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Human Resources and Council Tax
Committee

7 July 2022

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES AND COUNCIL TAX
COMMITTEE,
HELD ON THURSDAY, 7TH JULY, 2022 AT 7.33 PM
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM , TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-SEA,
CO15 1SE**

Present:	Councillors Chapman BEM (Chairman), Griffiths (Vice-Chairman), Amos, Baker, Calver, S A Honeywood and Morrison
Also Present:	Councillor P B Honeywood
In Attendance:	Anastasia Simpson (Assistant Director (Partnerships)), Carol Magnus (Organisational Development Manager), Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager), Katie Wilkins (Human Resources and Business Manager), Debiannne Messenger (Work Based Learning Manager), Karen Harges (Human Resources Advisor) and Keith Durran (Committee Services Officer)
Participated via MS Teams:	Councillor G V Guglielmi (Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance & Governance) (except items 9 and 10) and Ian Davidson (Chief Executive) (item 10 only)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no apologies for absence or notices of substitution submitted on behalf of Councillors on this occasion.

2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

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

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held on Thursday 24 February 2022, be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Griffiths stated for the public record that he was a member of the GMB union and a Shop Steward but that he had no involvement with Tendring District Council in that capacity.

4. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 38

Pursuant to the provisions of Council Procedure Rule 38 Councillor Griffiths asked the following Question on Notice in relation to staff at Brightlingsea and Harwich Sports Centres:-

“In the event of any changes to the organizational structure or functions, which may lead to a change in role, or conditions of employment, can we have an undertaking that the HR Department will be involved at the start of the process, that any changes will involve consultation, and an undertaking from senior management that colleagues facing any such changes will not be subjected to any confidentiality clauses aimed at stopping

discourse with colleagues, or family members relating to potential changes to their employment.”

The Chairman of the Committee (Councillor Chapman BEM) replied as follows:-

“Thank you Councillor Griffiths for your question. As outlined in the Authority’s Organisational Change & Redundancy Policy (updated February 2022 and compliant in accordance with employment law and in line with the ACAS Codes of Practice and guidance) as seen and noted by members of the Committee at its meeting on the 24 February 2022, it is recognised that whenever organisational change is necessary, those responsible for restructuring must work with Human Resources to establish a Transition Plan from the old to the new structure, which is clear and transparent and communicated to all involved.

The Transition Plan should identify the following elements:

- *Consultation (direct and with recognised trade unions) at the start of any review phase.*
- *Details of the timescale for the review and how it will be conducted.*
- *The opportunity for employees to be involved in the review process through appropriate consultation.*
- *Regular progress reviews.*
- *Compliance with the National Single Status Job Evaluation Scheme before any final structure is approved.*

The updated policy was shared with all TDC Staff following the Committee’s meeting and attention drawn to its contents and the requirements within.

In response to Councillor Griffiths’ comments regarding confidentiality clauses, this Authority does not use this approach. However, during the consultation phase, employees are asked to treat the information imparted to them with sensitivity and discretion.”

5. CAREER TRACK - ORAL UPDATE

The Work Based Learning Manager (Debianne Messenger) gave an update to the Committee regarding the Council’s Career Track service. That update covered the following matters:-

- (a) Introduction
 - (1) Work based learning provider delivering apprenticeships programmes to TDC and other local authorities, large and small employers;
 - (2) Role of the Education & Skills Funding Agency and Department for Education (RoATP); and
 - (3) OfSTED Inspection in November 2021.
- (b) OfSTED
 - (1) Education Inspection Framework; and
 - (2) Its five key themes: governance; safeguarding; standards; curriculum; personal development.

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- (c) Career Track's Development Plan: OneFile; Curriculum; Governing Board; stakeholder briefings; employer and learner survey & feedback; training and development; resorting; and ESFA.
 - (d) What is next? – self assessment report; Quality Improvement Plan 2022/23; Governance meeting; RoAPT response; OfSTED monitoring visit; next OfSTED full inspection; and 40th anniversary celebration of success on 7 February 2023.

With the permission of the Chairman, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance & Governance (Councillor G V Guglielmi), whose responsibilities included Career Track, addressed the Committee and highlighted the huge amount of work that had been undertaken in response to the outcome of the OfSTED inspection.

The Organisational Development Manager, the Work Based Learning Manager and the Portfolio Holder then responded to questions asked by Councillors Griffiths and Chapman BEM.

The Committee noted the foregoing.

6. APPRENTICESHIPS - ORAL UPDATE

The Organisational Development Manager (Carol Magnus) gave an update on Apprenticeships to the Committee. That update covered the following matters:-

- (a) Introduction
 - (1) Via Career Track, TDC provides Level (L) 2 & 3 in Customer Service; L3 in Administration and L3 in Public Service Operational Delivery Officer (PSODO);
 - (2) TDC using wide range of specialist apprenticeship providers – leading to professional qualifications such as:-
 - (i) Open University (L6 IT);
 - (ii) UCEM (L6 Surveyor);
 - (iii) CILEX (L6 Legal Executive);
 - (iv) CIPFA (L7 Accountancy);
 - (v) Colchester Institute (L5 CIPD, L3 Digital Marketeer and L3 Assistant Accountant);
 - (vi) SOLACE (L5 Operations/Department Manager);
 - (vii) Lighthouse (L4 Project Management); and
 - (viii) Writtle Cottage (L2 Arborist and L2 Horticulture).
- (b) Finance – levy charge and “co-investment” by the Government.
- (c) TDC Apprenticeship study
- (d) Value for Money
- (e) Planning Apprenticeships
- (f) Successes

With the permission of the Chairman, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance & Governance addressed the Committee and highlighted the huge value for money that apprenticeships provided for the Council and gave the example of Gary Guiver who had started with the Council as an apprentice and was now the Director of Planning.

The Organisational Development Manager then responded to a question asked by Councillor Baker.

The Committee noted the foregoing.

7. **REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (PARTNERSHIPS) - A.1 - WORKFORCE UPDATE**

Members had before them the latest analysis of workforce data that provided them with statistics relating to the staff employed within the Council and how that compared to the Tendring District and national averages. This was a standard report that was periodically provided to the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee and set out relevant data under the following headings:-

- (1) Workforce statistics;
- (2) Age Profile;
- (3) Disability Profile;
- (4) Ethnicity Profile; and
- (5) Sickness Absence.

In relation to Appendix B to the report the Vice-Chairman (Councillor Griffiths) requested that it include, going forward and in order to aid in succession planning, the number of TDC staff aged 61+ broken down by department. The Human Resources & Business Manager (Katie Wilkins) undertook to taken this into consideration for future reports of this nature.

The Committee **NOTED** the contents of the report.

8. **REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (PARTNERSHIPS) - A.2 - NEW MENOPAUSE POLICY**

The Committee considered a proposed Menopause Policy, which was intended to be implemented by the Authority. The purpose of this new policy was to ensure that the Council remained compliant with employment legislation (*including the Equality Act 2010*); identified best practice and the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy by ensuring that staff, who were experiencing the menopause were appropriately supported by the Council as their employer.

Members were informed that the policy aimed to provide information about the menopause (*and referenced andropause*) for staff experiencing the menopause; their managers, as well as colleagues and highlighted the support available both from within the Council itself and external agencies. The Policy incorporated guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), was written in accordance with current ACAS guidelines and set out:-

- *A clear definition of what is menopause, peri-menopause, post-menopause and andropause;*
- *An overview of potential symptoms;*
- *Responsibilities of both managers and employees; and*
- *Support available and additional resources for employees, managers, and colleagues.*

The Committee was made aware that, in line with the Council's commitment to Equality and Diversity the policy had been developed to be representative of all sections of society to ensure that all staff felt respected and able to give their best. In addition, it provided specific guidance to support managers' talking to their staff about the menopause and an advice sheet to support staff to talk to their GP about their symptoms and what support was available from the NHS and elsewhere.

Members were advised that Unison had been consulted on the new Menopause Policy and had offered its agreement and support for the implementation of these proposals.

The Committee was further informed that the introduction of a Menopause Policy was only the start of a comprehensive suite of health and well-being activities including information, support and advice that was planned to be cascaded throughout the Council over the coming months. This would include support sessions for those experiencing the menopause, along with information sessions and training for both those experiencing the menopause, line managers and colleagues. The HR Team planned to collaborate with all staff to identify the most appropriate support for staff experiencing menopause, which might include drop-in groups, one-to-one support sessions, and information briefings, as well as the promotion of self-help support and the Employee Assistance Programme.

The Human Resources & Business Manager outlined that section 1.4 of the Policy needed "tweaking" in order to make its wording 'gender neutral'.

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

RESOLVED that the Human Resources & Council Tax Committee supports the implementation of the new Menopause Policy, which includes the programme of support for staff experiencing the menopause, subject to the minor textual amendments to section 1.4 of the Policy being made in order to make the Policy 'gender neutral' throughout.

9. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

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

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item 10 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.

10. REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE - B.1 - MARKET FORCES REPORT FOR POSTS WITHIN GOVERNANCE

RESOLVED that the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee agrees that:

- (a) the Market Forces Supplement be applied with immediate effect to the posts within Election Services requiring the professional qualification;
- (b) the Market Forces Supplement continues from its expiry in November 2022 to be applied to posts within Legal Services which are required to be held by qualified solicitors with a current SRA practising certificate and Legal Executives;

- (c) subject to (a) and (b) above, the Market Forces Supplement is discretionary, to be decided by the Deputy Chief Executive, depending upon the post holder's circumstances; and
- (d) the Supplements be applied 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 or until the outcome of the Council's pay audit is completed, if earlier.

The meeting was declared closed at 8.36 pm

Chairman