

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE HELD ON
TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2014 AT 7.30 P.M IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WEELEY**

Present: Councillors R Callender (Chairman), Griffiths (Vice-Chairman), Amos, C Callender, Calver, Chapman, Colbourne, Heaney, J Henderson, S A Honeywood, Richardson and Tracey.

Also Present: Councillors P B Honeywood, McWilliams and Mitchell.

In Attendance: Chief Executive (Ian Davidson), Human Resources Manager (Anastasia Simpson), Senior Human Resources Generalist (Emma Horne), Workforce Development Manager (Stuart Brian) and Senior Democratic Services Officer (Ian Ford).

16. SILENT TRIBUTE

All persons present paid a silent tribute to the memory of the late Councillor Mitch Mitchell, the late Chairman of the Committee.

17. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE

Following the death of its previous Chairman, the late Councillor Mitch Mitchell, the Committee gave consideration to electing its Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year.

It was moved by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Amos and:

RESOLVED that Councillor R Callender be elected the Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

In the light of the fact that there was now a vacancy in the office of Vice-Chairman of the Committee, it was then moved by Councillor R Callender, seconded by Councillor Heaney and:

RESOLVED that Councillor Griffiths be appointed the Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Broderick.

19. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 15 October 2013 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Further to the Committee's decision to adopt the Reservists' Policy at its last meeting, the Chief Executive informed the Committee that the Council had, on this day, received a Certificate of Recognition as being a supportive employer of armed forces' reservists. The certificate was awarded on behalf of the Secretary of State for Defence.

The Chairman and Members congratulated the Officers.

20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Griffiths declared a non-pecuniary interest in respect of item A.4 of the Report of the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) – Time Off and Facilities Time Agreement insofar as he was a GMB union works convenor at his employer.

The Human Resources Manager advised Councillor Griffiths that he would not have to withdraw from the meeting as the Council's agreement was with UNISON.

21. REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR (CORPORATE SERVICES)**A.1 Staff Survey and Investor in People 2013**

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services), which presented to the Committee details of the findings of:

- (a) The recent staff survey and pulse survey undertaken by Dr Martin Reddington in conjunction with the Local Government Association; and
- (b) The Investor in People (IiP) assessment undertaken by Mr David Abdul on behalf of EMB Excellence Limited and IiP UK.

The Chief Executive reported the key findings of the staff survey and pulse survey which included:

- The Council had a committed workforce, investing time, energies and concentration to get the job done;
- There was a sense of pride within the workforce with high job engagement and efficacy; and
- Commitment at a team level was ranked high with most respondents reporting good conversations and dialogue with their managers.

The Chief Executive also reported that in November 2013 the Council had been re-assessed for IiP accreditation and had again been awarded Bronze status for a further three years and had come within two points of achieving Silver status. Mr Abdul's feedback had highlighted, amongst other things, a willingness of staff to get things done, take fresh approaches, take more ownership of their job and that the Council was well placed to deliver some exciting projects around sea defences, addressing deprivation and increasing council housing stock. Staff had also been complimentary about the Council's future direction, change management, values, improvements, review of services, achieving affordable excellence and securing their futures. Staff were increasingly innovative, flexible, professional and committed to delivering excellent services.

In addition, the Chief Executive informed the Committee that Mr Abdul was urging the Council to seek Gold status at its next IiP assessment in November 2016 and would work with the Management Team to try to achieve this. To that end the Chief Executive undertook to submit an action plan to the Committee at a future meeting.

Whilst anecdotal in nature the Chief Executive felt that comments made by Mr Kevin Sutcliffe of Marlborough Training and Consultancy were worthy of mention in the context of this report on external feedback. Members were reminded that a few years ago Mr Sutcliffe had delivered a large scale management development programme for the Council over an 18 month period and he had got to know the Council very well. Recently, he had been back providing a short project management programme and he was currently delivering our management development programme. Mr Sutcliffe had commented to the Workforce Development Manager on several occasions that the "feel of the place" was very

different now with the delegates he had met being more engaged, more positive and more “go-ahead”.

Councillor Tracey drew the Committee's attention to Dr Reddington's feedback that “...it was also evident that the Chief Executive's personal investment in listening to employees' concerns and articulating a vision for the future of the organisation had a discernible beneficial impact...”

Councillor Calver congratulated the staff on achieving the liP award and stressed how very difficult it was to even achieve Bronze status.

It was moved by Councillor Tracey, seconded by Councillor Heaney and:

RESOLVED that

- (a) the contents of the report be noted;
- (b) the Chief Executive, senior managers, the Human Resources section and the staff are congratulated on the distance the Council has come in its response to the massive organisational change it has undergone; and
- (c) an appropriate press release be issued.

A.2 Pay Policy Statement 2014/2015

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services), which presented to the Committee the proposed Pay Policy statement for 2014/2015.

The Committee was advised that Section 38(1) of the Localism Act 2011 required local authorities to produce a pay policy statement and that those matters which were required to be included in the statutory Pay Policy Statement were as follows:

- A local authority's policy on the level and elements of remuneration for each Chief Officer.
- A local authority's policy on the remuneration of its lowest-paid employees (together with its definition of “lowest-paid employees” and its reasons for adopting that definition).
- A local authority's policy on the relationship between the remuneration of its Chief Officers and other Officers.
- A local authority's policy on other aspects of Chief Officers' remuneration: remuneration on recruitment increases and additions to remuneration, use of performance related pay and bonuses, termination payments and transparency.

The Committee was made aware that the three years without a national pay award had been particularly difficult for staff employed on the lower pay bands within the Council. Last year the Council had removed three spinal column points on the pay bands (points 4-6), so that the starting salary would be £12,915 per annum for full time employees commencing at the lowest salary scale. This year it was proposed that a further spinal column point (point 7) be removed so that the pay band would commence at spinal column point 8, which was £13,321 per annum for full time employees. The cost of that change would be £16,820 (£7,320 for contracted staff and £9,500 for casual staff). UNISON had been consulted and was very supportive of the Council's incremental approach to raising the lowest salary scale.

The Committee was further made aware that the Pay Policy Statement needed to be approved by the Council before the end of March 2014.

At the request of Councillor Calver, the Chief Executive undertook to bring a report to the Committee in due course which would examine whether the Council could implement the "Living Wage" in its salary scales and whether this would lead to issues of affordability.

It was moved by Councillor Tracey, seconded by Councillor C Callender and:

RESOLVED that

- (a) the Pay Policy Statement 2014/15, as set out in Appendix A to item A.2 of the Report of Corporate Director (Corporate Services), be approved and forwarded to Council for its consideration, at its meeting to be held on 25 March 2014; and
- (b) costs will be met from existing salary/vacancy provision within budgets.

A.3 Sickness Update

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services), which presented the Committee with an update on sickness absence trends within the Council.

At the request of Councillor Tracey, the Chief Executive undertook to report a "sensitivity analysis" of pressure points within the Council to a future meeting of the Committee

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the contents of the report be noted; and
- (b) the Committee continues to monitor sickness and receive a regular update from the Human Resources Manager.

A.4 Time Off and Facilities Time Agreement

The Committee was aware that Councillor Griffiths had previously declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item, as detailed in minute 20 above.

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services), which sought the Committee's approval to update the Council's Time Off and Facilities Agreement for Trade Union Duties and Activities. The previous document had been produced in 2002 and following legislative and structural changes within the organisation, UNISON and Human Resources had jointly revised and updated the policy to reflect current working practices.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the Time Off and Facilities Agreement for Trade Union Duties and Activities, as detailed at Appendix A to item A.4 of the Report of Corporate Director (Corporate Services), be adopted with immediate effect; and
- (b) the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) be authorised to update the Agreement with any future legislative and/or best practice changes.

A.5 No Smoking Policy

There was submitted a report by the Corporate Director (Corporate Services), which presented to the Committee a proposed updated No Smoking Policy.

The Committee was advised that:

- The Health Act 2006 had required that all work places be smoke free by 1 July 2007, however, the legislation had not included electronic cigarettes;
- This Council had introduced a No Smoking policy in June 2007;
- The use of electronic cigarettes had increased since the mid- 2000s through increased marketing and online sales as an aid to reducing or quitting smoking;
- Guidance from the British Medical Association (BMA) stated that there was no evidence that electronic cigarettes were safe or effective and they had advised prohibiting them in the workplace as second hand exposure to the vapour exhaled by the user undermined smoking preventions and cessation; and
- The revised policy therefore included a ban on electronic cigarettes being used in this Council's workplaces.

RESOLVED that:

- (a) the revised No Smoking Policy, as detailed at Appendix A to item A.5 of the Report of Corporate Director (Corporate Services), be adopted with immediate effect; and
- (b) the Corporate Director (Corporate Services) be authorised to update the Policy with any future legislative and/or best practice changes.

22. ANY OTHER ITEMS THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

There were none.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.07 p.m.

Chairman