

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 30 September 2019 at 7.30 pm.

Present: Councillors V. H. Lewanski (Chair), J. S. Bray, S. McKenna, C. M. Neame and R. S. Turner (Substitute).

Also present: Councillor P. Harp.

39. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Employment Committee meeting held on 29 July 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed.

40. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M.A. Brunt (who was substituted by Councillor R. Turner).

41. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

42. UPDATE ON RECRUITMENT

The Chief Executive provided an update on the Director vacancy and the recruitment process for the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) position. The Head of Organisational Development was then invited to provide further information on the approach to recruitment/selection for the Director. It was noted that:

- The Employment Working Group, consisting of Councillors Lewanski, Neame and Schofield, had helped Officers to create a job summary and person specification for the Director of Organisation (Corporate Services).
- An external agency had been appointed to help source appropriate passive and active job candidates.
- Targeted social media would be used to assist with recruitment.

In addition, a wide range of issues were considered in relation to the importance of candidates understanding the Council's culture, vision and values, application by CV, competency based interview questions and the use of various assessment tools.

In response to questions about the selection process, the Head of Organisational Development explained that short listing would take place during an assessment day. It was noted that this would include a panel interview with officers, chaired by the Chief Executive, a presentation, informal meetings with Directors and Heads of Service, a tour of the Town Hall, and an informal meeting with Employment

Committee Members. Following the conclusion of each of these activities (including feedback from Members and Officers) it was confirmed that appointable candidates would be invited to meet formally with the Employment Committee. It was highlighted that this would take place a week or so after the assessment day, with times/dates to be finalised outside of the meeting in consultation with the Chair of the Employment Committee.

As set out in Procedure Rule 9 of the Constitution it was noted, due to the Director of Organisation (Corporate Services) being a direct report to the Chief Executive, that the Employment Committee (taking into account the advice of the Head of Paid Service) was responsible for confirming the appointment.

In terms of the selection process for the Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) it was agreed that the same format should be used as set out above for the Director of Organisation (Corporate Services). However, it was recognised that the appointment of Head of Finance was the responsibility of the Chief Executive and that full Council, on recommendation of the Employment Committee, was responsible for considering whether the candidate was suitable to be appointed as Section 151 Officer.

RESOLVED that the update in relation to the approach to recruitment/selection for the Director of Organisation (Corporate Services) and Head of Finance (Section 151 Officer) positions be noted.

43. FUTURE WORKFORCE REQUIREMENTS

The Chief Executive provided the Committee with an update on the Council's future workforce requirements. It was highlighted that workforce planning had become more complicated in recent years due to the operational environment in which it took place. The Committee was informed that in addition to budgetary cuts arising from central government austerity measure, the situation had already become more complicated. For example, in relation to outsourcing services, sharing services and partnership working, new delivery models and the need to join up with services in other parts of the public and/or private sector.

During the discussion, a wide range of issues were considered. These were in relation to ensuring the Council's workforce was suitable, and had the ability and skills required, to deliver objectives set out in the draft Corporate Plan 2020-2025 and emerging strategies such as the Housing Delivery Strategy, and work that was taking place to enable the Council to operate as an increasingly commercial organisation and in relation to tackling climate change and reducing the borough's environmental impact.

The assessment of salary costs in relation to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and Service and Financial Planning was also discussed. This included consideration of base budget growth proposals for 2020/21 and fixed term roles funded through the Corporate Plan Delivery Fund. It was noted that further information in relation to these proposals would be set out in the provisional budget proposals report (Service and Financial Planning 2020/21) which would be considered by the Executive on 7 November 2019.

RESOLVED that the update from the Chief Executive in relation to the Council's future workforce requirements be noted.

44. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Deputy Democratic Services Manager provided an update on the Committee's work programme for the 2019/20 Municipal Year. During the discussion the Committee suggested, subject to diary availability, that future meetings could take place during the day. It was noted that times/dates for future meetings would be confirmed outside of the meeting.

RESOLVED that the items of future business, set out on the work programme presented, be endorsed.

45. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

None.

46. EXEMPT BUSINESS

RESOLVED that members of the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting for agenda item 9 – Pay and Award Update (Exempt) – 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 3 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.

Clerk's note: Councillor Peter Harp left the meeting at 8.25pm on conclusion of this item.

47. PAY AWARD UPDATE (EXEMPT)

The Committee received a verbal update from the Director of People concerning the Council's pay award for 2020/21, which also included options for future years. During the discussion a wide range of issues were considered, including:

- The Council's current and future financial position;
- Matters concerning budget setting and the pay negotiations cycle;
- An update on negotiations following recent pay award discussions with the Unions (Unison and GMB);
- The role of the Staff Association;
- Actions that were being taken to support the Local Government Association's "Work Local" campaign;
- Matters concerning Brexit and the lack of certainty across the wider economy;
- Pay modelling options; and
- Data in relation to pay benchmarking;

Various issues concerning the assessment of salary costs in relation to the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and Service and Financial Planning were also considered.

It was highlighted that the Pay Award Update (Exempt) had been restricted to Members of the Committee only. The Committee was provided with 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 Pay Award Update (Exempt) provided by the Director of People be noted.

The Meeting closed at 8.40 pm