

EMPLOYER / TRADE UNION COMMITTEE

Monday, 1st July, 2019

Present:-

Councillor Serjeant (in the Chair)

Councillor J Innes
Huw Bowen, Chief Executive
Tony Devereux, Unison
Helen Fox, Acting Chief Finance Officer
Kate Harley, HR Manager
Gurpreet Khakh, GMB
Ade McCormick, Executive Director
Lesley Waller, Unison

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor P Gilby, Phil Mallender and Maria Slack.

2 MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4 OVERPAYMENT POLICY

The Human Resources Manager presented a report on the new policy on overpayments made to employees and ex-employees of the council, as had been required by audit.

The policy set out a procedure for the recovery of overpayments made to staff to ensure a consistent approach to overpayments and to ensure that errors were promptly identified and repaid appropriately, taking account of hardship issues.

It was noted that overpayments were rare and that regular staffing reports were now being sent to managers to minimise the risk of these occurring.

The policy had been produced through extensive discussion with trade union representatives. Following a request for opportunity for this to be considered at union branch meetings, trade union representatives were requested to submit any final comments to the HR Manager by no later than 12th July.

RESOLVED –

That the Overpayment Policy be approved to be submitted to the next meeting of the Employment and General Committee, subject to no further concerns being raised.

5 EMPLOYEE SURVEY

The Human Resources Manager reported on the results from the employee survey, to which there had been a good response of 59.9% of staff. The full results were available on the intranet and an article would be included in the next Borough Bulletin.

The responses were generally positive, with many showing an upward trend from the previous year. However, a number of areas for improvement had been identified, including:

- Workload and capacity
- Management styles
- Leadership – visibility and trust
 - leadership development was being planned for Senior Leadership Team and Corporate Management Team members
- Change management
- Resources to do the job, including ICT
- Value of PDRs and how these help staff to do their job better
- Perceived lack of care and concern
 - It was planned to run a mental health 1st aid programme, retender for the Council's Occupational Health service, review stress risk assessments and review the reward strategy to enable staff to feel valued

Managers would be discussing the survey results with staff to identify service specific action plans to lead to improvements and to support the aim of achieving a gold standard Investors in People assessment in 2020.

Representatives expressed their appreciation that the Council was still committed to undertaking the staff survey and to taking action to address those areas identified for improvement.

6 RECRUITMENT OF A FINANCIAL DIRECTOR

The Chief Executive reported that following Kevin Hanlon having left his post as Director of Finance and Resources, Helen Fox would act as interim Section 151 officer and Richard Staniforth as Deputy Section 151 officer.

Consultants had been appointed to support the recruitment of a replacement Director and this had been advertised the previous week. A recruitment process had been agreed, including technical interviews, psychometric testing and final interviews, probably in early September.

7 APPOINTMENT OF NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

The Chief Executive reported that Ade McCormick had taken up his post as Executive Director last month and that Christine Durrant had taken up the other Executive Director post today.

8 PDRS/PDPS

The Human Resources Manager reported that 76% of PDRs had currently been completed and she asked representatives to encourage staff to actively pursue the completion of their PDR and the setting of their PDP objectives. This was important to enable meaningful decisions to be taken on the centralised training budget by the Corporate Management Team.

It was noted that training had been provided to support those staff without ready access to IT in completing their PDR, and it was suggested that this may be required again in the coming year with sufficient time allowed for them to prepare appropriately.

9 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Unison representative requested that managers be reminded of the need to involve health and safety representatives in the investigation of accidents / incidents and to ensure that all accidents / incidents were recorded on the SHE recording system.

The Unison representative requested whether some of the Employer / Trade Union Committee meetings could be held on days other than a Monday to enable another representative to attend. It was agreed to consider the feasibility of doing this.

The Unison representative asked how new policies were communicated to staff when introduced in addition to being available on the intranet. It was suggested that they be referred to within the core brief to be communicated to all staff and for feedback to central management.

10 **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

To be confirmed following consideration of possible alternative date.