) Mr Whybrow confirmed that he supported negotiations with the unions on the Living Wage and suggested that the wording in paragraph 7.2 should be amended to read:

*"It is agreed that it is good in principle and that a pragmatic decision will be taken to move KCC in this direction for all staff directly employed by the Council. This includes the desire to set the lowest pay rate as close to or at the Living Wage level without overt commitment to match it, due to budget constraints, the need to minimise job losses, and complications with commissioning services."*

(4) Whilst not being against the principle of the Living Wage, Mr Simmonds expressed reservations about the robustness of the way in which it was calculated and the implications for future County Councils budgets if it was adopted.

(5) Two other issues in relation to the Living Wage were raised by the Chairman for clarification, these were the impact on schools and the impact on the standard wage paid to apprentices of KCC adopting the Living Wage.

(6) RESOLVED that the Committees discussion inform the corporate pay bargaining process with the trade unions and that there be a report back to the Committee in January on the outcome of the negotiations and more information on how other local authorities have implemented to the Living Wage

## **25. Disciplinary & Grievance Activity**

*(Item 6)*

(1) Mr Allwright presented a report which updated the Committee on employee discipline and grievance case work activity for the period 2012-13. The report also set out changes to the Disciplinary Procedure and sought the Committee's approval to a revised Disciplinary Policy and, Policy and Hearings Procedure.

(2) Members welcomed the intended approach to changing the Council's Grievance procedure.

(3) Mrs Beer undertook to provide Members with the rules around Officers canvassing Members support on Human Resources matters.

(4) RESOLVED that :

(a) the report of employee relations activity including senior officer appeals hearings be noted .

(b) the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure and the Hearings Procedure and the proposed approach to dispute resolution be approved.

(c) a report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee setting out additional figures on grievances which could be included in the performance dashboard.

## **26. Annual Workforce Profile**

*(Item 7)*

(1) Ms McCarthy submitted a paper which provided a mid year update to the Annual Workforce Profile report which contained details of changes in the size and composition of the Authority's workforce for the period ending 30 September 2013. The report included staffing information as at that date and details of trends identified within the period. The report was divided into sections, each covering different sectors of the Authority's workforce.

(2) In relation to sickness levels, which had been decreasing overall, Mrs Beer explained that in the Family and Social Care Directorate there were rigorous processes in place to access the reasons for absence and explained why sickness absence tended to be higher in this Directorate.

(3) RESOLVED that the update be noted.

## **27. Kent Manager - Presentation**

*(Item 8)*

(1) Ms Cudmore gave a PowerPoint presentation on KCC's Leadership and Management Development Strategy, including the work being undertaken to support Facing the Challenge and the Future Manager Programme.

(2) RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

## **28. Facing the Challenge**

*(Item 9)*

(1) Mrs Beer introduced a report which updated the Committee on the HR approach to supporting the overall Facing the Challenge agenda and on the top two tier restructuring.

(2) RESOLVED that the progress of the top two tier restructuring, the proposed approach to restructuring and the Human Resources project based response to Facing the Challenge be noted.

## **29. Dates of meetings in 2014**

*(Item 10)*

RESOLVED that the following dates for meetings in 2014 be noted:

Wednesday 29 January 2014

Wednesday 4 June 2014  
Tuesday 9 September 2014  
Thursday 27 November 2014

All meetings would start at 2.00pm.