

BOROUGH OF REIGATE AND BANSTEAD

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at the Front Committee Room - Town Hall, Reigate on 20 June 2019 at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillors J. S. Bray, M. A. Brunt, C. M. Neame and T. Schofield (Substitute).

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor V.H. Lewanski be appointed Chair of the Employment Committee for the Municipal Year 2019/20.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor M.A. Brunt be appointed Vice-Chair of the Employment Committee for the Municipal Year 2019/20.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Employment Committee meeting held on 5 December 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed.

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor V.H. Lewanski, who was substituted by Councillor T. Schofield.

It was noted that Councillor M.A. Brunt, Vice Chair of the Committee, had therefore been appointed Chair for the meeting.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Pat Main, Interim Head of Finance and Assets, declared a pecuniary interest in Items 8 and 16 – Director Vacancy and Interim Section 151 Arrangements – as the perspective Interim Section 151 Officer.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

The Committee considered a report setting out the revised terms of reference, and membership, of the Employment Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The Responsibility for Functions for the Employment Committee, set out in Part 3a of the Council's Constitution, be noted.
- (ii) Procedure Rule 9 – Officer Employment, set out in Part 4 of the Council's Constitution, be noted.

- (iii) The membership of the Employment Committee for the 2019/20 Municipal Year, set out in Section 1 of the report from the Head of Legal and Governance, be noted.

7. MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE

The Chief Executive provided an introduction to the Management Team Update. It was noted that detailed information had been set out under agenda item 15 – Management Team Update (Exempt).

RESOLVED that the Management Team Update be noted.

8. DIRECTOR VACANCY AND INTERIM SECTION 151 ARRANGEMENTS

The Chief Executive introduced the report as presented to the Committee. It was noted the Director of Finance and Organisation position had been vacant since 13 April 2019. In response to questions, it was highlighted that the previous incumbent had originally joined the Council as the Head of Finance and Section 151 Officer. They had retained responsibility for these statutory duties when moving from Head of Service level to the Director position.

The Chief Executive explained that the Council was legally required to have a Section 151 Officer and the report set out options for interim arrangements whilst a permanent solution was worked through. The Committee was also informed that interim arrangements had been put in place to ensure key projects / pieces of work continued to be progressed.

Following the introduction from the Chief Executive, the Committee considered: relevant statutory powers; legal, financial, communication and equalities implications; consultation undertaken; policy framework considerations; and information from CIPFA in relation to the role of the Chief Finance Officer.

During the discussion, the Committee supported proposals for the Council's Statutory 151 responsibilities being moved from the Director position to Head of Service level. It was noted that this reflected previous arrangements and, by removing the statutory responsibilities from the Director role, it would widen significantly the potential number of professionals that would be able to apply for the Director role.

As set out in the report, the Committee noted an update in relation to recruitment to the permanent Head of Finance position and considered a number of matters in relation to the Director vacancy, including:

- The remit, job summary and person specification for the Director Position, including the Council's generic role profile set out at Annex 2 to the report;
- The recruitment timetable;
- The importance of reviewing the roles and responsibilities of the position to ensure the post holder was able to oversee delivery of service/business plans across the Directorate.

Following the Committee's discussion it was agreed that a Working Group should be established to allow further consideration of the remit, job summary and person

specification of the Director role. On conclusion of their work, the Working Group would report back to the Committee to assist officers recruit to the vacancy.

RECOMMENDED that Pat Main, Interim Head of Finance, be appointed as the Council's Interim Section 151 Officer for the period following their appointment, up to the permanent Section 151 Officer starting in their position.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) The statutory Section 151 responsibilities move from the Director of Finance and Organisation position, to the Head of Finance position.
- (ii) An Employment Working Group, consisting of Councillors C.M. Neame, V.H. Lewanski and T. Schofield, be established to work with officers during June and July 2019 to review and develop the remit, job summary and person specification of the Director role ahead of reporting back to the Committee in July 2019 so that plans could commence to recruit to the vacancy.

Note: Pat Main, Interim Head of Finance and Assets, left the room for consideration of the report.

9. PAY AWARD 2019/20 (UPDATE)

The Committee received a verbal update from the Head of Organisational Development. The Committee was informed that after extensive conversations with Unison and GMB Unions, which had been more protracted than usual, the 2019/20 Pay Award had been agreed. It was explained that backdated pay owing (from 1 April 2019) had been processed in time for June's payroll.

It was noted that the confirmed pay award included:

- A 2.1% consolidated pay increase to all staff (excluding those on pay freeze);
- A £250 non-consolidated one off payment to those staff on pay freeze;
- A minimum hourly pay rate for all positions to match the "real living wage" of £9 per hour (i.e. above the statutory minimum hourly pay rate).
- A future commitment from all parties to agree a longer term pay deal, rather than one discussed annually.

The positive engagement from all parties was highlighted and it was recognised that this collaboration had enabled the 2019/20 Pay Award to be mutually agreed.

The Head of Organisational Development explained that in addition to engaging with the recognised trade union organisations, the Council encouraged the reactivation of the Staff Association to serve the interests of staff who wanted to have a voice other than through membership of a trade union.

During the discussion a number of issue were considered, including:

- The Council's performance appraisal framework, which looked at individuals' performance across the year, including performance agreement objectives (targets), role profile and job summary accountabilities (tasks), behaviours and competencies.

- Matters in relation to performance related pay which included incremental pay scales and a bonus scheme.
- The Council's Total Reward Package (officers agreed to provide further information on this at a future meeting).
- Issues in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

In response to questions about the "real living wage" it was explained that this would increase the minimum hourly rate of pay for casual workers, those on the "worker scheme" and apprentices. In addition, the Head of Organisation provided an update on plans for the Council to become an accredited Living Wage Employer.

RESOLVED that the verbal update on the 2019/20 Pay Award be noted.

10. WORKFORCE DATA SUMMARY & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

The Head of Organisational Development introduced a report, providing information on the Council's workforce and approach to developing an Organisational Development Strategy.

As set out in the report, in order to provide excellent services to the community and to support the Council's vision, aims and values, it was recognised that the Council needed to understand, plan and develop its workforce requirements for the future. Further information, set out in Annex 1a and Annex 1b of the report, was provided to help the Committee better understand the makeup of the Council's workforce.

During the discussion a number of matters were considered, including issues in relation to: employee demographics; employee sickness absence; employee turnover (attrition); employee relations; and the gender pay gap. It was noted that this information would be discussed in more detail at future meetings and the Head of Organisational Development agreed to provide additional data on employee sickness in future reports.

The Committee agreed additional sickness information was required in order to ensure Members could understand long term and short term trends and to allow comparisons to be made across different service areas and employee demographics. In response to questions about benchmarking the Committee was informed that this information could be provided but would need to be done with care, especially given the number of different absence measures available and variety of definitions applied by different local authorities.

In terms of the Organisational Strategy, the diagram set out in Annex 2 to the report of the Head of Organisational Development was considered and it was noted that Organisational Development was a new, explicit area for the Council. In response to questions, it was explained that Organisational Development was defined as a systemic approach to improving organisational effectiveness – one that aligned strategy, people and processes. The suggested approach to Organisational Development would be discussed in more detail at a future meeting.

During the discussion the importance of employee engagement was highlighted and the Chief Executive explained that the Head of Organisational Development position had been created as part of an organisational structure review, carried out in 2018.

RESOLVED that the Workforce Data Summary and draft approach for the Organisational Development Strategy be noted.

11. EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MEMBER LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT BRIEFING

The Committee considered a briefing on Member Learning and Development. In response to questions the Monitoring Officer explained, following the Governance Task Group review and recommendations (Executive, 18 March 2019), Members of the Employment Committee were required to receive mandatory employment law training. The following points were noted:

- Training with a specialist had been arranged for 2 July 2019.
- A briefing paper had been provided, as part of the agenda published on 12 June 2019, which provided all Committee Members with relevant introductory information ahead of the first meeting of the Municipal Year.
- Mandatory training for the Employment Committee was recognised as a key mitigation factor for Members involved in employment issues relating to the Council.

It was also recognised that the briefing and wider training programme would help ensure the Council continued to support the development of a great work environment by ensuring equality and inclusion criteria for employment were understood by the Committee.

RESOLVED that the Employment Committee Member Learning and Development briefing be noted.

12. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Deputy Democratic Services Manager provided an update on the Committee's indicative work programme for the 2019/20 Municipal Year. During the discussion, the Committee agreed that:

- The Committee meeting on 10 July would start at 6.00pm.
- The third meeting of the Municipal Year would be rescheduled to take place on either Monday 29 July or Tuesday 30 July. It was noted that a time/date would be confirmed, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, outside of the meeting.
- The third meeting would include an item on Total Reward, covering all aspects of work that were of value to employees, including elements such as development opportunities and flexible working opportunities, in addition to the Council's wider pay, pension and benefits package.
- The updates in relation to the Director of Finance and Organisation Vacancy would be renamed Director Vacancy Updates.

RESOLVED that, subject to the additions, comments and amendments, referred to above, the items set out on the indicative work programme report be approved for consideration by the Committee during the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

13. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

14. EXEMPT BUSINESS

RESOLVED that members of the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for agenda items 15 and 16 under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that (i) it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act; and (ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

15. MANAGEMENT TEAM UPDATE (EXEMPT)

In response to questions, it was explained that agenda item 15 – Management Team Update (Exempt) – had been restricted to Members of the Committee only on the basis that it included personal and confidential information. The Monitoring Officer provided further information on the “need to know” principles and the restrictions to accessing Employment Committee information, set out in the Constitution, were noted.

RESOLVED that the exempt Management Team Update be noted.

16. DIRECTOR VACANCY AND INTERIM SECTION 151 ARRANGEMENTS (EXEMPT)

In response to questions, it was explained that agenda item 16 – Director Vacancy and Interim Section 151 Arrangements (Exempt) – had been restricted to Members of the Committee only on the basis that it included personal and confidential information. The Monitoring Officer provided further information on the “need to know” principles and the restrictions to accessing Employment Committee information, set out in the Constitution, were noted.

RESOLVED that the exempt information in relation to the Director Vacancy and Interim Section 151 Arrangements be noted.

Note: Pat Main, Interim Head of Finance and Assets, left the room for consideration of this information.

The Meeting closed at 7.16 pm