

Minutes of a meeting of the **Employment Committee** held at the **New Council Chamber - Town Hall, Reigate** on **Thursday, 3 November 2022 at 7.30 pm.**

Present: Councillors ; V. H. Lewanski, J. S. Bray, P. Chandler, T. Schofield and M. Tary

Attended remotely: Councillors

Visiting Members present:

13 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence with all Members of the Committee in attendance.

14 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

15 Minutes of the Last Meeting

RESOLVED that the Minutes (public and exempt) of the meeting held on 19 July 2022 be approved and signed.

16 Hybrid working

The Interim Strategic Head of Corporate Resources provided the Committee with a verbal update on the hybrid working project. It was outlined that various phased reintroductions to the workplace had been completed with video meeting facilities in the Town Hall being provided and extended. Reception was open from 9am to 2pm every weekday with it being explored to extend this to 5pm daily. Whilst there was active encouragement to return to the workplace, this was not mandated. An asset review was being undertaken to better inform the progression of hybrid working policy as it was thought the Council no longer needed all its office space. The Managing Director highlighted the environmental and financial benefits of hybrid working as well as this allowing recruitment from a larger talent pool.

The Committee explored the extent of the return to the workspace with it being established that 40 – 60% of static staff were regularly working at one of the Council's sites. It was emphasised that it was for Heads of Service to determine the suitability of remote working depending on the needs of their service. It was noted that there had been no reduction in service levels as a result of hybrid working. Assurance was provided regarding resident accessibility to services – for example planning drop-ins were available, housing staff were onsite every working day from 9am to 5pm and all the Council's Community Centres were open as expected. Opening the Reception for



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longer would depend on this being established as the best use of resources with demand having shifted during the pandemic from face-to-face to contact by phone. The offices in reception were also being reconfigured to address staff safety issues.

RESOLVED: to note the verbal update on hybrid working.

17 Pay Policy Statement 2023/24

The Interim Strategic Head of Corporate Resources introduced the item. It was highlighted that the statement was required to be published in accordance with the Localism Act and was provided to the Committee in draft format for its comments. The figures (including the pay gap and chief officer remuneration) would be updated once these became available with the statement due to return to the Committee in its final format in January 2023 for recommendation to Council for approval.

The Committee explored if the ratios quoted within the consideration of the relationship between senior management pay and the pay of all other employees were correct. This was to be verified by Officers. It was also noted that there was a disparity between bonuses available to senior managers and all other staff. The Managing Director provided reassurance that this was being explored as part of the Financial Sustainability Programme and the workstream on pay scales and the bonus scheme.

RESOLVED: to note the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24.

18 Future Work Programme

The Committee considered its future work programme.

RESOLVED that the work programme as presented be accepted and implement for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year with the following amendments:

- The Pay Policy Statement would return to the Committee at its January 2023 meeting for recommendation for approval to Council in its final and not its draft format; and
- There would be no need for the Committee to give further consideration to the Pay Award for 2022/23 and therefore this item could be removed from the future work programme for the Committee's January 2023 meeting.

19 Exempt Business

RESOLVED to exclude members of the press and public from the meeting for this item of business under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that:

1. It involved the likely disclosure of information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or officer holders, under the authority; and
2. The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

20 EXEMPT: Pay Award 2022/23

The Managing Director provided the Committee with a verbal update on the 2022/23 Pay Award.

RESOLVED to note the verbal update provided by the Managing Director on the 2022/23 pay award.

21 EXEMPT: Pay Award 2023/24

The Managing Director provided the Committee with a verbal update on the 2023/24 Pay Award.

RESOLVED to note the verbal update and endorse the proposal for the 2023/24 award as outlined by the Managing Director.

22 EXEMPT: Financial Sustainability

The Managing Director provided the Committee with a verbal update on the Financial Sustainability Programme.

RESOLVED to note the verbal update provided by the Managing Director on the Financial Sustainability Programme.

The Chair returned the meeting to public session.

23 Any Other Urgent Business

There was no other urgent business for the meeting to consider.

The meeting finished at 8.54 pm