

Time began: 4.00pm
Time ended: 4.30pm

**Personnel Committee
19 March 2014**

Present Councillor Roberts (Chair),
Councillors Ashburner, Barker, Carr, S Khan and MacDonald

45/13 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jackson, Jennings and Redfern.

46/13 Late items to be introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

47/13 Declarations of Interest

There were none.

48/13 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 January 2014 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

49/13 Update on Staffing Implications of 2014/15 Medium Term Financial Plan

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Resources on Update on staffing implications of 2014/15 MTFP. The report was presented by the Strategic HR Business Partner.

It was reported that in line with the Council's approach to previous consultation on the budget, regular corporate trade union budget consultation meetings had been set up to help to ensure that the Council met its statutory consultation obligations. It was further reported that trade union budget consultation meetings had been held since 5 November 2013, initially on a weekly basis and then on a fortnightly basis.

Members noted that at the trade union budget consultation meeting on 5 November 2013, a Section 188 letter was issued to the trade unions to open consultation over possible dismissals on the grounds of redundancy, and to enable the Council to actively seek applications for voluntary redundancy in order to mitigate potential compulsory redundancies.

It was reported that, in addition to the regular corporate trade union budget consultation meetings, directorates had been consulted locally on their restructure

proposals to deliver staffing savings. It was also reported that updates on the progress of local consultation had been shared at corporate trade union budget consultation meetings.

Members noted that as the local consultation on the restructure proposals had progressed, voluntary redundancy requests had been considered and, where appropriate, approved. Members also noted that opportunities to redeploy any staff at risk were also actively being explored.

It was reported that following appropriate consultation, a number of employees were now at risk of compulsory redundancy, with some employees already having been served notice of dismissal by reason of redundancy. It was further noted that redundancy dismissals were being made in accordance with the existing Consultation, Restructuring and Redundancy Policy.

Resolved to note the report and current status.

50/13 Pay and Reward Project Update

The Committee received a report of the Strategic Director of Resources on Pay and Reward Project Update. The report was presented by the Pay and Reward Project Manager.

It was reported that the new pay and grading structure and package of revised terms and conditions of employment would be implemented from 1 April 2014 and would apply to approximately 3,500 employees in Council Directorates. Members noted that a report to confirm the final package of terms and conditions implemented for employees in Council Directorates would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

It was reported that there were two aspects to the project:

1. Implementation of job evaluation for all posts in scope of the review
2. Harmonisation of terms and conditions of employment for all posts in scope of the review.

It was reported that the job evaluation process was now complete and a new pay structure had been adopted. Additionally, terms and conditions of employment would be harmonised for all employees in scope of the review. It was further reported that the new pay structure had 14 grades commencing at a new minimum earnings level of £14,880 (equating to £7.71 per hour) and that 60 per cent of employees would receive an increase in their basic rate of pay. Members noted that 20 per cent would remain at the same salary level and 20 per cent would receive a reduction. It was reported that all employees had a right of appeal against their job evaluation outcome and that any appeals would not take place until job evaluation had been implemented in April 2014.

It was reported that the Personnel Committee had endorsed a package of revised terms and conditions of employment proposals at its meeting on 18 July 2013. It was further reported that the Committee had granted delegated authority to an Employers

Side Negotiating Panel chaired by the Leader of the Council to progress consultation with trade unions, and modify the proposals as necessary to support the achievement of a collective agreement. Members noted that there had been 20 formal consultation meetings with the trade unions and that they had not brought forward any substantive counter proposals.

It was reported that the Employer's Side Negotiating Panel had made a change to the Committee's proposal for two month pay protection for those incurring a reduction in basic salary. Members noted that pay protection would now be as follows:

- Up to 10% reduction – 12 month pay protection;
- 10.01 – 14.99% reduction – 18 month pay protection; and
- In excess of 15% - 24 month pay protection.

It was reported that a Section 188 notice was issued in November to bring the process to a conclusion. It was further reported that between November and December more than 30 individual consultation sessions were held to engage direct with employees and over 1000 employees attended. The purpose of these individual consultation sessions was to provide briefings on the Council's proposals, invite comments and views from the workforce and to provide any individual clarification that employees required in order to make an informed choice as to whether to voluntarily accept the new proposals.

Members noted that the 3,500 employees were invited to voluntarily agree to vary their contract of employment to incorporate the new terms and conditions of employment and new grading structure. Members also noted that 70 per cent did agree to voluntary variation and the 30 per cent who didn't were formally served notice of dismissal. It was reported that the 30 per cent had been dismissed and offered re-engagement effective from 1 May 2014. It was further reported that 30 employees had appealed against the decision to dismiss. It was noted that any of the 30 per cent who had been dismissed were able to sign up to the new terms and conditions at any point until the end of April. It was reported that any employees dismissed and offered re-engagement who attended work on their next normal working day after 1 May 2014, would be considered to have accepted the new terms and conditions.

Members asked what the grounds for a dismissal appeal were. It was reported that appeals against dismissal would be dealt with under the Council's Appeals Policy with the modification that appeals would be considered by Strategic or Service Directors as agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 8 January 2014.

Members asked whether those being dismissed and offered re-engagement would receive a better contract than those who voluntarily signed up to the new terms and conditions. It was confirmed that there would be no difference in the contracts.

Members noted that those employees, who had submitted an intention to appeal against their new grade, believed that the job evaluation did not reflect their duties and responsibilities. It was reported that those employees would be invited to re-submit their Job Information Questionnaires, if they did go ahead with their appeals.

Members noted that some of those employees, who were the subject of dismissal and re-engagement, would have been entitled to an increase in basic pay from 1 April if they had voluntarily signed up to the new terms and conditions. Members asked whether those employees would receive an increase in pay from April or May if they did at this stage decide to accept the new terms and conditions. It was confirmed that employees in those circumstances would receive an increase from 1 April 2014.

Resolved:

- 1. to note the current position on implementing the National Single Status Agreement for staff employed in Council Directorates; and**
- 2. to agree that a further report is submitted to the next meeting of the Committee to confirm the final package of terms and conditions implemented for employees in Council Directorates.**

MINUTES END