

Meeting: Council

Date: Wednesday 23 February 2011

Subject: Agile working programme – revised and new human resources policies

Report of: Councillor Tester on behalf of the Cabinet

The Council is asked to consider the minute and resolution of the Cabinet meeting held on 15 December 2010 as set out below.

Further copies of the report to Cabinet are available on request – please see end of this report. A copy may be seen on the Council's website at:

<http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/council/meetings/cabinet/>

The Council is recommended to:-

(1) Approve the revised and new human resources policies and procedures.

(2) Approve the arrangements for allowances and expenses and the provision that these be reviewed at two yearly intervals by the Head of Human Resources in conjunction with Head of Infrastructure in line with cost of living changes.

Minute Extract
CABINET 15 December 2010

***104 Agile working programme (AWP) update** (Cabinet, 1 September 2010, page 133, minute 50).

- 104.1 Cabinet considered the report of the head of infrastructure giving an update on progress for the 3rd quarter covering the period between 2 September and 15 December. The AWP would allow the Council to vacate leased premises at 66 and 68 Grove Road, re-locate staff at 1 Grove Road and generate savings from reduced accommodation needs and technological innovation.
- 104.2 The delivery phase of the programme was now well advanced. The building works were 50% complete and some groups of staff were already using some of the new technologies in the refurbished space. A transformation project plan had been created which listed every individual affected by the AWP and detailed their work styles, any temporary move dates, final move dates, delivery dates for new technology and training

dates. This would drive the transition from the old buildings and work styles to the new building and work styles.

104.3 The AWP had a tremendously challenging timescale and in 10 months had progressed from approval, through a range of selection and procurement processes to a stage where the building blocks for the new ways of working were largely in place. The next 3 months would present huge challenges as approximately 250 staff moved into the new work styles in order to vacate 66/68 Grove Road on time and deliver an annual saving in excess of £300,000. The project was still on time and on budget (with any overspends being absorbed by savings made elsewhere) and there was a high degree of confidence that delivery would be achieved on time and within budget. The overall estimate of cost was £3m as compared with the original budget of £3.1m.

104.5 The final period of the AWP would run from 15 December 2010 to 30 March 2011 and in that period, the following key milestones were due to be reached:

- Building works completed by 31 January 2011.
- All staff equipped with new technology and moved into new work styles by 14 March 2011.
- Exit from 66/68 Grove Road completed by 24 March 2011.

104.6 Within the move towards more agile working, it had been necessary to revise a number of the council's human resources policies and practices. A portfolio of learning resources to support these changes had been designed, sourced and put in place. Cabinet was asked to endorse the following principles governing changes to people management terms and conditions and intervention resources:

- To improve and reinforce good practice in people management as the council entered an agile working environment.
- To ensure continued value for money and prudent corporate expenditure in people management when supporting alternative ways of working.
- To design, implement and manage induction and learning interventions consistent with the agile working environment, promoting optimum use of available technology.

The suite of policy documents and procedures guiding managers and employees in the transition to agile working had been the subject of consultation with the trade union and included:

- Rebranded and developed agile working policy and associated procedures (formerly home and remote working).
- Flexible working policy updated.
- Employment contract variations – standard clauses.
- Adaptations and enhancements to corporate health and safety procedures to support employees in working effectively in the new context.
- 'Agile' good practice guides and workplace components to ensure continued delivery of attendance and other performance management processes in the changing organisation.

- Administrative tools including e-forms and electronic templates to support communication, decision making and paperless record keeping in the future reality.

Since many of these changes impacted upon the terms and conditions of employment of council staff, approval would need to be sought from full council. Copies of relevant documentation were available for inspection in the members' room, the town hall or from human resources.

104.7 Cabinet was asked to agree the following allowance and expenses provisions of the new agile working policy and processes:

- Confirmation of IT equipment levels for different work styles.
- Provision of a one-off allowance of £150 for home workers towards provision of suitable furniture.
- Confirmation of travel expenses policy for different work styles.
- Provision of a tax free allowance for home workers at the statutory tax-free limit of £156 per year.

Cabinet was also asked to agree delegated authority for sums to be reviewed two yearly intervals.

*104.8 **Resolved (key decision):** (1) That the key activities and progress made against the agile working programme plan be noted and endorsed.

(2) That the allowance and expenses' provisions of the new agile working policy be agreed.

(3) Approve delegated authority for the allowance and expenses provisions to be reviewed at two yearly intervals by head of human resources in conjunction with head of infrastructure in line with cost of living changes.

(4) That the key programme milestones for December 2010 to March 2011 be endorsed.

*(5) That full council be recommended to approve the revised and new human resources policies and procedures and endorse the allowance and expenses resolutions at (2) and (3) above.

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