



Lewes District Council

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Employment Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **Employment Committee** held in the **Warren Room, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes** on **Monday, 12 October 2009** at 10.00am.

Present:

Employer's Side:

Councillors T M Hawthorne (Chair), J M Harrison-Hicks and H J F Sheppard

Employees' Side:

Mr P Demetriou, Mr G Purdye and Mrs L Plant

Also Present:

Mr J Clark, Head of Business Services

Ms J Gavigan, Committee Officer/Equalities Co-ordinator

Minutes

Action

8 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 8 June 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

9 Apologies for Absence/Declaration of Substitute Members

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor J H Freeman and Mr M Connolly. An apology for absence was given on behalf of Mr J Betteridge.

10 Annual Leave

The Committee considered Report No 193/09 relating to proposed changes to the way that annual leave was managed to reflect recent changes in the statutory holiday entitlement rules.

In response to questions from the Employees' Representatives, the Head of Business Services explained that the amount of standard annual leave

given by the Council already exceeded the new national statutory holiday entitlement so it did not intend to take any further action.

Under employment regulations, the Council was not allowed to pay for statutory leave so untaken leave would no longer be paid for. With regards to sickness arrangements, leave could be claimed back if staff fell ill whilst on holiday. The Head of Business Services would amend the Sickness Absence Procedure to reflect this.

Regarding requests for annual leave, the Employees' Representatives asked that managers give a reason to staff if their request for holiday was refused as this was good practice.

Resolved:

- 10.1** That the Annual Leave Policy, as set out at Appendix A to Report No 193/09, be adopted; and
- 10.2** That the Head of Business Services be requested to amend the guidance for managers to state that it was good practice to explain their reasons for any refusal of annual leave.

HBS

11 Disciplinary Procedure

The Committee considered Report No 194/09 relating to proposed changes to the Council's Disciplinary Procedure to reflect recent changes to the statutory code of practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures.

The Head of Business Services reported that changes to the code of practice now allowed for the Disciplinary Procedure to be less prescriptive. The revised procedure set out at Appendix A to the Report contained less procedural steps, although the more detailed information would remain in the guidance for managers and for circulation where necessary.

Resolved:

- 11.1** That the Disciplinary Procedure, as set out at Appendix A to Report No 194/09, be adopted; and
- 11.2** That the Head of Business Services be requested to amend the Council's Grievance Procedure to reflect the statutory code of practice changes for the next meeting of the Committee.

HBS

12 Equal Pay Audit

The Committee considered Report No 195/09 relating to the equal pay audit and action plan for 2009. The equal pay audit compared the pay of men and women in the Council, explained any pay gaps and set out how any such gaps that could not be justified on grounds other than sex would be closed.

The Head of Business Services reported that the last full equal pay audit had been considered in 2006. Since then, annual reports had shown progress towards reducing the overall male/female pay gap each year. The pay gap was due to the distribution of the sexes across the Council with men occupying more senior positions. This was being tackled by actions already underway as part of the Workforce and Workforce Development Plans.

In response to councillors' questions, the following points were made:

- Starting rates within grades were agreed individually depending on experience and the need to attract external candidates.
- In comparison to the 2006 audit, the gender pay gap had been narrowing year on year.
- The forthcoming Equality Bill would require changes to the criteria used to calculate equal pay.

Resolved:

12.1 That Report No 195/09 be noted; and

12.2 That the Equal Pay Audit Action Plan, as set out in Appendix A to Report No 195/09, be agreed.

13 Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved:

13.1 That, in accordance with Section 100A 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 was likely to be disclosures of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

14 Consideration of Matters Raised by the Employees' Side

Replacement members were being sought for Mr J Betteridge and Mr T Watson to sit on the Committee. The Employees' Representatives would inform the Committee Officer of the replacements following their Branch Executive meeting.

With regard to the issues raised by the Staff Survey concerning office cleaning, the Head of Business Services informed the Committee that new cleaners and more cleaning hours had been contracted in the buildings that had reported problems. Due to refurbishment and office changes, further cleaning at 4, Fisher Street would be put on hold until the building work had finished.

15 Date of Next Meeting

Resolved:

- 15.1** That the next meeting of the Committee to be held on Monday, 18 January 2010 at 10.00am in the Warren Room, Lewes House, 32 High Street, Lewes be noted.

All to note

The meeting ended at 10.30am.

T M Hawthorne
Chair