

Employment & Appeals Committee – Meeting held on Tuesday, 20th June, 2017.

Present:- Councillors Sarfraz (Chair), N Holledge (Vice-Chair), Bedi, Brooker, M Holledge, R Sandhu and Sharif

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Bains

PART 1

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th April 2017

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th April 2017 be approved as a correct record.

3. Temporary Agency Staff Progress on Implementation and Baseline Monitoring

The Committee received an update on the Temporary Agency Staff contract with Matrix and the progress that was being made to reduce agency staff.

The annual spend was £6.5m which was gradually reducing, taking into account the transfer of staff back to the Council. In response to a query from Members at the last meeting about the position in the Wellbeing Directorate, it was confirmed that there had been a restructure of Adult Social Care and 18 staff had moved from temporary to permanent staff. It was noted that the Matrix contract had been extended by a year to provide time to assess the progress made in reducing agency staff and consider the best options for future arrangements.

Members discussed the management actions in place to continue to address concerns about agency spend and asked a number of specific questions which were responded to. The position regarding agency staff in education was raised and it was agreed that the next report to the Committee in October would include an update on the progress of recruiting more permanent staff in Education & Children's Services following the transfer from Cambridge Education.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the report was noted.

Resolved –

(a) That the report be noted.

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- (b) That the next report include an update on progress on the recruitment of permanent staff in Education & Children's Services following the transfer from Cambridge Education.

4. Smart Working Policy and Procedure

A report was considered that sought approval of the proposed new Smart Working Policy and Procedure which set out an approach to modern working practices such as hours, location and methods. The policy was the next stage of the Council's Accommodation and Hub Strategy and would use technology to maintain strong employee performance whilst also reducing office space.

Smart working could deliver a wide range of benefits to the Council including greater productivity, improved communication, reduced commuting time, fewer incidences of sickness and increased staff retention. Three types of working style had been identified – homeworker, local independent worker and office based worker. The policy and procedure was designed to support managers and staff assess the most suitable smart working arrangements for each individual's role.

Members raised a number of issues including whether performance management arrangements were strong enough to monitor staff working away from the office and the anticipated level of savings expected under the new approach. It was recognised that this would be a new way of working between managers and their staff with clear roles and outcomes agreed at the start of the process, supported by an operational agreement. Trust was a key part of the new approach and each role would be assessed individually. The IT solutions would also need to be agreed to support remote working and whilst there would be some costs arising from this, there were long term savings from digital transformation and a reduction in office space. In response to a question about how the policy would relate to temporary staff, it was noted that the potential flexibility was expected to help retain staff and reduce sickness.

After due consideration, the Committee approved the Smart Working Policy and Procedure as set out in the appendices to the report.

Resolved – That the Smart Working Policy and Procedure which supported the Council's Accommodation and Hub Strategy be approved.

5. Family Leave Policies and Procedures

The Committee considered a report that sought approval of the family leave policies and procedures which had been revised since the previous meeting to take account of the comments of Members on miscarriage and stillbirth. The policies and procedures recommended for approval were for Maternity; Paternity; and Parental Leave.

At its meeting on 12th April 2017, the Committee had generally welcomed the plans but had requested that the provisions relating to an employee who

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suffered from miscarriage or stillbirth be strengthened. The revised wording in the 'exceptional circumstances' sections of the Maternity and Paternity Policies and Procedures was explained. The guidance encouraged managers to take a sympathetic and lenient approach in such sad circumstances.

Members considered the revised wording of the recommended policies and sought clarification on a number of matters and it was confirmed that the documents complied with the legislative requirements. After due consideration, the Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave Policies and Procedures as set out in Appendices 1, 2 and 3 to the report were approved.

Resolved – That the Maternity, Paternity and Parental Leave Policies and Procedures be approved, including the revised wording in the Maternity Policy and Procedure which offered further guidance to managers in the event of an employee suffering a miscarriage or stillbirth.

6. Fleet Challenge - Pool Electric Car and E-Bike (Pilot Scheme)

The Environmental Management Officer introduced a report that updated Members on the Fleet Challenge Programme and the launch of the Pilot Electric Pool Car and E-bike Scheme in June 2017.

The Fleet Challenge Programme was a Council wide approach including community transport, grey fleet (staff vehicles used on council business); waste vehicles etc. which focused on reducing CO2 emissions and revenue spend on mileage claims whilst also promoting sustainable travel options. Employees generated almost a million business miles in the last year for which full statistics were available, which had high impacts in terms of carbon emissions and financial cost. A number of specific activities were planned to support the programme including increased use of pool electric vehicles, an e-bike scheme and hire car scheme for longer journeys. A Pilot Scheme for staff to use the pool of new electric car and bikes would be launched later in June and the operational procedures and guidance for the scheme were reviewed.

Members expressed support for the principle of the approach, and a number of practical issues were discussed including the controls in place for users who may have an accident history or not be fit to drive. It was responded that users would be required to complete a Driver Declaration Form, as set out fully in Appendix 4 to the report, which provided information on accident history, motoring offences and relevant medical issues. Checks were also made on driving licences before staff could access a pool car. A point was raised about the processes and potential sanctions in place if the Driver's Responsibilities detailed in paragraph 5.3.1 were breached. These included the use of mobile phones, restricting use to work purposes and leaving the vehicle in a clean condition. The Committee agreed the importance of highlighting the responsibilities of staff using the scheme and therefore requested that the potential sanctions and consequences for staff who

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failed to meet the agreed responsibilities under the scheme be made clear in the guidance and procedure documentation.

A number of others issues were discussed including the range of the electric vehicles, booking procedures, tracking systems and evaluation of the pilot. At the conclusion of the discussion, the update was noted.

Resolved – That the update on the Fleet Challenge Programme and the launch of the Pilot Electric Pool Car and E-bike Scheme in June 2017 be noted.

7. Appointment of Appeals Sub-Committee

The Committee considered a report on the establishment of an Appeals Sub-Committee. The terms of reference of the Sub-Committee were explained and the political group nominations to the Sub-Committee were reported. The establishment of a Sub-Committee on the terms of reference proposed was approved and the Members appointed to the Sub-Committee were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Appeals Sub-Committee be appointed for the 2017/18 Municipal Year.
- (b) That the terms of reference of the Sub-Committee be approved as set out in Appendix A to the report.
- (c) That seats be allocated to the Committee as shown in paragraph 5.1 of the report.
- (d) That the following Members be appointed to serve on the Sub-Committee in accordance with the wishes of the political groups, in respect of the seats allocated to them:

Sub-Committee	Seats	Labour	Conservative
Appeals Sub-Committee	5 (+ 5 deputies)	4 (+4) Brooker, M Holledge, N Holledge, Plenty (Rasib + 3 vacancies)	1 (+1) Smith (Vacancy)

8. Members' Attendance Record

Resolved – That the Members' Attendance Record be noted.

9. Date of Next Meeting - 24th October 2017

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 24th October 2017.

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10. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved – That the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the item in Part 2 of the Agenda, as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to individuals as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (amended).

The following is a summary of the matters considered during Part II of the agenda:

11. Proposed Senior Management Review

The Committee considered a report on a proposed review of senior management arrangements. The report had been considered by the Cabinet on 19th June and it had been agreed to proceed with the review.

Members commented on a number of aspects of the review including the rationale for the changes, proposed directorate structures, consultation arrangements and the timetable. The report was noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.00 pm)