

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held in the Council Chamber, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Wednesday, 8 March 2023.

PRESENT: Mrs S Prendergast (Vice-Chairman in the Chair), Mrs C Bell, Mrs S Chandler, Mr D Robey, Mr C Simkins, Dr L Sullivan and Mr B J Sweetland

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr R Smith (Corporate Director of Adult Social Care and Health), Mr P Royel (Director of HR & OD), Mr I Allwright (Employment Policy Manager), Ms M Flegg (Workforce Development Strategy Manager), Ms D Trollope (Head of Consultation and Engagement) and Mrs A Taylor (Scrutiny Research Officer)

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

47. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.

(Item 2)

Mr Simkins declared an interest that his daughter worked at a Kent School.

48. Minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 January 2023

(Item 3)

Paul Royel clarified that the appendices to the pay report provided greater clarity than the summary recommendation and that those staff employed at the top of KR11 will receive 4.5%.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2023 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

49. Workforce Profile Update

(Item 4)

1. Paul Royel introduced the update to the Annual Workforce report which contained information on changes in turnover across the County Council's workforce up to 31 January 2023.
2. The Annual Workforce report would be submitted to Personnel in June 2023 and it was hoped that by that time turnover would have reduced further, to within expected levels and that reporting could return to the usual structure.
3. Mr Royel responded to questions of detail and noted comments, which included the following:
 - a. Did the report include comparators from outside KCC? Intelligence on this should be available by the next meeting.

- b. Did turnover measure vacant posts? Turnover is calculated by the number of leavers from the workforce population; therefore any unfilled posts or current vacancies would not be included.

RESOLVED that Members note the content of the report.

50. Apprenticeships and Young People

(Item 5)

1. Michelle Flegg introduced this report which updated the Committee on the progress of the Apprenticeship agenda in KCC as well as other elements of the KCC Early Careers development programme.
2. Mrs Flegg responded to questions of detail and noted comments, which included the following:
 - a. How was the apprenticeship levy shared out and how was the apprenticeship scheme promoted? There was a link on kent.gov, a link on the government pledge site, word of mouth, forums, meetings, presentations. The scheme was well supported and there wasn't currently a need to further promote the scheme.
 - b. The graduate programme allowed individuals within the organisation to have opportunities to build a career path, there was a broad range of recruits joining KCC.

RESOLVED that the Personnel Committee note the contents of the report and endorse the further development of the KCC Early Careers Programme.

51. Staff Survey Results

(Item 6)

1. Paul Royel introduced this report and Diane Trollope gave a presentation to Members which was circulated to Members after the meeting.
2. Officers responded to questions of detail and noted comments, which included the following:
 - a. It was confirmed that there was a balanced response to the survey which covered all areas of the authority.
 - b. A work life balance was a wellbeing measure and should allow officers to 'switch off' from their job.
 - c. Mrs Trollope would confirm the questions asked around organisational objectives.
 - d. In relation to a question about protected characteristics Mrs Trollope explained that there was a need to take more action in relation to staff identifying with a disability and their wellbeing support and management action.
 - e. In relation to bullying – effective management action and core manager briefings were essential. Staff had a strong moral compass and there needed to be a zero-tolerance attitude towards bullying. This was found to be most difficult in external facing roles such as Children's and Adult's

Social Care where there was sometimes an acceptance that officers would be treated badly by customers – this had worsened since covid.

- f. In relation to flexible working/hotdesking arrangements KCC was currently looking at what was working and what was needed – teams were adapting and finding solutions which worked for them – this continued to be reviewed.

RESOLVED that Personnel Committee note progress and the presentation given at the meeting.

52. Exclusion of the Press and Public

(Item 7)

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)

53. Adult Social Care & Health - Top Tier Structure

(Item 9)

1. Paul Royel introduced this item which set out a proposal to delete the post of Strategic Commissioner and create a new post Director post in the Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) Directorate.
2. Richard Smith gave an outline of the proposals.
3. Mr Royel and Mr Smith responded to questions of detail and noted comments, which included the following:
 - a. Although the rationale for the proposal was understood further questions were asked about the remit of this person covering Children's Commissioning as well as Adult's and how the understanding of both areas would be maintained with a director sitting in the ASCH Directorate. Mr Smith confirmed that the Corporate Director of CYPE was supportive of this proposal.
 - b. A Member asked what KCC's overall change agenda was driven by. The officers confirmed that this proposal would maintain the improvements made to the procurement processes, governance and delivery of commercial procurement activity.
 - c. It was confirmed that accountability lines would be clear.
 - d. Concerns were raised about the geographical split of directors continuing in the ASCH Directorate, particularly given that the CYPE Directorate had just moved away from this.
 - e. The Cabinet Member confirmed that she considered this a positive move and replicated structures across the country.

RESOLVED that the Personnel Committee recommend to County Council:

- The deletion of the post of Strategic Commissioner;
- The introduction of a new Director of Adults and Integrated Commissioning.

Dr Sullivan asked that her abstention on this be noted in the minutes.

54. Pay Strategy

(Item 8)

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

1. Mr Royel introduced this report which set out an overview of the potential direction for the County Council's future grading and pay structure. Endorsement of the model was sought from Personnel Committee prior to more detailed work being undertaken. It was confirmed that any formal proposal would return to Personnel Committee before consideration by County Council.
2. Mr Allwright gave the Personnel Committee a presentation on the concept and proposals for KCC's pay structure beyond 2024. Broad and initial discussions had been had with the trade unions.
3. Mr Royel and Mr Allwright responded to questions of detail and noted comments which included the following:
 - a. How would performance be recognised? – members considered they would need to see more detail and have more understanding of the performance related pay options.
 - b. There were concerns around the transition and it was confirmed that any new model would not be introduced until April 2024, making 2024 a transition year to take effect from April 2025. There were concerns over the effect of consultation on staff given the unstable financial climate.
 - c. It was acknowledged that there were conflicting views on Total Contribution Pay (TCP).
 - d. Mr Royel confirmed that further details on the proposal would be submitted to Personnel Committee in November 2023/January 2024.

RESOLVED that Personnel Committee:

- Endorse the principles set out in the presentation taking into account the comments made by the committee during the meeting;
- Agree that a more detailed proposal for the Council's pay strategy be developed for further consideration at a future meeting before submission to the County Council.