

Time commenced – 6:00pm
Time finished - 7.00pm

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
19 NOVEMBER 2009**

Present: Councillor Rawson (Chair)
Councillors Berry, Carr, Jones

29/09 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Hird, Nath and Roberts.

30/09 Late Items Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

31/09 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations

32/09 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2009 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair

33/09 Changes to the Christmas and New Year Closure Arrangements

The Committee considered a report which stated that since 1993/94, the Council has operated a policy of a block closure of its administrative centres for the Christmas and New Year period. To enable the block closure to take place, some or all of the two extra statutory days and two concessionary days have been used. Any of these days not required for the block closure are added to employees' leave entitlement. Under the current arrangements, the administrative centres would have closed at 1 pm on Friday 24 December 2010 and re-opened on Tuesday 4 January 2011. The report said that it was no longer felt to be appropriate for our customers to be denied access to some of the Council's services for the whole of the Christmas and New Year period. Arrangements for 2009/10 had already been agreed so that the earliest we could make any changes was for 2010/11. The report recommended that from this period, the Council's administrative centres would be closed on the statutory holidays only. All of the extra statutory and concessionary days would be added to employees' annual leave entitlement.

The Officer presenting the report explained that the proposal had been raised by the trade unions at a recent Conditions of Service meeting and he gave Members a full account of the unions' views on the proposal.

Resolved

- 1. To defer the decision in order to ask customers what they would like to see and to allow consultation to take place with unions, staff and the Pointer Panel.**
- 2. To ascertain details of savings from a climate change point of view.**

34/09 Review of Discretionary Compensations Regulations Policy

The Committee considered a report which stated that the Council's policy statement made in accordance with regulation 7 of these regulations was issued in April 2007 and was attached to the report. It was agreed that the policy would be reviewed every two years. The review was now overdue. The regulations gave the employer the discretion to calculate statutory redundancy payments on the basis of an employee's actual week's pay. The Council chose to exercise this discretion which was a continuation of existing practice. The regulations also gave the employer the discretion to award a one-off lump sum payment of up to 104 weeks' pay, inclusive of any statutory redundancy payment, in cases of redundancy or termination in the interest of the efficient exercise of the Council's function. The Council chose not to exercise this discretion as it was felt to be difficult to develop non-discriminatory criteria.

Resolved to confirm the existing policy on the Local Government (Early Termination of Employment) (Discretionary Compensation) Regulations 2006 with no amendments.

35/09 Travel Plan Update

The Committee considered a report which stated that consultations had been ongoing with Trade Unions Representatives since 3 April 2009 on the proposed new arrangements for business travel. Following a failure to agree on the proposals at the end of May 2009, notice was issued to Trade Unions Representatives that in the event that no alternative could be agreed, management would have no option but to recommend that the changes should be brought in through a process of dismissal and re-engagement, but with the option for employees to voluntarily agree to the changes if they wished to.

Both parties had demonstrated some movement towards the end of the consultations with management making an offer of £500 compensation for non-

school based essential users. Trade Unions Representatives made a counter proposal to restructure the current NJC schemes, reducing the number of allowance and mileage rate bandings from 3 to 2 and suggested possible scope for removing the allowance from those with a long history of not claiming mileage. Serious consideration was given to the counter offer but analysis showed that it could only deliver an annual saving of £85k against the £800k required. Detailed analysis of similar scenarios concluded that it would not be possible to achieve the equitable treatment of existing essential and casual users within the NJC framework at sustainable cost. Whilst Management welcomed Trades Union Representatives' willingness to engage in negotiations and offer a counter proposal, a modified NJC scheme framework was not an acceptable alternative and this conclusion has been endorsed by the Chief Executive, Chief Officers and Leadership.

Management made a final revised offer of compensation of £1,000 for essential car users and £100 for casual car users on 25 September and Trade Union Representatives agreed to consult their members on this offer. They did not, however, recommend acceptance.

At a meeting on Friday 6 November 2009, Trade Union Representatives informed us that, as a result of their consultation with members, they were rejecting the final offer of compensation. We do not know how many union members responded to the consultation or what the balance of views was between those that did respond. We would be writing to the Trades Unions to request these details.

A hearing of the Disputes Resolution Sub Committee has now been arranged for 2 December to consider representations from both management and the Trade Unions.

Authority to hear disputes and make recommendations under the Procedure for Settling Disputes is delegated to the Disputes Resolution Sub Committee, under Part 3 D of the Constitution. The Sub Committee is also empowered to make recommendations to Council on such matters. The authority to implement such recommendations is, however, delegated to the Personnel Committee and this report recommends that the Committee in turn delegates this authority to the Chief Executive.

Resolved

- 1. To note the outcome of the consultation process with Trades Union Representatives.**
- 2. To note that a hearing of the Disputes Resolution Sub Committee has been convened for 2 December 2009.**

- 3. To delegate authority to the Chief Executive to implement the recommendations of the Sub Committee.**

36/09 Working for the Council – Employment Statistics

The Committee considered a report which stated that every year we collect our equality employment statistics and produce equality employment objectives. We produce the statistics in a booklet and this is posted on our website and reported to the three Diversity Forums as well as the three Employee Networks. The figures are analysed and a commentary is included within the booklet. Each department studies the figures and then makes some equality objectives to help increase the representation of equality groups in the workplace. The booklet also includes progress reports on the Pakistani Recruitment Initiative and the Succession Planning Pool for potential Assistant Directors and Heads of Service.

Resolved

- 1. To note the annual equality employment statistics and the objectives highlighted to improve representation of equality groups in the workplace.**
- 2. To request the minutes of the Diversity Forums when they consider this item to see the comments they make.**

37/09 Introducing a Competency Framework

The Committee considered a report which stated that for the recruitment of the two new Strategic Directors we have developed a set of behavioural competencies, based on our existing Leadership Principles – Appendix 2. Our recruitment agency will benchmark candidates against them during the selection process. Behavioural competencies allow us to describe actions and concerns that will contribute to success in any given role and thus help us to select the best candidates as well as develop existing employees. We plan to build on this approach and develop a competency framework for the whole Council. This work will be carried out in tandem with the restructuring of the workforce. A competency framework will strengthen our approach to deploying and managing our people. It will add value to recruitment, appraisal, learning and development and talent management. We will discuss the development of a competency framework with the trade unions.

Resolved

- 1. To note the use of behavioural competencies for the recruitment of the two new Strategic Director posts.**

2. To approve that the development of a competency framework cover the whole workforce.

38/09 Pakistani Recruitment Initiative

This item was deferred until the meeting to be held on 7 December 2009.

39/09 Craft Bonus Update

This item was deferred until the meeting to be held on 7 December 2009.

40/09 Council Restructure

This item was deferred until the meeting to be held on 7 December 2009.

41/09 Pay Review Update

The item was deferred until the meeting to be held on 7 December 2009.

Chair of the next ensuing meeting
at which these minutes were signed