

STAFFING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 7th November, 2012

Present:- Cllr Mrs Hambleton – in the Chair

Councillors Howells, Olszewski, Stringer, Studd, Sweeney, Tagg, Taylor.J and Mrs Williams

1. APPOINTMENT OF A CHAIR

The Head of Central Services confirmed that Full Council had delegated authority to the Council Leader and Chair of the Transformation and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee to establish the details of this Committee. It had been agreed that the Chair of the Committee be from the party in administration.

A nomination for Chair had been received for Cllr Mrs Hambleton.

Resolved: That Cllr Mrs Hambleton be appointed as Chair of the Committee.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Mrs Hambleton declared that she was a retired member of an active Trade Union.

4. TERMS OF REFERENCE

A report was submitted to inform the Committee of its Terms of Reference as agreed by Full Council at its meeting held on 11 July 2012.

Resolved: That the report be received.

5. TRAINING

A report was submitted to inform the Committee of arrangements for training. All members of the Staffing Committee would be expected to take part in related training as and when required, and refresher training would be made available at regular intervals.

Members queried whether there was a register of training that Members had already undertaken and as to whether future training would be recorded. It was confirmed that training was recorded for Elected Members and that a budget for this training was already allocated on an annual basis.

Resolved: That the report be received.

6. PAY PROTECTION

A report was submitted to enable the Committee to consider the current arrangements for protecting the pay of those employees whose pay grades were reduced as a result of restructuring. It was considered by the Executive Management Team that the current arrangements were fair, equitable and reasonable, taking into account the relevant factors, including mitigation of the loss of income of affected employees and the potential cost to the authority.

Some members considered that the current scheme was not overly generous but expressed concern that it could affect people differently depending upon where they were in their career. It was suggested that three years protection was too much but that a compromise position could be found as the current scheme did appear limiting and the Council still needed to be able to attract new employees.

Other Members however suggested that the current 12 month scheme was preferential as it would be Council Tax payers supporting it and that any additional cost incurred would be an additional burden to the tax payer.

Clarification was requested regarding section 9.1 of the report regarding the additional cost of £14,240 should the recommendation from the Employee Consultative Committee be implemented and the percentage of Council Tax that this would form. This information was not currently available.

Members agreed that a general principal needed to be established rather than focusing on the three staff referred to in the report and the questions was raised as to how the current practice fitted in with other organisations. It was stated that the recommendation from the Employee Consultative Committee had been based on figures received from other councils.

An amendment to the recommendation was put forward:

That the recommendation of the Employee Consultative Committee at 1.3 in the report be the policy of this Council.

It was confirmed that should the amended recommendation be implemented that the three employees currently under pay protection would be entitled to longer protection backdated at a cost of £14,240 as stated in section 9.1 of the report.

Members questioned where the money for this would come from. It was stated that if the money was not already in the budget then agreement for the extra amount would need to come from Cabinet (up to £50,000) or Full Council. It could not be confirmed whether there were resources to cover this in the budget as it currently existed.

It was confirmed that the amended recommendation would be implemented retrospectively:

That the recommendation of the Employee Consultative Committee at 1.3 in the report be the policy of this Council and that this be backdated to include the three staff referred to in section 9.1 of the report.

The Committee voted on the amended resolution with 5 in favour and 4 against.

Resolved: That the recommendation of the Employee Consultative Committee at 1.3 in the report be the policy of this Council and that this be backdated to include the three staff referred to in section 9.1 of the report.

7. **ARRANGEMENTS FOR EMPLOYEES ASSISTING WITH CIVIL EMERGENCY RESPONSE**

A report was submitted to obtain approval for a set of terms and conditions to apply to employees undertaking alternative roles during civil emergency situations and to facilitate the training of appropriate staff. The proposed arrangements would assist the council to meet its obligation in the provision of civil emergency response to the public and the council's partner organisations. The proposals would also ensure that employees who are assigned to specific roles were suitably trained and were treated fairly, consistently and without detriment and that the staffing costs associated with civil emergency response provision were reasonable and justifiable.

Section 2.3 of the report highlighted the recommendation of the Employee Consultative Committee:

The committee recommended that the following wording:

'In the event that employees are required to work additional hours to their contracted hours, the usual arrangement regarding overtime payments will apply, based on the evaluated grade of the temporary position and in accordance with the relevant parts of Section 4 of the 2005 (Single Status) Collective Agreement (Overtime Working)'

be replaced with:

'In the event that employees are required to work additional hours to their contracted hours, the usual arrangements regarding overtime will apply.'

The changes recommended by the Employee Consultative Committee were proposed and seconded and voted upon with 5 in favour and 4 against.

Resolved: (a) That the following wording:

'In the event that employees are required to work additional hours to their contracted hours, the usual arrangement regarding overtime payments will apply, based on the evaluated grade of the temporary position and in accordance with the relevant parts of Section 4 of the 2005 (Single Status) Collective Agreement (Overtime Working)'

be replaced with:

'In the event that employees are required to work additional hours to their contracted hours, the usual arrangements regarding overtime will apply.'

(b) That with the exception of the changes in (a) that the terms and conditions as proposed at Appendix A be adopted.

(c) That officers be authorised to roll out relevant training to appropriate staff in order to meet the needs of the Council during civil emergency situations.

Recommendations

Reasons

8. REVIEW OF MARKET SUPPLEMENTS

A report was submitted to confirm a future level of market supplement for a total of 4 posts in order to maintain the future continuity of service provision by ensuring the recruitment/retention of suitably qualified and experienced staff.

The proposed number and future level of market supplements was deemed by the Executive Management Team to be fair and reasonable both in relation to the employees who would receive them and those who would not and should be sufficient to enable the retention and recruitment of suitably qualified and experienced staff.

The matter was considered at the Employees Consultative Committee on 17 October 2012. The recommendation of the ECC was that consideration be given to extending the current level of supplement paid for a further 6 months (i.e. to 31 May 2013) due to the delay in confirming the future level of payments.

Member queried whether there were still recruitment problems regarding planning and development staff. Officers stated that this could not be confirmed as the Council had not attempted any recruitment in the last 12 months. It was however thought that staff would look elsewhere for employment should the supplement not be continued. Members agreed that it would not be desirable to return to the situation as it was in 2006 when officers were recruited but left soon afterwards.

Some members considered that more facts were required before an informed decision could be made such as performance outputs, condition of the market and budgetary implications. It was stated that this information was already in existence and had been considered by the Planning committee, Transformation and Resources Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

There were no alternative recommendations and the recommendation as stated on the report was voted upon with 7 in favour and 2 abstaining.

Resolved: That, having taken into account the detailed information contained in the report at Part II of the agenda, Market Forces Supplement payments equivalent to 4 spinal column points be applied to the four posts where this has been identified as necessary by appropriate benchmarking exercises, for the period 1 December 2012 to 30 June 2015.

Chair