



Employment Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **Employment Committee** held in **Warren Room, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes** on **21 April 2008** at **10:00** .

Present:

Employer's Side:

Councillors T M Hawthorne (Chair), I A Nicholson, D O Rogers OBE,
J H F Sheppard

Employees' Side:

Mr J Betteridge, Mr M Connolly, Mr P Demetriou, Mrs L Plant and Mr G Purdye

	Minutes	Action
19	Minutes The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.	
20	Apologies for Absence Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor J H Freeman.	
21	Staff Survey 2008 The Committee considered Report No 62/08 which included the results of the Staff Survey carried out in January 2008 and sought the views of the meeting as to	

any subsequent action that was needed.

The Head of Business Services stated that overall steady improvements had been noted since the survey had appeared in its present format in 2000. Drops in satisfaction with regard to working conditions had practices would be investigated further. Members noted that while some questions lent themselves to straight yes/no responses and that more responses might be elicited by making the survey shorter, it would then be difficult to compare data with previous years although some questions were omitted in particular years.

Results by Department were considered within Team Meetings and were addressed within those Departments. The survey had resulted in slight changes on corporate policy in the past, for example, bullying awareness, harassment, discrimination and unsafe working practices. Individual comments from surveys were published on Infolink. It was considered worthwhile to continue issuing paper questionnaires in terms of perceived confidentiality and because computer access was not universal. The Head of Business Services would provide response rates to Committee Members.

Resolved:

21.1 That the Report be noted.

22 Data Protection Policy and Procedures for Employment Related Information

The Committee considered Report No 63/08 which sought adoption of a Data Protection Policy and Procedure for employment related information. The Head of Business Services pointed out that while the Council was generally compliant with all legislation a written policy was recommended. Ex employee records were currently kept permanently.

Resolved:

22.1 The Policy and Procedure at Appendix A to the Report be adopted.

23 Changes to Flexible Retirement Policy

The Committee considered Report No 64/08 which reported some minor changes to the Council's Flexible Retirement Policy needs to comply with the new rules of the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Resolved:

23.1 That the Report be noted.

24 Checks on Casual and Essential Car Users

The Committee considered Report No 65/08 which sought to introduce a series of checks on casual and essential car users to ensure that the Council met its Duty of Care to those drivers. The employees were concerned with how these checks would be carried out and compliance enforced. The Head of Business Services stressed the need to keep such records regardless of the difficulties in data collection which would be co-ordinated by the Safety Officer.

Resolved:

24.1 That the proposals set out in paragraph 3 of the Report be adopted as the Council's policy on casual and essential driver checks, and

24.2 The Head of Business Services be requested to report back to the Committee on the progress of the policy in six months time.

25 Pension Contribution Rates

The Committee considered Report No 66/08 which sought agreement for the pension status of various payments available to staff and to Council's policy on setting pension contribution rates. The Head of Business Services reported that it was necessary to decide when to reassess contributions and overall it was recommended that the pay band and contribution rates be reassessed annually from 1 March each year to take effect from the following 1 April.

Resolved:

25.1 That the pension status of various payments

available to staff and the Council's policy on setting pension contributions rates as set out in the Report be agreed; and

25.2 That the policy be reviewed in March 2009 to see if there were any unforeseen consequences of the approach and to make any subsequent recommendations.

26 Pay Award 2008

The Committee received the oral update of the Head of Business Services. The employer's final offer of 2.45% plus £100.00 for the bottom three points of the Spinal Scale were under consideration by Unison and were subject to a ballot which suggested strike action should the offer be rejected.

27 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

27.1 That in accordance with Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following item as there were likely to disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of part 1 of schedule 12A of the Act.

28 Consideration of Matters Raised by the Employees' Side

(i) Area Representative

Resolved:

28.1 That the Unison Area Representative, Sarah McGreal, be invited to attend the next meeting of the Committee.

(ii) One Department in particular was unhappy that out of area mileage and time spent walking between parking spaces and their office accommodation had not been fully taken into account when the limited number of parking permits had recently been allocated.

29

Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee was schedule to be held in the Warren Room, Lewes House, Lewes on 9 June 2008 at 10.00am.

The meeting ended at **10:50** .

T M Hawthorne Chair