



## Lewes District Council

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### Employment Committee

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **Employment Committee** held in **Rooms 7 and 8, Southover House, Lewes** on **Monday, 23 April 2007** at 10.00am

**Present:**

**Employer's Side:**

Councillors R T Crocker (Chair), N R Turner and D O Rogers OBE

**Employees' Side:**

Mr J Betteridge, Mr S Budgen, Mrs S Pattenden and Mr G Purdye

#### Minutes

#### Action

**20 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**21 Apologies for Absence/Declaration of Substitute Members**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E N Collicot and A L Small.

**22 Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Crocker declared a non-prejudicial interest in Agenda Item 9 as the particular employee under discussion was known to him.

**23 Equal Pay Audit Progress**

The Committee considered Report No 78/07 the purpose of which was to report progress on the Equal Pay Audit Progress action plan.

The Head of Business Services reported a 0.4% reduction in the pay "gap" within the Council. This disparity was unlikely to be reduced further without fresh recruitment to senior management posts. There had been almost no recruitment to such posts since the Equal Pay Audit of January 2006.

**Resolved:**

**23.1** That the Report be noted.

**24 The Health Act 2006 – Smoke-free Premises and Vehicles**

The Committee considered Report No 78/07 which sought to implement the smoke-free provisions in the Health Act 2006.

The Head of Business Services pointed out that the Act came into effect on 1 July 2007 but as an enforcement authority the Council wished to set an example by implementing requirements on 1 June 2007. The Cabinet recognised the benefits afforded to both individual and public health and was making recommendations to Council on 25 April 2007 regarding future arrangements towards no smoking on Council-owned land and property (excluding housing stock).

Employees' side representatives were content with the enforceable legislation and its proposed introduction a month in advance. On the possible future proposals, the Employees' side representatives thought that a review of smoking breaks should be extended to all reasons why employees may leave their place of work but recognised that this might result in restricting the flexibility now enjoyed by all employees. The issue of employees visiting customers in their homes where smoking might take place was covered by the legislation. The Head of Business Services stated that non-statutory enforcement issues such as smoking outside Council buildings would be addressed by management.

Councillors agreed that it was not the business of the Committee to solve enforcement problems. Beyond the implementation of statutory requirements, the Council would work progressively towards solutions of further issues.

**Resolved:**

- 24.1** That the smoke free provisions in the Health Act 2006 be implemented from 1 June 2007;
- 24.2** That the Head of Business Services be requested to amend the current smoking policy to meet the requirements of the Act and inform all staff of its contents;
- 24.3** That the actions taken so far, which encourage staff to stop smoking, be noted; and
- 24.4** That the Head of Business Services be requested to bring a further report to the next meeting on proposals to tackle "smoking breaks" and smoking on Council land.

**25 Exclusion of the Public**

Resolved:

**25.1** That in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following item as there were likely to be disclosures of exempt information, as defined in paragraphs 1 and 4 respectively of part 1 of schedule 12A of the Act.

**26 Housing Caretaker – De Montfort**

The Committee considered Report No 79/07 which described the claim for payment in respect of a rent rebate to which a Housing Caretaker believed he was entitled.

The Head of Business Services reported that the Employees' side had raised the issue of possible compensation to that employee who was unable to receive a service tenancy rent reduction that was payable to other similar employees.

Employees' side representatives agreed with Councillors that, given the facts of the matter, the employee in question had already received greater benefits than a service tenancy rent reduction would have afforded. The Unison representative would contact the employee to this effect.

Resolved:

**26.1** That no payment be made to the employee in question.

**27 Consideration of Matters Raised by the Employees' Side**

There were no further matters raised by the Employees' side in respect of the items on the Agenda.

**28 Vote of Thanks**

Resolved:

**28.1** That thanks be extended to Councillor Crocker for his chairing of the Committee and good wishes be extended to Councillors Crocker and Turner on their retirement from the Council next month.

**29 Date of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is on Monday, 11 June 2007 at 10.00 am in the Warren Room, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes.

The meeting ended at 10.35am

R T Crocker  
Chair