

MINUTES OF MEETING STAFFING AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, 25TH NOVEMBER, 2019, 7.00 - 8.50 PM

PRESENT:

**Councillors: Makbule Gunes (Chair), Patrick Berryman (Vice-Chair),
Gideon Bull, Paul Dennison and Reg Rice**

6. FILMING AT MEETINGS

Noted.

7. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS (IF ANY)

None.

8. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

9. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

10. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / PRESENTATIONS / QUESTIONS

None.

11. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2019 be approved as a correct record.

12. REVIEW OF COUNCIL DISCIPLINARY POLICY

Ian Morgan, Reward Strategy Manager, introduced the report as set out. HR was carrying out a rolling review of HR policies, and the consensus was that greater clarity was required on the disciplinary policy. Practice notes had been produced to use alongside the policy, and provided information on suggested forms and templates to use.

Officers responded to questions from the Committee:

- Paragraph 3.3 of the policy referred to legal representation. It was important to recognise that in some instances disciplinary decisions could affect future employment, as well as employment in the Council therefore certain individuals would require legal representation at an earlier stage of the process. All

employees were entitled to have a colleague or workplace representative at each stage.

- Guidance around timelines had been produced in the past, however, it had been largely ignored. The practice notes had therefore been introduced to provide guidance for dealing with disciplinaries in a timely manner.
- Members would only be required to attend an Employment Tribunal hearings when the Council's legal representative considered that there was material evidence to be heard.

It was suggested by a Member of the Committee that recommendation set out at 3.2 of the report be updated to include the Chair of the Staffing and Remuneration Committee, and the relevant Cabinet Member.

RESOLVED that

- i. **The new Disciplinary Policy and Practice Notes be approved and implemented with effect from 1 January 2020, with a series of training sessions and workshops to be provided to HR staff and line managers; and**
- ii. **The Director of Customers, Transformation and Resources, the Chair of the Staffing and Remuneration Committee, and the relevant Cabinet Member be delegated the power to make minor changes to the policy and practice notes.**

13. UPDATE TO APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME

Daksha Desai, Interim Head of HR and OD, introduced the report as set out. This was an update for the Committee to note, following the update report provided in June 2019. Since the last meeting, the team had met with Members to discuss areas where the Council could improve.

NOTED:

- Apprenticeships were for a minimum of 12 months, and paid an average for £12,000. The criteria to join an apprenticeship scheme varied, based on basic qualifications.
- The target for apprenticeships was set by Central Government, and the target could include both new and existing staff.
- 25% of an organisation's apprenticeship levy could be attached to other organisations – work was being carried out with the Economic Regeneration Team to see how this could work with smaller businesses in the borough.
- For any restructures within the Council affecting over 30 staff, at least one apprenticeship role had to be created.

Officers responded to questions from the Committee:

- There were set guidelines on apprenticeship salaries according to the age of the apprentice.
- The apprenticeship levy could not be used for administration or pastoral support, only for training.

- Further information could be provided on the work carried out by the Economic Regeneration team – there was a dedicated apprenticeship co-ordinator within the service.
- Further thought needed to be given to advertisement of apprenticeships. An update could be provided to a future meeting on this.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

14. DIGNITY AT WORK PRACTICE NOTES

Ian Morgan, Reward Strategy Manager, introduced the report as set out. Following a short discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Dignity at Work Practice Notes be noted.

15. SOCIAL MEDIA PRACTICE NOTE

Sinead Booth, HR Policy Officer, introduced the report as set out. Following a short discussion it was

RESOLVED that the implementation of the Social Media Practice Notes be noted.

16. PEOPLE REPORT - DECEMBER 2019

Daksha Desai, Interim Head of HR and OD, introduced the report as set out.

Officers responded to questions from the Committee:

- The average amount of sickness days was between 9 and 9.5 – the Council target was 6 days. Analysis of sickness reasons had been carried out, and 29% of sickness taken was due to mental health / stress.
- The next set of 'My Conversation' outcomes would be available in January.
- Where services used agency staff, the HR Business partner for the service would investigate with managers as to why permanent staff were not recruited. This could be due to genuine gaps in recruitment, or in trends in certain areas such as social workers.
- Any appointment of consultants must be approved by the relevant Director.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

17. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR: Councillor Makbule Gunes

Signed by Chair

Date