

# EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18 December 2006 at Riverside House, Royal Leamington Spa at 4.30 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillor Crowther (Chair), Councillors Boad, Mrs Bunker, Gifford, Gill, Hammon and Hatfield.

Apologies were received from Councillor Kundi.

## 723. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

## 724. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2006 having been printed and circulated were taken as read and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

## 725. **CUSTOMER SERVICES HANDBOOK**

The Committee considered a report from Revenues and Customer Services which sought approval for the Customer Services Handbook (Customer First) and to agree to its rollout to all Warwick District Council staff.

Following the work on the Customer Access Best Value Review, Warwick District Council had fundamentally changed the way it provided access to information and advice. The development of the Customer Service Centre, One Stop Shops and the Website had allowed customers to access services in ways that suited them best.

During the last eighteen months Corporate Management Team had agreed certain standards in relation to the phone and e-mail. The Customer Care Handbook brought together those agreed standards and further standards developed within Customer Services.

Once the standards within the Handbook had been agreed, all new District Council employees would receive awareness training as part of the Corporate Induction process. With regard to existing staff, briefing sessions would be provided by Revenues and Customer Services.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Customer Services Handbook be approved.

## 726. **HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES IN RELATION TO WORKING AWAY FROM THE OFFICE**

The Committee considered a report from Environmental Health informing members of new health & safety procedures, in relation to employees working away from the office and to request their support for its implementation.

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

Members of the Committee suggested that it would be useful for them to have individual Staff Alert Lists which relate solely to their own Ward.

**RESOLVED** that;

- (1) the content of the report be noted; and
- (2) the Assistant Chief Executive (Member's Services) be requested to investigate individual Staff Alert Lists for Members.

### **727. CHANGES TO LGPS REDUNDANCY REGULATIONS**

The Committee received a report which sought approval of the transitional provisions of the Local Government Pension Scheme (England and Wales) prior to start changes to the redundancy, retirement on the grounds of redundancy and termination of the grounds of efficiency of the service schemes from 1 April 2007.

In November the Committee considered a report in relation to the implications of the proposed changes to LGPS (England and Wales) Compensation Regulations and the statutory redundancy regulations in light of the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006, that came into effect on 1 October 2006, rendering the existing discretionary powers to grant 'added years' and severance payments unlawful.

The Corporate Management Team considered a range of options at its December meeting CMT would then consult with UNISON and GMB/MPO prior to a report being submitted to the March 2007 Employment Committee for consideration.

**RESOLVED** that;

- (1) the changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) be noted; and
- (2) the Council uses the transitional provisions to the end of 2006/2007, prior to a new scheme being implemented.

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

The Committee received an update on the number of performance appraisals completed for 2006 within Warwick District Council.

The number of staff requiring an appraisal was taken as all those on the establishment as at 1 April less anyone who left, was on probation, took long-term sick leave or was on maternity leave during the appraisal period of April to June. The data collection date for the review was 24 November 2006.

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

In total 411 appraisals had now been completed, 82.86% of those due (the figure reported in September was 71.4%), with 85 not yet confirmed to have taken place. Half of all Service Areas/Directorates have recorded 100% completion with two areas still reporting 0% of appraisals undertaken.

A full report detailing the outstanding appraisals was considered by the Corporate Management Team in October so that appropriate action could be taken.

**RESOLVED** that the content of the report be noted.

### **729. 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 & 2 of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

### **730. ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION STAFFING**

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Chief Executive (Members' Services) to approve the increase in the working hours of the post of Electoral Administrator for an initial period of two years, from 1 January 2007.

During the organisation of elections and the electoral registration canvass each autumn, it was necessary for the post holder to work thirty seven hours per week to enable all the required work to be carried out.

Due to the significantly increased responsibilities placed on the electoral process and the added security involved in the processes, the post holder now had a greater role in the organisation of all elections and the electoral registration process.

Funding was provided initially for a period of two years, but it was anticipated that it would continue thereafter.

**RESOLVED** that the establishment for the post of Electoral Administrator be amended from the current thirty hours per week to thirty seven, for an initial period of two years, subject to a review towards the end of that period.

### **731. HEALTHY LIVING CENTRE**

The Committee considered a report advising them about the employment implications of the Forward Strategy for Health Living Centre and to seek approval for the recommendations set out in the report.

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

Pending the outcome of the bid process a complete review of the Centre was being undertaken. In order to secure the future of the Centre into the long term all task and ways of delivering services are being evaluated, with a view to realigning and refocusing the project to meet the needs of the local community in a cost effective manner.

Full staff consultation had taken place in relation to the proposals for future funding and the Regenesi s Board has also been actively involved.

### **RESOLVED** that

- (1) formal notification be given to members of staff, in line with their contracts of employment, that their employment would terminate on the grounds of redundancy on the 31 March 2007.
- (2) employees be accorded their rights under the Redeployment Agreement three months prior to 31 March 2007.
- (3) discussions continue to secure future funding for the Healthy Living Centre.

## **732. BENEFITS AND REVENUES STAFFING RESTRUCTURE**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Revenues and Customer Services to request the approval of re-designating of various posts.

The Benefits and Revenues teams had seen significant change over the last three years. The main drivers behind the change had been Government legislation and to take advantage of new technologies and software to ensure that the delivery of the service was customer focused. However, it was the structure of the teams that had not kept pace with this change, consequently Members were asked to approve a number of changes so the services could better respond to future demands.

All the changes detailed in Section 1 of the report could be met from current budgets and so there was no effect on the council's revenue or capital expenditure.

### **RESOLVED** that;

- (1) the re-designating of post T03020 from Overpayments Officer (G) to Recovery Officer (G);
- (2) the re-designating of post T03180 from Assessment Officer (G) to Technical Support Officer (F);

**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)**

- (3) the re-designating of post T03300 from Assessment Officer (G) to Benefits Team Leader (E1);
- (4) the re-designating of post T06045 from Senior Revenues Officer (F) to Revenues Team Leader (E1); and
- (5) the creation of a Revenues Officer (G) post.

(The meeting ended at 5.15 pm)