

# Employment Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 18 June 2014 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 4.30 pm.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Mrs Bromley, Mrs Bunker, Coker, Doody, Hammon, Kirton, Mrs Knight, Wilkinson and Wreford-Bush.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Copping, Kirton and Mobbs.

## 1. Appointment of Chairman

It was moved by Councillor Hammon, 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 2014/15.

## 2. Declarations of Interest

### Item 6 – Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013

Councillors Coker and Doody declared an interest as members of the Local Government Pension Scheme. The Head of Finance assured them that there was nothing in the report to effect a pecuniary interest.

## 3. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2014 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## 4. 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 item, 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
5 to 8	1	Information relating to an individual
5 to 8	2	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

The full text of Minutes 5 to 8 were recorded in a confidential minute which was to be considered for publication following implementation of the relevant decisions. A summary is as follows:

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

### **5. Minutes**

The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 7 April 2014 were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **6. Application for Flexible Retirement**

The Committee received a report from Finance requesting that a member of the team was granted a request for flexible retirement.

### **7. Establishment of posts – Telecare Officers and Telecare Admin Assistant**

The Committee received a report from Housing and Property Services requesting approval to add additional staff to the establishment.

### **8. Improvement Programme II – Reshaping the Organisation**

The Committee received a report from Housing and Property Services seeking approval for the second phase of the staff re-structure. Following decision, the meeting resumed public open session.

### **9. Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Finance and the Senior Human Resources Officer with an updated policy statement in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Attention was drawn to the fact that the updated policy meant that request for flexible retirement would become a management decision to be approved by the relevant member of the Corporate Management Team or Head of Service.

The Head of Finance was asked to check whether staff who were granted flexible retirement would then be allowed to work for the Council as a contractor, thus increasing their income.

Members requested a retrospective report on the numbers of staff granted flexible retirement once the policy was adopted so that they could gauge whether a large number of such requests were being made. The Interim HR Manager suggested that this could form part of the quarterly People Strategy Steering Group report and should show numbers and service areas. Members made it clear that the report need not be long, a single sheet at most for noting.

**Resolved** that the Employer's Policy Statements in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 Discretions be adopted and that narrative can form part of the People Strategy update.

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

### **10. People Strategy Update**

The Committee considered a report from Human Resources (HR) giving an update on progress made on the People Strategy Action Plan following a meeting in June of the People Strategy Steering Group (PSSG).

It was explained that the issue of absence and the use of agency workers had been a main topic of debate at the meeting. HR planned to look at the policy and factors affecting absenteeism in more depth and to consider how this could be managed. It was noted that absenteeism levels in the Council were higher than the national average both in the Private and the Public Sectors, and also neighbouring Local Authorities.

In respect of Agency staff, the PSSG had found that examining the data in respect of the breakdown of areas where Agency staff were used and the reason why raised more questions. There were 34 Agency staff currently working at Warwick District Council, 18 of which were within Housing & Property Services. Recommendations would be forthcoming to manage this better.

**Resolved** that the report and the feedback from the Employment Committee Chairman be noted.

### **11. 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 item, 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 No.	Para Nos.	Reason
12	1	Information relating to an individual
12	2	Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.

### **12. Appointment of Head of Service Housing & Property Services**

The Chairman asked all parties, except the members of the Employment Committee and the Interim HR Manager, to leave the room. Members of the Employment Committee were then informed of the decision made in respect of successful candidate selected to fill the vacancy for the post of Head of Service Housing & Property Services; Andrew Thompson.

(The meeting ended at 6.10 pm)