

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Wantsum Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Tuesday, 9 September 2014.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter, CBE (Chairman), Mr G Cooke (Vice-Chairman), Mr N J Bond, Mrs T Dean, MBE, Ms A Harrison, Mr C P D Hoare (Substitute for Mr L Burgess), Mr J D Simmonds, MBE, Mrs P A V Stockell and Mr B J Sweetland.

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

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

32. Minutes of the meetings held on 17 July 2014
(Item A3)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2014 be taken as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

33. Retention Policy
(Item A4)

(1) Mr Fairburn introduced a report which outlined KCC's retention strategy and how was informed by understanding why some people choose to leave KCC. The report set out information on the data from the new joiner 'on boarder, pilot and details of workforce planning including talent management.

(2) Mrs Beer and Mr Fairburn answered questions and noted comments from Members.

(3) Mr Fairburn explained there was no evidence that new employees were being given unrealistic expectations regarding progression within the organisation. He also outlined the work that was being carried out with managers in relation to succession planning and talent management. As part of this managers were encouraged to identify people with potential and ambition in order to provide them with the opportunity to broaden their skills. Mrs Beer confirmed that reference to experience had been removed from recruitment material in favour of aptitude and ability. Also use was made of flexible deployment where appropriate.

(4) In relation to the new joiner 'on boarder', pilot mention was made of the 5% of respondents who had left KCC employment within 6 months. It was confirmed that these were on fixed term contracts and therefore were always going to leave KCC, but they were still able to provide valuable feedback about the organisation. Mr Fairburn undertook to provide data comparing turnover with other authorities in the South East.

(5) In response to comments from Members about the move away from carrying out exit surveys, Mrs Beer explained that there was a view amongst HR professionals that the responses when available were not reliable. She confirmed HR was not resourced to carry out exit interviews and therefore they would currently need to be carried out by the line manager which might have an impact on the responses given.

(6) Members suggested that it would be helpful to have the data from the new joiner survey broken down into types of work as there might be some areas that were showing a high turnover of workforce and issues in those areas may need to be specifically addressed.

(7) It was noted that work was being carried out on Total Contribution Pay (TCP) to achieve a correlation with other data.

(8) RESOLVED that the Retention Strategy be endorsed and that reports be submitted to future meetings of the Personnel Committee on:

- (a) the use of exit interviews including the cost of using an external provider.
- (b) the result of the work being carried out to correlate information about individual's development activity with TCP ratings.

34. Employment Value Proposition (EVP)
(Item A5)

(1) Mr Allwright introduced a report which provided an executive summary of the findings of the 2014 EVP survey outlining key improvements in the levels of employee engagement.

(2) Officers undertook to circulate to Members of the Committee the free text comments from the survey and the data broken down by Directorate/ Department.

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

35. Employment Policy Update
(Item A6)

(1) Mr Allwright introduced a report which provided an update on the Kent Scheme Terms & Conditions of Service and on guidance to support change management in the Authority.

(2) RESOLVED that the changes to the Kent Scheme Terms & Conditions of Service and the revised and new guidance introduced to support change management in the Authority be noted.

36. Discretionary Payments
(Item A7)

(1) Mr Miller introduced the annual report which outlined payments made to staff where the Authority could exercise discretion.

(2) Mr Miller answered a number of questions on the process and reasons for granting discretionary payments in relation to both market premium payments and pay enhancements. Members were assured that these payments were related to performance and that there was a system in place to ensure that the payments were reviewed by the Corporate Director on an annual basis.

(3) RESOLVED that the report be noted and a list be submitted to the next meeting setting out the reasons for each of the market premiums which would be considered in the part of the “exempt” part of the meeting.

(Post Meeting Note: The figure reported for Finance Business Partner – Families & Social Care, (£20,000 for 2013/14) was incorrect as the figure included other changes to pay which took place that year. A net market premium payment of £10,000 was made within the 12 month review period which is consistent with the agreed and approved value.)

37. Facing the Challenge - HR Implications & Policies

(Item A8)

(1) Mr Royel introduced the report which highlighted the immediate and planned impact that Facing the Challenge had driven in HR policy and practice.

(2) Members acknowledged the key role that good managers played in the transformation process. Mr Royel emphasised the importance of giving managers the confidence to discharge their role and make good judgements.

(3) RESOLVED that the changes made and direction proposed for Human Resources Policy and Practice be endorsed.

38. Motion to exclude 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 paragraph 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

EXEMPT ITEM

39. Deferred Redundancy

(Item B1)

(1) Mrs Beer introduced the report which outlined reasons for seeking an extension to a deferred redundancy and updated this report at the meeting.

(2) Mrs Dean expressed concerns on behalf of her Group regarding this request which were noted

(3) RESOLVED that the extension to the deferred redundancy be approved.