

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday 13 May 2009.

PRESENT: Mr P B Carter (Chairman), Mr N J D Chard, Mr K Ferrin (Substitute for Mr D A Hirst), Ms A Harrison, Mr C Hart, Mr A J King, Mr K G Lynes and Mr G Rowe.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms A Beer (Director of Personnel and Development) and Mr G Mills (Legal & Democratic Services).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes
(Item 2)

(1) Mr King referred to paragraph 29 of the Minutes and said the Council had received a letter from the Local Government Employers thanking it for officers from the Personnel Department attending an employer event in London to talk about the work undertaken in producing the Work and Wellbeing Framework. The LGE expressed the hope that this work could form part of a future case study to highlight good practice in employee wellbeing in local government.

(2) RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2009 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

2. Personnel Committee - Terms of Reference and Delegations
(Item 3 – report by Mr Geoff Wild, Director of Law and Governance)

(1) This report asked the Committee to consider recommending a change to the Constitution in order to remove an anomaly in the approval of changes to staff terms and conditions.

(2) Mr Wild said that among the functions delegated by the Council to the Personnel Committee as set out in the Constitution was the responsibility for appointing Managing Directors and the senior managers who report directly to them and to determine their terms and conditions, which would include pay. This particular delegation appeared to be at odds with the role of the Chief Executive who, elsewhere in the Constitution, was said to have the responsibility for agreeing the starting salaries and subsequent pay movement for staff above Grade L. In order to remove any uncertainty in the wording of the Constitution, the Committee was asked to confirm that responsibility for appointing Senior Managers should continue to rest with the Personnel Committee, whilst responsibility for determining senior managers terms and conditions (including starting salary and subsequent pay movement) should rest with the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Leader of the Council.

(3) During the course of detailed discussion the Members of the Personnel Committee said it had to be elected Members who took the responsibility and therefore the control over the appointment of everyone of Grade M and above and

therefore it should equally be the responsibility of Members to take the responsibility for agreeing their terms and conditions, including pay, with the advice of the Chief Executive. This was agreed. The Personnel Committee therefore agreed that the Constitution and therefore the terms of reference of the Personnel Committee be amended as follows:-

Resolved:

1. that Appendix 2 Part 2 paragraph 2.3(b) of the Constitution (Personnel Committee terms of reference) be amended as follows:

From: “appointing Managing Directors and the senior managers who report direct to them and determining their terms and conditions and those of the Chief Executive”

To: “appointing Chief and Senior Officers on Grade M or above and determining their terms and conditions and those of the Chief Executive (including subsequent pay movement)”

2. Appendix 2 Part 6 of the Constitution (Personnel Management Rules) be amended as follows:

(a) Paragraph 2

From: “In these rules “Senior Manager” means officers (other than Managing Directors) on Grade M or above who report directly to the Chief Executive or to Managing Directors.”

To: “In these rules “Senior Manager” means Chief and Senior Officers on Grade M or above.”

(b) Paragraph 4

From: “Rules 4-9 apply to the appointment of the Chief Executive, Managing Directors and Senior Managers.”

To: “Rules 4-9 apply to the appointment of the Chief Executive and Senior Managers.

(c) Paragraph 6

From:

Post	Appointing Body	Adviser
Chief Executive	Personnel Committee to interview and report to Council with recommendation	As determined by the Committee
Managing Director	Personnel Committee or Member Panel (Sub-Committee)	Chief Executive
Senior Manager	Member Panel (Sub-Committee)	Managing Director or Chief Executive

To:

Post	Appointing Body	Adviser
Chief Executive	Personnel Committee to interview and report to Council with recommendation	As determined by the Committee
Senior Manager	Personnel Committee or Member Panel (Sub-Committee)	Chief Executive and/or Senior Manager

(d) All other references to “Managing Director” be deleted and replaced by “Senior Manager”.

(e) The delegation to the Chief Executive to agree starting salaries and subsequent pay movement for staff above Grade L be deleted.

The Chairman declared considerations of Items 4, 5 and 6 of the agenda for this meeting to be urgent on the grounds that they could not be despatched at the time of the main agenda because information relevant to their content and accuracy was not available at that time.

3. Annual Workforce Profile Report

(Item 4 – report by Mr Alex King, Deputy Leader, Corporate Support and External Affairs and Ms Amanda Beer, Director of Personnel and Development)

(Mr Graham Cox of Personnel and Development was present for this item)

(1) This report detailed the staffing levels as at 31 March 2009, and provided comparative staffing information from previous years. The report also included the reasons for changes in staffing levels over previous years together with information on the demographics and diversity of Kent County Council's current workforce. Graham Cox also demonstrated to the Committee IT software which was now being used to improve the way data was being used to both record and present information relevant to the County Council's personnel function both across the authority as a whole and also on a directorate by directorate basis.

(2) During the course of discussion Members said that they welcomed the introduction of the new software as it provided managers with a range of personnel information relevant to their staff which could be presented and analysed more efficiently and quickly. This information could be made readily available almost on a day by day basis. It was confirmed that this information would be placed on the website on a restricted basis and therefore it could only be accessed through having a specific login code. It was also confirmed that the system would enable the Council to analyse those areas in which it was doing well and other areas where the data suggested actions may need to be taken to address particular concerns.

(3) It was also said that there needed to be more rigour and transparency around the way that assessments were made in relation to performance reward and how that was managed, particularly for those who were at the top of their scales. Also performance management needed to be seen as an integral part of business planning and staffing issues had to be integrated as part of that process. Ms Beer said these matters were being looked at by officers as part of the Total Contribution Pay system and she would arrange to bring forward a report to the September meeting of the Committee.

(4) RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the information on staffing levels and the ways that these are now being collated and presented through the introduction of new IT software be endorsed and that it be noted that future reports would include information related to all grades not just those up to L;
- (b) a report on performance reward be presented to the Committee at its meeting in September 2009;
- (c) as the use of technology was changing the way information was being managed there needed be a quality discussion through the Chief Officer Group, Cabinet and this Committee around how this information could help the Council better understand personnel data and how that was interpreted and used to inform future policy. It was agreed that these matters would be discussed again at the Committee's next meeting.
- (d) there would be a report to Cabinet and possibly the Personnel Committee about posts which were externally funded and what the impact would be on the Council and employees in externally funded posts should that hypothecated funding be withdrawn.

4. Disciplinary and Grievance Activity - 6 monthly

(Item 5 – report by Mr Alex King, Deputy Leader, Corporate Support and External Affairs and Ms Amanda Beer, Director of Personnel and Development)

(1) This report updated the Personnel Committee on disciplinary and grievance activity over the year ending March 2009 including details of Personnel appeal cases.

(2) Following discussion the Committee resolved that the report of employee relations activity and that of recent appeal hearings be noted.

5. Discretionary Payments

(Item 6 – report by Mr Alex King, Deputy Leader, Corporate Support and External Affairs and Ms Amanda Beer, Director of Personnel and Development)

(1) The Committee had previously agreed the introduction of policies whereby the County Council had discretion over the level of payments made in specific areas where it was difficult to attract and retain staff. This report therefore provided an update on the latest trends and figures relevant to posts which attracted a market premium.

(2) RESOLVED that the report be noted.