



Lewes District Council

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Employment Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **Employment Committee** held in **Room 7, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes** on **Wednesday, 3 April 2013** at **9.30am**

Present:

Employer's Side:

Councillors E E J Russell (Chair), R Blackman, S J Gauntlett and A X Smith

Employees' Side:

S Harvey

Also Present:

R Allan, Scrutiny and Committee Officer

J Amos-Davidson, Interim Head of HR

S Jump, Head of Finance

Minutes

10 Apologies for Absence

An apology for absence had been received from Mr M Connolly (Employees' side).

11 Core Values and Behaviours

The Committee considered Report No 61/13 which consisted of a draft document detailing the Council's Core Values and Behaviours.

The Interim Head of HR took the Committee through the Report. She explained that this document had been produced through consultation with staff and the Corporate Management Team to pull together the shared core value and behaviours that underpinned the Council's work. She added that from this document, a new competency framework would be created, which included a new appraisal scheme. The scheme would be publicised to all staff through posters, the Council's Intranet, the Chief Executive's blog and staff meetings. It would also be written into staff contracts.

A discussion followed, and Councillors stressed the importance of a link from the Report to the Council's vision as the Report made little mention of customer service, and that it was vital that the Council considered its work from the perspective of the customer. The Committee added that

Action

Councillors were in a good position to provide an outside-in perspective.

The Committee was concerned that the final statement in the Report “Careful with Resources” could lead to staff being too risk averse, and that it was important that staff felt empowered to take decisions as part of their role and that managers were able to facilitate, rather than micro manage, their staff.

Councillors questioned whether this Report was in line with the current work culture of the Council, and whether a change in core values and behaviours could clash with the natural culture of the organisation.

The Employees’ Side suggested that clear messages needed to be presented to staff concerning these changes, and that time must be given to adjust to change. Councillors agreed that honest feedback on change must also be received from staff, such as from staff who worked at home.

Resolved:

- 11.1 That Report No 61/13 relating to Core Values and Behaviours be noted;
- 11.2 That the Interim Head of HR be requested to incorporate the views of the Employment Committee expressed at this meeting into Report No 61/13 concerning Core Values and Behaviours; and
- 11.3 That the Interim Head of HR be requested to consult with the Director of Planning and Environmental Services to establish a mechanism for staff to allow time to adjust to new styles of working.

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12 Exclusion of the Public and Press

Resolved:

- 12.1 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 items 8 and 9 as there was likely to be disclosures of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

13 Flexible Retirement Request

The Committee considered Report No 62/13 which detailed a flexible retirement request from an employee.

The Interim Head of HR took the Committee through the Report. She explained that the employee was eligible to request flexible retirement because he was aged over 55, was a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme, had a permanent contract of employment and had proposed to reduce his hours of work by at least 40%. She advised that as the Council was undergoing a significant transformation, this proposal would enable the Council to build up expertise and ensure the retention of

an experienced officer. She added that the Council had taken external legal advice on this matter.

The Committee discussed the Report and advised that paragraphs L and N contained within Report No 62/13 were management issues and not for discussion at this Committee, therefore these paragraphs should be removed from the Report. Councillors agreed that with those changes, the Report was a well constructed case that suited the purpose.

The Interim Head of HR advised that this request would be implemented later than the 1 April 2013 as advised in the Report, most likely in the second week of April 2013.

Resolved:

- 13.1** That Report No 62/12 be agreed, subject to the removal of paragraphs L and N on page 4 contained within the Report.

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14 Date of Next Meeting

The Interim Head of HR advised Councillors that it would be useful to arrange a further meeting ahead of the scheduled meeting on 8 July 2013 as there would be further business for the Committee to discuss.

Resolved:

- 14.1** That the Committee Officer be requested to arrange a further meeting of the Committee to take place in advance of the next scheduled meeting on 8 July 2013.

CO

The meeting ended at 11.40am

E E J Russell
Chair