

# EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 17 December 2007 in Riverside House, Royal Leamington Spa at 4.30 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Guest (Chairman); Councillors Mrs Bunker, Coker, Crowther, Gifford, Hammon, Heath and Mrs Knight.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor White.

## 750. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 751. **MINOR ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES WITHIN PLANNING AND ENGINEERING**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Planning and Engineering to approve minor amendments to the structure of the existing Appeals and Enforcement Team in the Development Group of the Planning and Engineering business unit.

A report on the structure of Development Control and Policy was brought to Employment Committee in September 2006. The Committee agreed changes in the Structure of the Delivery of the Appeals and Enforcement Service through the transfer of an existing Planning Officer post from Appeals & Enforcement to the Eastern Area Planning Application team and the creation of a permanent part-time Enforcement Officer post (funded through Planning Development Grant). The Head of Planning and Engineering circulated an updated Structure of Appeals and Enforcement at the meeting.

The establishment structure of the team remained the same, consisting of the Team Leader (Principal Planning Officer, Appeals & Enforcement), one full-time Enforcement Officer and two part-time Enforcement Officers. In addition the Team retained a Planning Officer dealing primarily with Appeals.

During the course of the year the previous Team Leader left the Authority for employment elsewhere. Following advertisement for a replacement Team Leader little response was received. Investigation indicated that this was because of the unusual nature of the Team in that it combined both Appeals & Enforcement work. It was anticipated that it would be more likely to gain an appropriate candidate where the team concentrate on Enforcement work alone.

A limited review of the Appeals & Enforcement service was, therefore, undertaken. It was agreed that the Appeals Officer would remain as an independent post but would not remain within the Appeals & Enforcement team and would report directly to the Head of Development Control and deal primarily with Appeals. The remainder of the team would then be an Enforcement Team with an Enforcement Team Leader to be appointed.

## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

The opportunity was taken to review the structure of the team within the Group. It was considered appropriate for one Enforcement Officer post to be designated a Senior Enforcement Officer in order that the post holder could take responsibility for managing day to day enforcement matters and reporting to the Enforcement Manager who would oversee the overall work of the team.

**RESOLVED** that the minor amendments to the structure of the existing Appeals & Enforcement Team in the Development Group of Planning and Engineering be approved.

### **752. REVIEW OF ANNUAL APPRAISAL MONITORING**

The Committee considered a report from Corporate Personnel Services updating members on the number of performance appraisals completed for 2007.

A full report on the monitoring of appraisals was carried out during the current year and was presented to the Employment Committee at its meeting on 18 September 2007. Following the meeting, the Committee requested a further report updating the position to be presented at its meeting on 17 December 2007.

In total 458 appraisals were completed, 91.6% of those due, (the figure reported in September was 90.2%), with 42 not yet confirmed to have taken place. The Acting Human Resources Manager updated the meeting and informed them that this figure had now increased to 93%.

Over half of all Service Areas/Directorates have recorded 100% completion with 66% being the lowest percentage achieved.

11 of the 42 people who had not had an appraisal in 2007 also did not receive one in 2006. The Council's Corporate Management Team were investigating outstanding appraisals with Heads of Service areas to find a resolution.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

### **753. EMPLOYMENT DATA MONITORING**

The Committee considered a report from Corporate Personnel Services informing them of the most recent employment data.

The report and its appendices gave a detailed breakdown of the workforce employed by the Council including data on grade band, gender, ethnic groups, disability, working patterns and the percentage of people in each group living in Warwick District. Information was also provided on the number of established, filled and vacant posts for each Service Area during 2006/07.

In line with the Local Government's Pay and Reward Agenda, Warwick District Council had to write and implement a Workforce Plan to support the overall

## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

approach to workforce planning and organisational development. The employment data supplied and the trends identified from this report needed to be incorporated within the Plan and used to inform the priority activities for the Workforce Plan. The plan would outline the approach the Council would take to ensuring its employee profile was more representative of the local community it served.

The data showed that there was an imbalance in the proportion of females, ethnic minority groups and people with disabilities in the more senior posts within Warwick District Council. Members of the Committee agreed that action needed to be taken to redress this imbalance.

Corporate Personnel Services were aware that in order to attract applications from all sectors of the community they needed to target people in different ways from those currently used. It was also suggested that some members of the community may need assistance with current interview processes and would benefit from attending workshops dealing with the completing of application forms.

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) the contents of the report be noted and the proposed action be approved; and
- (2) the Chair of Employment Committee and the HR Manager (Acting) review the content and frequency of the annual HR Management Information reporting requirements.

## **754. COUNCIL TAX STAFFING**

The Committee received a report from the Head of Revenues and Customer Services to increase the resource available for the council tax administration function.

Over the last 10 years the number of domestic properties in the District had grown by 8,000 yet the number of staff deployed to deal with local taxation billing and collection had fallen. This meant that the council tax team was one of the most efficient in the country with CIPFA Benchmarking displaying costs in the bottom third and a staff to domestic property ratio in the top quarter.

The impact on staff of the property growth had been particularly apparent in the last three years with backlogs of work, very high sickness, excessive amounts of overtime worked and critical internal audit reports. However, the commitment from staff had enabled the council to record excellent collection rates but the situation was not sustainable.

There was an opportunity to utilise an element of the forthcoming increase in court fees to pay for much needed staff resource.

## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

Having gone through the service planning process the proposals had Corporate Management Team support and if approved by Employment Committee would be included in the budget report of February 2008.

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) the re-designating of posts T07110 & T07100 from Grade H to G and increasing T07100 to 37 hours per week, be approved;
- (2) an increase of hours for post T06073 (Senior Revenues Officer) from 29 to 37, be approved;
- (3) the creation of a Revenues Support Assistant at Grade I, be approved; and
- (4) the creation of a revenues officer post at grade G, be approved.

## **755. PUBLIC AND PRESS**

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items, by reason of a likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs of Schedule 12(a) 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
756 & 757	1	Information relating to any individual
756 & 757	2	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual
756	3	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

## **756. NOTICE OF MOTION**

The Committee considered the following Notice of Motion from Councillors: Kirton, Barrott, Copping, Mrs McFarland, Crowther, Weed, MacKay, Gill, Mrs Falp and Mrs Knight asking this Committee to reconsider its decision of 18 September 2007, not to increase the redundancy multiplier used by Warwick District Council from 2 to 2.3.

## **EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) the Notice of Motion be approved in principle showing the actual calculation of neutrality; and
- (2) a report be submitted back to this Committee detailing the actual cost of the back pay and the legality of this.

### **757. MEMBERS PANELS**

The Committee discussed various issues which potentially would require the involvement of Councillors. In order to make the necessary preparations and arrange training for those involved, it was agreed to establish two sub-committees and a panel of members to undertake the functions as discussed, with powers being delegated to them to enable decisions to be made, as appropriate to their terms of reference.

### **RESOLVED** that the following appointments be made:

- (a) Employment Sub-Committee A: Councillors Guest, Mrs Knight and Mobbs;
- (b) Employment Sub-Committee B: Councillors Coker, Mrs Gallagher and Gifford;
- (c) Employment (Appeals) Panel: Councillors Crowther, MacKay and Vincett; and
- (d) Councillors Barrott, Ms Dean, Heath and Mrs Sawdon be appointed as reserve members, if required.

(The meeting ended at 5.45pm)