

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Wantsum Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 8 June 2016.

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

IN ATTENDANCE: Mrs A Beer (Corporate Director Engagement, Organisation Design & Development), Ms D Fitch (Democratic Services Manager (Council)), Ms J Cudmore (Head of Organisation Development), Ms S Dunn (Head of Skills and Employability), Ms K Ray (HR Business Partner - Social Care, Health and Wellbeing) and Mr P Royel (Head of HR).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

92. Minutes

(*Item 3*)

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2016 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

93. Employee Relations Casework Activity

(*Item 4*)

(1) Mr Royel introduced a report which updated the Committee on employee relations case work activity for the period 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. This included case activity and dismissal appeals heard by senior officers.

(2) Mr Royel clarified a number points for Members.

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

94. Annual Workforce Profile

(*Item 5*)

(1) Mr Royel introduced a report which provided information on the staffing levels in the various sectors of the Authority's workforce, together with comparative information from recent years. The report also provided information on the diversity and demographics of the current workforce including breakdowns of staff by each of the diversity strands.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.

95. Apprenticeship Levy

(Item 6)

(1) Ms Cudmore and Ms Dunn introduced a report which updated the Committee on the changes to apprenticeship frameworks and funding which would come into effect on 6 April 2017. The report included consideration of the impact of the new apprenticeship levy, introduction of the new apprenticeship standards, targets and opportunities for KCC to deliver apprenticeships in a totally different way.

(2) Ms Cudmore and Ms Dunn explained that the funding which could be drawn down from government was only in relation to the training element of the apprenticeship. However, this training could be carried out in various ways including the use of e-learning, accredited in-house training with employees being assessors in order to maximise the return to the County Council. Ms Dunn confirmed that it would be possible for KCC to offer training provided to its own apprentices to other local authorities.

(3) Ms Dunn informed Members that in September the first KCC degree level apprenticeship would be piloted which would be targeted at young people who traditionally would not go on to Higher Education. It was intended that these young people would obtain a degree and a management qualification which would provide an opportunity for succession planning

(4) In response to a question from a Member regarding concerns that existing employees could be replaced by apprentices at a lower salary, Ms Cudmore confirmed that an apprenticeship was a training offer not an employment offer and that apprentices were employed on KCC's conditions of service. Ms Beer confirmed that when a vacancy occurred, one of the factors that managers considered was whether it would be appropriate to bring in an apprentice.

(5) Mrs Dunn informed the Committee that when a KCC apprenticeship was completed 95% of those young people either stayed with KCC, went to another job or onto further studying

(6) The Chairman emphasised the importance of the achievements of the KCC apprenticeship scheme being publicised to encourage support for apprenticeships across the County.

(7) Ms Dunn confirmed that clarification was still being sought on what would happen to the apprenticeship levy monies that were collected from KCC by central government and not drawn down by KCC for training,

(3) RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted, further work incorporating government guidance expected in June 2016 be commissioned and that there be a standing item for each meeting of the Committee to receive an update on apprenticeships with a focus on the implementation of the apprenticeship levy and its benefits for KCC.

96. Date of Next Meeting

(Item 7)

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 13 October 2016.

97. Motion to exclude the Press and Public

(Item 8)

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.

98. Interim Update on terms and conditions for Public Health staff

(Item 9)

(1) Ms Ray introduced a report which provided an update on the terms and conditions for Public Health staff and the next steps including initial options.

(2) In response to a question Ms Ray set out the key differences in the NHS and KCC conditions of service.

(3) It was noted that the Director of Public Health would be invited to attend the October meeting of the Committee.

(4) RESOLVED that the report be noted and that a further report on terms and conditions for staff in Public Health be submitted to the October meeting of the Committee.

99. Legal ABS

(Item 10)

(1) Mrs Beer introduced a report which set out the implications of the establishment of the Legal Services Alternative Business Structure and sought approval for the appointment of a Managing Director Designate and an Interim General Counsel. Mrs Beer answered questions from Members on these two appointments.

(2) RESOLVED that:

- a) the interim appointment of Mr B Watts to the post of General Counsel be endorsed.
- b) the appointment of Mr J Pigott as the Compliance Officer for Legal Practice in the new ABS company be noted.
- c) the appointment of Mr G Wild as the Managing Director of the new ABS company be noted.
- d) the arrangement, as outlined in 5.7 of the report be approved.

