

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 7 April 2014 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 4.30 pm.

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Bunker (Chairman); Councillors Mrs Bromley, Coker, Doody, Gill, Hammon, Kirton, Pratt and Wilkinson.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Copping, Mrs Knight, Mobbs and Wreford-Bush.

49. **SUBSTITUTES**

Councillor Gill substituted for Councillor Mrs Knight.

The Chairman announced that the Committee had been asked to discuss an additional report to those listed on the agenda about a request for flexible retirement. Due to the nature of the report, she had agreed. It would be discussed in-camera.

50. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

51. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2014 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

52. **EXTENSION OF TEMPORARY POSTS (SENIOR PROJECT COORDINATORS, CUSTOMER CONTACT MANAGER & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT)**

The Committee received a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (AJ) which sought approval to extend temporary posts to enable the Council to deploy the necessary resources to continue with its Prosperity and Organisational development change initiatives.

RESOLVED that:

- (1) 2 x Senior Project Coordinator posts (Y99999 x 2) be extended to 31 March 2016;
- (2) the Customer Contact Manager post (X99999) be extended to 31 March 2016; and
- (3) the Organisational Development Officer post (X20045) be extended to 31 March 2016.

53. **NATIONAL LIVING WAGE**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Finance on the National Living Wage (NLW). The Committee had previously deferred any

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

decision, requesting more information specifically on the impact of the NLW on those aged under 21.

It was explained that following research, most Local Authorities paid the differential for employees aged 18 and over. There were a negligible number of employees aged below 18 employed at Warwick District Council. Based on this, Councillors questioned why it was felt necessary to exclude employees aged under 18 and were informed that the reason was simply to copy what was practice in other Local Authorities.

After establishing that paying all employees on the grades affected regardless of age would have little effect on the differentials if it was paid as a discretionary supplement, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that:

- (1) the National Living Wage be paid to all employees on the grades affected regardless of age;
- (2) the National Living Wage of £7.65 be introduced from 1 October 2014, paid as a discretionary supplement to the basic wage rates for all employees earning less than the National Living Wage; and
- (3) the Council reviews its commitment to paying any further increase in the National Living Wage from the subsequent April of each year as part of the Budget Process.

54. PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE

The Committee considered a report from Human Resources which gave an update on the People Strategy Action Plan following the March meeting of the People Strategy Steering Group (PSSG).

In response to a question from a Member about what measures were being taken to reduce staff absenteeism, the Chairman explained that this was an issue that the PSSG had discussed and examined. Stress could be a reason given for absenteeism but the causes of stress were not always caused by work but it was difficult to separate out when the cause was work or not. The PSSG planned to give this further review and would report back to the Employment Committee when it had drawn together its findings.

Members pointed out that agency fees were increasing again but were informed that hiring agency staff was competitive because the Council was not responsible for paying National Insurance contributions or employers' pension contributions; these were paid by the agency. Councillor Coker stated that he felt a report on agency staff was required and it should set out the reasons for using agency staff, who was responsible for authorising these hirings and the full details. The Chairman informed the Committee that she had already asked Human Resources to provide this

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

information once the new staff that had been recently employed in Human Resources were fully operative and trained.

RESOLVED that the report and feedback from the Chairman be noted.

55. 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, 3 and 7 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

The full text of Minute 57 was recorded in a confidential minute which was to be considered for publication following implementation of the relevant decisions. A summary is as follows:

56. MINUTES

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2014 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

57. REQUEST FOR FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT – ADDITIONAL REPORT

The Committee received a report from the Deputy Chief Executive (BH) to grant flexible retirement to a member of staff.

(The meeting ended at 5.00 pm)