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Human Resources and Council Tax
Committee

23 October 2019

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES AND COUNCIL TAX
COMMITTEE,
HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 23RD OCTOBER, 2019 AT 7.30 PM
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - COUNCIL OFFICES, THORPE ROAD, WEELEY,
CO16 9AJ**

Present:	Councillors Chapman (Chairman), Griffiths (Vice-Chairman), Amos, Calver, Clifton, King, Morrison and M Stephenson
In Attendance:	Martyn Knappett (Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Services)), Anastasia Simpson (Head of People, Performance and Projects), Carol Magnus (Organisational Development Manager), Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager & Deputy Monitoring Officer), Katie Wilkins (Human Resources and Business Manager) and Leanne Thornton (Safer Communities Manager)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Broderick (with Councillor King substituting), Chittock (with no substitute) and S Honeywood (with Councillor Amos substituting).

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee, held on Wednesday 20 February 2019, be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

For the record and as a point of information, Councillor Griffiths reminded the Committee that he was a member of the GMB union and a Shop Steward but not at Tendring District Council.

4. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 38

There were none on this occasion.

5. APPRENTICESHIPS AND CAREER TRACK

The Committee received a verbal update from the Organisational Development Manager (Carol Magnus) regarding Apprenticeships and Career Track. The information presented to the Committee included apprenticeship statistics, learning programmes, marketing and promotional activities, recent external appraisals and detail of apprentices that had secured permanent employment or had gone on to university following the completion of their learning programme.

Members raised questions which were responded to by the Organisational Development Manager, as appropriate.

The Committee noted the foregoing.

**6. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CORPORATE SERVICES) - A.1 -
LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTORS IN PEOPLE UPDATE**

There was submitted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Services) (A.1) presented to the Committee by the Organisational Development Manager (Carol Magnus) which provided it with an update on Learning and Development activity during 2018/19 and the Investors in People Gold Assessment.

Learning and Development Activity

It was reported that throughout the financial year 2018/19 a number of new courses had been centrally organised as part of the Organisation Development function. One of the main areas for attention had been that of giving more junior or less experienced staff skills training on note-taking, report writing and handling conflict.

Priorities during this period had included increasing the Authority's understanding of, and support for, mental health related issues which had culminated in the organisation signing the Time To Change Pledge in January 2019. A significant focus had been on preparing staff to work more flexibly and with greater autonomy. Two programmes had been key to this: InDependence and Managing Remote Teams. All courses had been delivered by external providers working very closely with the Organisational Development Manager and the HR Operations Manager on design, development and content. The InDependence programme had been designed and developed by the Organisational Development Manager with input from an organisation psychologist. The workshops had then been delivered by a team of six internal managers who had been trained in how to deliver the programme. Initial feedback reaction to this programme had been positive and a further evaluation was being developed to assess how the learning had enhanced practice within the workplace.

The Committee was also made aware that the staff sponsorship programme continued to be well-used and the principle of 'grow our own' was well-established. Currently there were two staff studying a degree to become planners, one was undertaking a degree in IT. All staff in receipt of sponsorships were meeting or exceeding the minimum requirements of their course and a number were on target to achieve distinctions. Recently three staff had completed degrees and all had gained a First. Those subjects were Environmental Health, Planning and Building Surveying.

In addition, via the new Apprenticeship route five staff were currently undertaking degrees - one in Management, two in Building Surveying and two in IT.

Members noted that additional development of staff for their specific technical areas of expertise as part of ongoing continuous professional development was identified and organised by their respective departmental managers.

In addition, the organisation's e-learning platform had been completely re-designed and updated. A 'soft' roll out was currently underway.

Investors in People

Members recalled that in December 2015 the Council had been assessed against the Investor in People Gold standard and had achieved IIP Gold accreditation. Since that time the Council had had to undertake a process of moving across from the Generation 5 to Generation 6 IIP standards. That process had included a review of the benchmarking evidence and the new standards and award process were substantially different.

In summary the new standard was as follows:

- (1) High Performing;
- (2) Advanced;
- (3) Established; and
- (4) Developed.

The Committee was made aware that the Council needed to ensure that the majority of evidence presented as part of the Re-Assessment process was in the Advanced category in order to maintain Gold Status.

Members were informed that in December 2018 the Council had been formally assessed against the new Standards. This had been a more exacting process than the previous system as it included not only interviews but also results from an all staff survey.

In Spring 2019 it had been confirmed that this Council had retained its Gold Status. This was an excellent achievement against a tough benchmark and was a demonstrable sign that the Council continued to develop and support its staff at all levels. The Council had then received a report on the findings. This had been extremely positive overall and on 26th March 2019 the Leader of the Council had announced at Cabinet that the organisation had been assessed and had retained its Gold Award.

The Committee was informed that as with any good report it had also provided recommendations for next steps, many of which were already in hand. They included:-

- *Further work to develop great leaders, e.g. aspiring leaders and 3rd /4th tier managers*
- *Address slippage in 1:1s and team meetings*
- *Staying ahead of the change curve having a clear vision for economic growth and prosperity*
- *Consider another IIP survey in December 2019 to confirm improvements and outcomes, following Transformation*
- *Embed succession planning at Tier 1 and 2 levels*
- *Develop communications plan for all Council activities*
- *Celebrating achievements and PR*
- *Make the most of every possible opportunity regarding the Transformation Programme work streams – people, channel shift, digitisation, accommodation*
- *Continually review how the organisation recognises and rewards people.*

Members raised questions which were responded to by the Head of People, Performance and Projects (Anastasia Simpson) and the Organisational Development Manager (Carol Magnus).

Having considered the contents of the report:-

It was moved by Councillor Calver, seconded by Councillor Griffiths and:-

RESOLVED, that the contents of the report be noted, with the Committee's thanks and appreciation.

7. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CORPORATE SERVICES) - A.2 - STAFF HANDBOOK

There was submitted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Services) (A.2), presented to the Committee by the Head of People, Performance and Projects (Anastasia Simpson) which informed it that a number of minor amendments had been made to the Staff Handbook in order to reflect structural changes within the organisation and to incorporate updates to other key corporate policies and legislation.

Members were informed that the purpose of the Staff Handbook was to provide an employee with a guide to both the Council and the terms and conditions affecting their contract of employment. It comprised five main parts:

- Terms and Conditions
- Remuneration and Benefits
- Core Policies and Procedures
- Policies and Guidelines
- Career Development

It was felt that the updated Staff Handbook would ensure that the Council maintained its high standard of employment practices and remains an employer of choice.

The Committee was advised that though the production and upkeep of the Staff Handbook was delegated to the Head of People, Performance & Projects in conjunction with the Deputy Chief Executive it had been considered that the new Members of the Committee might find the presentation of this document useful, in terms of their introduction to staffing matters within the Council. A copy of the Staff Handbook was before Members as an Appendix to the Officer's report.

Members raised questions which were responded by the Deputy Chief Executive (Martyn Knappett) and the Head of People, Performance and Projects (Anastasia Simpson).

Having considered the contents of both the report and the Staff Handbook:-

It was moved by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor M Stephenson and:-

RESOLVED, that -

- (a) the contents of both the report and the Staff Handbook be noted; and

- (b) in view of the concerns expressed as to hours potentially worked the Head of People, Performance and Projects be requested to review Section 36 (Election Duties) of the Staff Handbook.

8. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CORPORATE SERVICES) - A.3 - SAFEGUARDING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

There was submitted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Services) (A.3) presented to the Committee by the Community Safety Manager (Leanne Thornton) which submitted to the Committee the revised 'Safeguarding Policy and Procedures'.

The Committee was informed that the existing Safeguarding Policy had last been reviewed in November 2017. Since then there had been significant changes across the safeguarding agenda and the Safeguarding Policy and Procedures had therefore been significantly updated in line with the Southend, Essex & Thurrock (SET) Safeguarding Guidelines for both Children and Adults.

In addition at the back of the revised policy there were procedures so staff knew when there was an immediate Safeguarding risk and when the risk was not immediate and also a procedure for allegations against staff. Also included was a new Safeguarding Reporting Form so staff could download the form and send it through for triage if they had a concern but did not want to raise an incident to Essex County Council direct without it being noted internally first.

Members were advised that in reviewing and updating the Policy, it was important that the Council could demonstrate a commitment to how it thought and acted in relation to safeguarding concerns and incidents in the workplace but also ensure that employees were supported when they raised a Safeguarding Concern. By adding in the new reporting form and quick guide all staff and Members should know how and when to raise a concern.

Members raised questions which were responded to by Officers.

Having considered the contents of both the report and the revised Safeguarding Policy and Procedures attached as an appendix to the Officer's report:-

It was moved by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor M Stephenson and:-

RESOLVED that the Deputy Chief Executive be requested to investigate the appropriateness and practicalities of introducing DBS checks for all Members of Tendring District Council (such as the budgetary and legal ramifications) and that the outcome of such investigations be reported to a future meeting of the Council (having first been submitted to the Standards Committee for its recommendations) for its consideration and determination.

It was then moved by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Clifton and:-

RESOLVED that –

- (a) the updated Safeguarding Policy and Procedures be formally adopted; and

- (b) the Head of People, Performance and Projects be authorised to amend the Policy in order to incorporate legislative changes or best practice updates.

9. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CORPORATE SERVICES) - A.4 - STAFFING STATISTICS REPORT

There was submitted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Services) (A.4) presented to the Committee by the Human Resources and Business Manager (Katie Wilkins), which provided the Committee with updated and current staffing statistics including:

- (1) Number of Staff Employed – Full-Time and Part-Time;
- (2) Gender Profile (including Gender Pay Gap figures);
- (3) Age Profile;
- (4) Disability Profile;
- (5) Ethnicity Profile; and
- (6) Sickness Absence (information was included on the management procedures and preventative action taken together with the sources of support available for staff).

Officers responded to questions raised by Members on various topics and where an answer was not immediately available, the Human Resources and Business Manager undertook to respond to Members as soon as possible after the meeting.

Following discussion it was **RESOLVED** that the contents of the report be noted.

10. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CORPORATE SERVICES) - A.5 - HUMAN RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE PANEL: APPOINTMENT OF THE NAMED SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBER AND THE NAMED SUBSTITUTE SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBER FROM AN OPPOSITION GROUP

There was submitted a report by the Deputy Chief Executive (Corporate Resources) (A.5) presented to the Committee by the Deputy Chief Executive (Martyn Knappett) which sought to enable the Committee to appoint a named member and a named substitute member from an opposition group to serve on the Human Resources Sub-Committee Panel.

Members were informed that the former Human Resources Committee, at its meeting held on 15 November 2016 (Minute 14 referred), had considered a joint report by the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer, which provided that Committee with details of changes to the Officer Employment Procedure Rules.

The Officers' report had recommended that a Sub-Committee Panel of the Committee be constituted to form part of the recruitment, dismissal and disciplinary process for the appointment of Senior Officers. This included the Chief Executive and other Statutory Chief Officers (Section 151 and Monitoring Officer posts), Chief Officer posts (Corporate Directors) and all Deputy Chief Officers (Heads of Service).

That report had also recommended that the Panel would undertake the final interview of those applicants for Senior Officer posts who had successfully been shortlisted and had undertaken the necessary technical interviews and assessments. The Panel would be a formally constituted sub-committee of the Committee, established by the Council. It was

proposed that the Panel should comprise of three members. At least one was required by legislation to be a member of the Cabinet, (to be appointed by the Leader of the Council at the appropriate time) however, it was suggested that this could be the relevant Portfolio Holder for the service concerned. The Panel should also include the Chairman (or failing him/her the Vice-Chairman) of the Committee and a named Committee member from an opposition group (full Council would appoint the named individual).

After due consideration of the whole report the Committee had, inter alia,:-

“RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL that:

- (a) a sub-committee of Human Resources Committee be formed to act as a Panel and to discharge the functions as set out in the report;*
- (b) the terms of reference of the Human Resources Committee be amended to include the function of the sub-committee Panel;*
- (c) the requirements of political balance be dispensed with for the sub-committee Panel;*
- (d) a named committee member (and a named substitute committee member) from an opposition group be appointed;”*

Full Council had considered the Committee’s recommendations at its meeting held on 29 November 2016 (Minute 101 refers) and had, inter alia, **RESOLVED**:-

“(b) that the recommendations to Council, as contained in Minute 14 of the Human Resources Committee of 15 November 2016, be approved, subject to Councillor Calver and Councillor Bray being appointed as the named committee member and the named substitute committee member from an opposition group respectively.”

The Committee was advised that, following the District Council Elections held in May this year it was now required to re-appoint the named committee member and the named substitute committee member from an opposition group.

Members were made aware that in making those appointments the Committee would be permitted to choose from the following four opposition group members of the Committee:-

Councillor Garry Calver
Councillor Paul Clifton
Councillor Pam Morrison
Councillor Mark Stephenson

It was moved by Councillor Morrison, seconded by Councillor M Stephenson and:-

RESOLVED, that Councillor Calver be appointed as the named committee member from an opposition group on the Human Resources Sub-Committee Panel.

It was then moved by Councillor Chapman, seconded by Councillor Clifton and:-

RESOLVED, that Councillor Morrison be appointed as the named substitute committee member from an opposition group on the Human Resources Sub-Committee Panel.

11. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved by Councillor Griffiths, seconded by Councillor Chapman and:-

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of Agenda Item 12 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, as amended, of the Act.

**12. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CORPORATE SERVICES) - B.1 - A
MARKET FORCES REPORT FOR A POST WITHIN LEGAL SERVICES**

RESOLVED that the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee agrees that the Market Forces Supplement be applied to the specified post within Legal Services, for a period of two years, in line with the Council's approved Market Forces Policy, at which point a further review will be undertaken.

The meeting was declared closed at 9.00 pm

Chairman