

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the proceedings at a meeting of the Human Resources Committee held in the District Council Chamber, South Lakeland House, Kendal, on Tuesday, 1 February 2022, at 3.00 p.m.

Present

Councillors

Rachael Hogg (Chairman)

Pat Bell
Philip Dixon

Brian Rendell
Shirley-Anne Wilson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Janet Willis (Vice-Chairman).

Officers

Lawrence Conway	Chief Executive
Julia Krier	Legal, Governance and Democracy Specialist
Courtney Langhorne	Case Management Officer (Support Services)
Charlie McShane	Case Management Officer - Human Resources
Charles Officer	HR Lead Specialist
David Sykes	Director of Strategy, Innovation and Resources

HR/1 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the Chairman be authorised to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 20th July 2021.

HR/2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were raised.

HR/3 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUDED ITEMS

RESOLVED - That the items in Part II of the Agenda be dealt with following the exclusion of the press and public.

The Urgent item to be considered in Part I of the meeting for approval by committee members.

HR/4 PAY POLICY STATEMENT FOR 2022/23

The HR Specialist presented the Pay Policy statement for 2022/23 to the Human Resources Committee providing transparency on the setting of pay to employees, detailing in particular the pay of senior management.

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The Pay Policy Statement 2022/23 be recommended to Full Council for approval; and
- (2) The minimum living wage payment of £9.50 per hour from 1 April 2022 be agreed to staff who fall within the C grade on the Council's spinal scale with the exception of apprentices.

HR/5**HUMAN RESOURCES SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Note - this matter was being included as an urgent item of business under Section 100B (4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, as the Chair of HR was of the opinion that it required consideration without delay. A decision was required because of the retirement of the current Director of Strategy Innovation and Resources. To delay a decision until the next scheduled meeting of the HR Committee would mean that the recruitment process would be delayed.

The Committee was asked to confirm membership of the Sub Committee (for interviews being held on 23 February 2022) which needed to be politically balanced (3 Liberal Democrats and 2 Conservative Members) and include at least one Cabinet Member.

It was noted that there was a requirement for the Sub-Committee to be politically balanced and therefore for Liberal Democrat members to be allocated 3 seats on the Sub-Committee and for Conservatives to be allocated two seats. During discussion it was noted that by agreement the HR Committee could agree to allocate a position on the Sub-Committee to a Labour member, Cllr Shirley-Anne Wilson having expressed an interest in sitting on the Sub-Committee. It was further noted during discussions that, as there were only two Liberal Democrat members present at the HR Committee meeting, the appointment of a third Liberal Democrat member to the Sub-Committee would be delegated and agreed in consultation with the relevant Liberal Democrat members of the HR Committee who were available on the interview date in question.

RESOLVED – That

- (1) Councillors Pat Bell, Philip Dixon, Rachel Hogg and Shirley-Anne Wilson be confirmed as Members of Sub-Committee for interviews to be held on 23 February 2022; and
- (2) that the appointment of the remaining Member of the Sub Committee be delegated to the Chair of HR Committee to appoint a Liberal Democrat member of HR Committee following consultations regarding availability.

HR/6**JOINT CONSULTATIVE PANEL**

- *Paragraph 4 - Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under the authority.*

RESOLVED – That the notes of the meeting of the Joint Consultative Panel held on 13 July 2021 be received.

HR/7 HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

- *Paragraph 2 - Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual.*

The Director of Strategy, Innovation and Resources provided an update on the Health, Safety and Wellbeing board's discussion confirming a number of changes. Officers continued to focus on safe operations in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and health and wellbeing of employees. The support mechanisms in place for staff and encouragement were discussed referencing social aspects of working.

The Committee discussed staff involvement and sickness absence, requesting updated reports on Covid-19 absences. The Human Resources Lead Specialist explained that the Council's smart working policy (introduced through Customer Connect) enabled staff who were isolating to work from home and this had therefore assisted with reducing the impacts of Covid-19 absences on the Council. He further clarified that, in accordance with guidance from the National Green Book, Covid-19 absences were not reported as part of annual sickness absences. It was confirmed that these figures would be shared in the annual sickness report at the next meeting of the Human Resources Committee. It was noted that customer-facing services had dealt admirably with the challenges of Covid-19 and with little disruption to residents.

There was discussion regarding the proposal to introduce 'pulse mini surveys' to staff and the Director of Strategy Innovation and Resources confirmed that such surveys would be designed to take soundings from within the organisation regarding readiness for change.

In response to a query regarding sickness absences, the Human Resources Lead Specialist provided an overview of the support and policies in place.

During discussion, a query was raised regarding the percentages of employees working from home and in response the Human Resources Lead Specialist noted that the Customer Connect business case had envisaged a 70/30 split regarding working from home and office-based working respectively. It was confirmed that on average 70-80% of staff continued to work from home with approximately 20% working from the office.

In response to a query concerning communications with staff regarding Local Government Reorganisation, the Chief Executive updated the Committee that the Council had been preparing the organisation for the future through fortnightly staff briefings online, regular updates through the LGR Programme Board and communications shared weekly on the programme's progress.

RESOLVED – That

(1) The minutes of the meeting of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board held on 21 September 2021 be received.

HR/8 ORGANISATIONAL ESTABLISHMENT REPORT

- *Paragraph 1, 2, 3 - Information relating to any individual. Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)*

The Human Resources Specialist presented the report which provided members with an updated organisational establishment list further to the previous update in July 2021. .

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The changes to the organisational establishment and accompanying appendix to the report be noted; and
- (2) The updated Establishment List as at Appendix A be approved; and
- (3) The Establishment List be recommended to Council to be used to update the 2022/23 to 2025/26 salary budgets to be approved by Full Council and a summary of the establishment be included in the budget setting report to enable Council to approve the overall staffing requirements.

Prior to closing the meeting, the Chair offered a vote of thanks to the Director of Strategy Innovation and Resources on his forthcoming retirement from the Council.

The meeting ended at 3.47 p.m.