



## Staffing Committee

Minutes of the meeting held at County Hall, Colliton Park,  
Dorchester, DT1 1XJ on Monday, 28 January 2019

**Present:**

Peter Wharf (Chairman)  
Hilary Cox, Ray Bryan and Rebecca Knox

Officers Attending: Grace Evans (Monitoring Officer), Melissa Craven (Communications Lead - Children's Services), Paul Loach (HR and OD Business Partner), David Patrick (Senior HR&OD Adviser), Sheralyn Towner (HR Specialist Services Lead) and Fiona King (Senior Democratic Services Officer).

(Notes:(1) These minutes have been prepared by officers as a record of the meeting and of any decisions reached. This is the last planned meeting of this Committee before the start of the new Dorset Council on 1 April 2019. The minutes will therefore be confirmed and signed by the Chairman prior to 31 March 2019.

(2) **RECOMMENDED** in this type denotes that County Council approval is required.)

### Apologies for Absence

1 An apology for absence was received from Janet Dover.

### Code of Conduct

2 There were no declarations by members of disclosable pecuniary interests under the Code of Conduct.

### Minutes

3 The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2018 were confirmed and signed.

#### **Matters Arising:-**

Minute 62 – Headcount and FTE Figures and Non-Directly Employed Contract Workforce – Quarter 2 2018/19

The HR Specialist Services Lead advised that members had been emailed with the information regarding the increase in consultancy spend.

Minute 63 – Management of Attendance 2018/19 – Quarter 2 (July 2018 to September 2018)

The Chairman advised the Committee that he and the Chief Executive had agreed that appreciation of the work being done by staff to maintain essential work as well as LGR had been provided in the most recent Chief Executive Blog.

It was also noted that an update on the sickness in respect of Passenger Transport Assistants was included in the Management of Attendance report to be considered later on the agenda.

### Public Participation

4 Public Speaking

There were no public questions received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(1).

There were no public statements received at the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 21(2).

Petitions

There were no petitions received at the meeting in accordance with the County Council's Petition Scheme.

**LGR Update**

- 5 The Leader of the Council felt that members were very up to date with the LGR programme and noted that it was now moving towards a busier state of affairs with the main budget issue coming up in February 2019. There was more Task and Finish Group work happening especially in respect of convergence. The Governance workstream was now looking at the implementation of the Constitution.

The Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee was fairly busy, with different enquiries being made in respect of the different workstreams.

She highlighted that attendance could be an issue over the next couple of months, and her message to Lead Members, members of Cabinet, Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen was to be as visible as possible in the coming weeks.

The Chairman of the Council highlighted that as she would not be re-standing in the forthcoming Election, but that she would be in place as Chairman until 6 May 2019 and would attend the first meeting of the new authority in order to complete the hand over. The Leader felt it might be helpful if there were some other senior members who were not standing again but remained as councillors that had the expertise which could be really helpful over the coming weeks.

Noted**Management of Attendance 2018/19 - Quarter 3 (October to December 2018)**

- 6 The Committee considered a report by the Service Director for Organisational Development which highlighted that DCC sickness absence remained below the average for local authorities although there had been a quarterly rise in absence from 7.7 to 8.3 days per person.

The HR&OD Business Partner highlighted the fluctuations between the quarters but advised the Council was still well below the CIPD average rate figures of sickness in local authorities.

Members' attention was drawn to the fact that three quarters of mental health absences were non-work related, and the extent of support available. The Chairman noted the improved recognition of mental health in the council and workplace.

On availability of facilities for staff suffering with stress during LGR, the HR&OD Business Partner advised that there was a range of support on offer which included counselling, cognitive behaviour therapy, the five steps to wellbeing courses and also resilience training. A career gateway software had been launched to employees and initial feedback had been very positive. Occupational Health services continued to be available and were well used.

The HR&OD Business Partner highlighted the update on sickness management in the Dorset Travel Team. An improved sickness management process was now in place and it was hoped to see reduced sickness absence in the team in future.

One member expected the figure of 8.3 sickness days per person would be higher when winter conditions were coming on. In respect of the role of the Passenger Transport Assistant, the member had recently spent some time with employees to understand the job. He felt the Council needed to be aware of the difficulties and pressures for these staff not just short term but long term going forward to the new

Council.

In response to a question about whether there could be any distinction made between work and non-work related musculoskeletal absences the HR&OD Business Partner advised he would take this back to occupational health to see if this could be achieved. The Chairman added this would be an important area of discussion with the new Council going forward.

In respect of random testing on drink and drugs the HR&OD Business Partner confirmed that this had been in place for a couple of years for those in safety critical roles.

**Noted**

**Mid Year Performance and Development Review (PDR) Completion 2018**

7 The Committee considered a report by the Service Director for Organisational Development which highlighted that as of November 2018 PDR completion rates stood at 90% compared with 65% in 2014. Members were advised that it was not feasible to achieve 100% as employees left and joined during the year and some were absent during the time of the PDR discussion.

The HR & OD Business Partner highlighted an issue with Public Health, that they had arranged PDRs but did not enter them into the system. Members accepted assurance that 100% of their PDRs had been completed but highlighted the importance of inputting the information into the system as the data only showed that 35% had been completed.

The Monitoring Officer made reference to the low number of PDRs completed in Legal Services and advised members that part of reason was maternity leave, long term sickness absences and a high number of new starters on probation. There were 4 teams in legal services and each of the team members had monthly 1:1 meetings with their line managers. Two of the teams had 100% completion at full year and also at mid-year and two teams had 100% completion as at April 2018 but less at mid-year. All PDRs were now in the calendar for this year. The importance of conducting and recording PDRs would be highlighted to staff. There may possibly have been some errors in inputting some of the data which was currently being reviewed.

The HR & OD Business Partner highlighted the substantial progress made with PDRs over the past few years. Officers had seen a big change in the last 4 years in respect of the quality of PDRs and the survey found that employees did find the process helpful. He added that the quality of the relationship between the employee and their manager was key to performance.

The Leader of the Council highlighted the importance of embedding the process in the development of staff going forward to the new Council. She felt it was important to set a realistic achievable target for PDRs. Members agreed that 95% would be doing really well.

**Noted**

**Gender Pay Gap Report 2018**

8 The Committee considered a report from the Chief Executive which provided a short overview of the requirement together with the proposed Gender Pay Gap Report for publication in March 2019.

The Senior HR&OD Adviser highlighted the interpretation of the data and drew members' attention to the infographics contained in the Appendix of the report.

The Chairman highlighted that whilst there was no requirement for the report to be approved by the County Council he felt it was appropriate for it to be presented at the last County Council meeting on 28 March 2019.

**RECOMMENDED**

That the Gender Pay Gap report be presented to the County Council on 28 March 2019 to note.

**Resolved**

That the Gender Pay Gap Report for 31 March 2018 be approved.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that the council was compliant in respect of the gender pay gap reporting duty.

**Redundancy Costs - Quarterly Report**

9 The Committee considered a report from the Service Director Organisational Development which provided the costs for dismissals effective from 1 October to 31 December (Quarter 3).

The HR Specialist Services Lead highlighted the total cumulative costs associated with redundancy dismissals effective from October to December 2018 and highlighted that the general rule of payback was 24 months.

Following a question from the Leader of the Council regarding the payments that had been made, the HR Services Lead advised that all payments made had been in line with County Council policies.

In response to a question about what was happening in other areas of the authority in respect of any potential restructurings, the HR Specialist Services Lead advised that reviews had been going on around the Council but were not necessarily reported on in this quarter.

**Noted**

**Pay Policy Statement 2019/20**

10 The Committee considered a report from the Chief Executive which set out the County Council's Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2019/20. Members were advised that whilst the new Dorset Council would be established on 1 April 2019, legal advice recommended that notwithstanding the abolishment of Dorset County Council, a Pay Policy Statement for 2019/20, published in 2019, should still be produced.

The HR Specialist Services Lead highlighted the reason for the reduction in the pay multiple based on FTE salaries was that the salary of the recently recruited Chief Executive in post on 1 January 2019 which was slightly lower than the previous incumbent.

**RECOMMENDED**

That the County Council be asked to approve the Pay Policy Statement.

Reason for recommendation

The Staffing Committee oversee matters relating to staff terms and conditions.

**Temporary arrangements for covering the role of Monitoring Officer and Service Director Organisational Development**

11 **For this item the Monitoring Officer left the room**

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Executive which outlined the

arrangements for covering the statutory duty of Monitoring Officer for the County Council and the role of Service Director, Organisational Development, following the Monitoring Officer commencing his new role in facilitating the creation of the new Dorset Council.

As the next County Council meeting was not until 28 March 2019 the Chief Executive advised he had used his powers of urgency to address the issue of appointing a Monitoring Officer. He then advised members that he wished to add a further recommendation to avoid the use of urgency powers again in case there was a need to approve and arrange temporary cover for existing senior management and leadership roles which were required prior to 31 March 2019.

The Chairman made reference to the support received with this item from the Leader of the Liberal Democrat party and the Leader of the Green party for which he was most grateful.

The Vice-Chairman noted that whilst the Chairman would be actively involved in any such issues if they arose, it would be helpful for all members of the Staffing Committee to be appraised of any further senior management or leadership changes.

### **RECOMMENDED**

That the County Council be asked to note the exercise of urgency powers by the Chief Executive to appoint a Statutory Monitoring Officer for the County Council.

### **Resolved**

1. That the temporary cover arrangements for the Service Director, Organisational Development, be approved, albeit retrospectively.
2. That delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for HR and Workforce and the relevant Cabinet Member for the service area concerned, to approve and arrange temporary cover for existing senior management and leadership roles which are required prior to 31 March 2019.

### **Reason for Decisions**

To facilitate the establishment of Dorset Council by the early release of the current post holder into the new role. To provide cover for the Council's statutory role of Monitoring Officer and the vacant role of Service Director, Organisational Development from 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2019.

### **Questions from County Councillors**

- 12 No questions were asked by members under Standing Order 20(2).

Meeting Duration: 10.00 am - 11.25 am