

Employment Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 14 June 2017 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 pm.

Present: Councillors Barrott, Mrs Bunker, Day, Doody, Mrs Evetts, Mrs Falp, Mobbs, Murphy, Noone and Parkins.

2. **Apologies and Substitutes**

- (a) There were no apologies for absence; and
- (b) There were no substitutes.

3. **Appointment of Chairman**

It was moved by Councillor Doody, and duly seconded that Councillor Mrs Bunker be appointed Chairman of Employment Committee.

Resolved that Councillor Mrs Bunker be elected Chairman of Warwick District Council's Employment Committee for the municipal year 2017/18.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

The Chairman welcomed Mrs Darke, Head of Development Services, to the meeting, who was substituting for the Head of Human Resources, Mrs Dolphin.

5. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 February 2017 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record. The minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2017 were unavailable in completed form and would be presented to the next meeting for approval.

6. **Review of Staff Terms & Conditions of Employment (Standby Allowance)**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Development Services which explained the proposed changes to staff terms and conditions for phase 2, relating specifically to standby allowances following a trial of delivering the standby and out of hours service provided by Building Control and Housing Repairs differently.

In September 2016, the Employment Committee agreed a trial to review standby allowances. It was felt that there was an opportunity to use the existing Warwick Response Service, which operated 24/7 to provide Lifeline support to the Council's tenants in sheltered accommodation. Prior to the trial, out of hours calls would be dealt with by a Housing Repair Officer or Building Control. A team was set up to run the trial,

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which consisted of officers from Housing Repairs, Building Control and Warwick Response. This started on 9 January 2017.

The trial meant that the first point of contact for all out of hours calls was Warwick Response for housing repairs and building control enquiries. Warwick Response then filtered the calls and only referred those calls that required a Housing Repairs or Building control Duty Officer for technical input. The trial significantly reduced the number of calls being forwarded to a Duty Officer from an average of 40-50 per week, to 0-4 approximately. It was felt that this would further reduce as Warwick Response became even more experienced at handling the calls. It was, however, recognised that a process needed to be in place should a significant incident occur.

The report sought approval from the Employment Committee for standby and out of hours service for Building Control and Housing Repairs to be delivered through the Warwick Response Service.

Members were concerned with the wording in paragraph 6.2 of the report and felt that it was too strong and needed softening and more explanation. The Senior Human Resources Officer explained that the intention was to reach a collective agreement and it was expected that the five members of staff would still have positions. But, as in any re-structure, if this collective agreement could not be reached, then there was the risk that the process of "dismissal and offer of re-engagement" would have to be employed. She felt that whilst this was listed as a risk in the report, the prospect of it happening was limited.

Resolved that:

- (1) standby and out of hours service provided for Building Control and Housing Repairs is delivered through the Warwick Response Service; and
- (2) the wording of paragraph 6.2 in the report is amended to make it softer and provide better explanation; this wording to be circulated to the whole Committee for approval.

The Committee thanked all the officers involved with the trial for their hard work because they had taken on a lot of extra work and had refined the service offered by the Council.

7. Fit for the Future People Processes

The Committee considered a report from Human Resources that proposed amendments to the Council's Fit for the Future employment processes with the aim of providing alternative options to match the needs of business and support employees through change.

It introduced an "assimilation process" whereby staff whose roles were changing but not subject to a redundancy process were assimilated into a

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revised role rather than put at risk and matched into a role that largely comprised their substantive duties.

A revised Fit for the Future People Process was detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.

The Committee welcomed the changes to the employment processes. In response to concerns raised by a Member of the Committee that it might be possible for an employee to claim redundancy and therefore receive the payment implicit within the terms of redundancy, if they felt they were inappropriately matched to another position when plainly it was a fair offer for their skills and experience, the Committee was informed that measures were in place to prevent this type of claim and that an officer's departure from the Council would be treated as resignation.

Resolved that the revised Fit for the Future Processes as set out in Appendix 1 to the report are noted and approved and that:

- (1) this includes the option to assimilate members of staff to revised roles as a result of staffing reorganisation;
- (2) references to Systems Thinking Interventions and Experimentation Process are removed as these have now evolved into a more proactive consultation processes;
- (3) this process is operated in conjunction with the current redeployment and support mechanisms; and
- (4) a report be presented to the Committee in the future on reflections and learning points of the new system after the re-structure and how it is working.

8. People Strategy Update

The Committee considered a report from Human Resources that gave an update on the progress made on the People Strategy Action Plan as discussed at the People Strategy Steering Group.

The People Strategy Steering Group comprised of Councillors Barrott, Mrs Bunker, Mobbs and Mrs Falp and was supported by the Head of Cultural Services, the Head of Neighbourhood Services, the Head of Development Services, the Human Resources Manager and a Human Resources Senior Officer.

The Steering Group met quarterly prior to Employment Committee and reviewed successful work completion, plans in progress and areas to highlight for discussion. The report then listed the areas of work being undertaken by the Steering Group in paragraphs 8.3.1 to 8.3.6.

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The Committee thanked the officer for the report.

Resolved that the report is noted.

9. **Public and Press**

Resolved that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items, by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within paragraphs 1 and 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as set out below.

Minute Nos.	Para Nos.	Reason
10 to 11	1	Information relating to an individual
10 to 11	2	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

The full text of Minutes 10 and 11 were recorded in a confidential minute which was to be considered for publication following implementation of the relevant decisions. A summary is as follows:

10. **New posts for site Delivery Officer and Planning Assistant**

The Committee approved the recommendations in the report.

11. **Housing support and Lifeline Services – Restructure proposals**

The Committee approved the recommendations in the report.

(The meeting ended at 5.56pm)