

**HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held in Committee Rooms A and B, Civic Offices,  
Elstree Way, Borehamwood**

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2 May 2018

**Present:**

**Voting Members:**

Councillors Rutledge (Chairman), Swerling (Vice-Chairman), Choudhury, Davis,  
S Hodgson-Jones and Newmark

**Officers:**

J Fear	Head of Human Resources & Customer Services
L Martin	HR Adviser
C Noble	HR Adviser
J Smith	Principal Democratic Services Officer

588. **MEMBERSHIP**

Noted that, since the publication of the agenda, there had been no changes to the membership of the Committee.

589. **COMMUNICATIONS AND APOLOGIES**

The Chairman welcomed Members and Officers to the meeting.

He reminded Members that all questions and comments should be directed through himself and that they should seek his permission before speaking. The Chairman advised that no person should speak while another Member of the Committee or Officer was speaking or giving a presentation.

590. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No Members had an interest to declare in any of the items of business on the agenda.

591. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 13 February 2018 were approved and signed as a correct record.

592. **CONSULTATION ON A NEW WORKFORCE STRATEGY 2019-2021 AND WORKFORCE PLAN 2018**

Report PER/18/06 provided an overview of current research on workforce strategy in local government to serve as the basis for initial consultation with staff and other stakeholders on the preparation of a draft strategy for the period 2019 to 2021. An update of the Workforce Plan 2018/19 was also proposed to reflect the work on developing a new strategy as a high priority.

Members noted the presentation of this report to the Local Joint Committee and its discussion set out below:

“The Head of HR and Customer Services advised that the current Workforce Strategy was due to expire at the end of the calendar year. Referring to the recent LGA paper, Great People for Growing Places, at Appendix A to the report, she pointed out that the five key areas identified in the document were the same as those identified in the Council’s Strategy in 2010. She highlighted the statistics for labour turnover and sickness absence on agenda page 11 of the document, both of which she said compared well with the Council’s own figures. A Councillor commented that the sickness absence records were very much the result of team leaders’ efforts. A staff representative emphasised the need to be mindful of possible stress anxiety and fatigue among staff in light of the reducing size of the workforce and increasing work levels.

The Head of HR and Customer Services referred members to the second LGA document at Appendix A, entitled Outside the Box, and specifically the key motivations listed on agenda page 35 and the need to rebrand the Council as a workplace (page 47 refers).

During discussion, both staff and Councillor members welcomed the documents as useful vehicles for discussion but agreed that much of the content was not applicable to Hertsmere Borough Council. Members of the Committee concurred that this Council had always taken a progressive stance, that its reward system was different and that it had strong, capable front line staff. One Councillor suggested that heed should be paid to the local impact of BREXIT. In connection with rebranding, he added that consideration could be given to expanding opportunities for members of the public to engage with the Council, perhaps via full Council and Planning meetings.

The Vice-Chairman put forward a number of suggested amendments to the Workforce Development Action Plan at Appendix B, including further training for managers (Leadership Development), the promotion of more student work placements (Developing the Organisation) and mention of the Cycle to Work Scheme (Pay and Rewards).”

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The LGA research reports and proposals for Local Government Workforce Strategy set out in Appendix A to the report be noted; and
2. the updated Workforce Plan 2018/19, set out in Appendix B, be approved, subject to the feedback from the Local Joint Committee outlined above and to any financial implications being approved by the Executive.

(Action: Head of HR and Customer Services)

593. **APPRENTICESHIP POLICY AND APPRENTICESHIP REFORM UPDATE**

Report PER/18/11 presented the Committee with the revised Apprenticeship Policy and provided an update on the Council’s response to apprenticeship legislative reform.

Members noted the presentation of this report to the Local Joint Committee and its discussion set out below:

“The HR Adviser referred members to the three main areas of reform set out at report paragraph 2.1: the introduction of the Apprenticeship Levy; the introduction of an Apprenticeship Target; and a new method of delivering apprenticeship training and provided further detail and clarification. With regard to the target, she said that this requirement equated to seven new apprentices each financial year for this Council which could include existing staff who took up an apprenticeship for development purposes (report para 4.1 refers). She added that a good deal of work in this area was underway and this included the undertaking of a training needs analysis.

A staff representative commented that the eligibility requirements in section 2 of the Policy were not sufficiently clear and asked that they be expanded to specify the entry requirements. In response to a Councillor’s question, members were assured that there were processes in place to encourage apprentices to transition into the mainstream workforce. Another Councillor commended the Council’s work on new apprenticeships and said that she was encouraged to see the list of new apprentices commencing in 2018/19, as set out in paragraph 4.4 of the report.”

**RESOLVED** that:

1. the Apprenticeship Policy, attached at the report's appendix, be approved; and
2. the Council's response to apprenticeship reform be noted.

(Action: HR Adviser)

594. **PAY POLICY STATEMENT**

Report PER/18/10 presented the Committee with a pay policy statement for 2017/18 prior to its consideration by the Personnel Committee for recommended adoption by the Council on 11 July 2018 in compliance with Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.

Members noted the presentation of this report to the Local Joint Committee and its discussion set out below:

"The HR Adviser reminded members of the background to this matter which was an annual legislative requirement for transparency purposes, largely in relation to senior officer pay and largely retrospective. She then took members through the main features of the statement, the most recent changes involving a restructure of the Chief Officer structure in 2017 and related severance package and resulting

The Portfolio Holder for HR matters suggested that the information on gender pay gap, also due for consideration by the Council in July, should be included with the Pay Policy Statement item.

Responding to questions from a Councillor, the Head of HR and Customer Services clarified that the panel of members referred to in paragraph 1.6 of the Statement was not a standing panel but was convened at the appropriate time."

It was agreed that clarification of paragraph 6.1 of the Statement, in respect of the remuneration of the lowest paid employees, be circulated to the Personnel Committee prior to submission of the Statement to full Council.

**RESOLVED** that:

1. subject to the above clarification, the Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18, attached as Appendix A to the report, be recommended to the Council for adoption; and
2. the information arising from the gender pay gap report be included in the Pay Policy Statement when submitted to the full Council in July 2018.

(Action: HR Adviser/Head of HR and Customer Services)

595. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Noted that the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 4 July 2018 at the Civic Offices, Elstree Way, Borehamwood.

596. **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED** that, under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I, Schedule 12A to the said Act:-

<u>Part II Agenda Item</u>	<u>Paragraphs in Schedule 12A</u>
1. Minutes of the LJC Meeting held on 13 February 2018	1, 2 and 4
2. Sickness Absence Management	1, 2 and 4

597. **MINUTES OF LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE - 13 FEBRUARY 2018**

The minutes of the Local Joint Committee meeting held on 13 February 2018 were noted.

598. **SICKNESS ABSENCE MANAGEMENT**

Report PER/18/07 provided Members with details of sickness absence levels during 2017/2018 and highlighted the out-turns for March 2018.

Members noted the presentation of this report to the Local Joint Committee and its discussion as set out below:

“The Head of HR and Customer Services highlighted in particular the cumulative figure for short term sickness absence in the 12-month period ending 31 March 2018 which stood at 3.24 days per full time equivalent. She said that this figure, whilst raised slightly over January and February, was still well within the target of no more than 3.5 days per employee per year and compared well with other organisations. She highlighted the main three categories for sickness absence in the last twelve months, as set out in report paragraph 2.5. She confirmed that efforts were continuing to reduce sickness absence with a range of

wellbeing initiatives available including a roof garden for staff and a new yoga course.

Responding to some Councillor questions, the Head of HR and Customer Services confirmed that the Council's winter health and wellbeing day routinely included free flu jabs for staff which had a high take-up and were well publicised by means of the weekly staff emails."

The Head of HR and Customer Services referred the Committee to the further case information provided in Appendix A of the Personnel Committee report in respect of the reasons for long term sickness absence. She confirmed that, of the seven cases cited, most of these were in street scene services with one recent departure.

**RESOLVED** that the out-turn for sickness absence levels in the 12-month period ended 31 March 2018, as set out in report Appendices A and B, along with the related analysis set out in the report, be noted.

**CLOSURE: 8.15 pm**

**CHAIRMAN**