

Employment Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the **Employment Committee** held in the **Telscombe Room, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes** on **Monday, 5 March 2018** at 10.00am

Present:

Employer's Side:

Councillors E Merry (Chair), S Catlin, M Chartier, P Franklin and S Gauntlett

Employees' Side:

R Haigh

Also Present:

B Cooke, Assistant Director for Human Resources and Transformation
 H Knight, Head of Human Resources
 S McGreal, Regional Organiser, Unison
 J Norman, Committee Officer
 J Yeates, Health and Safety Officer

Minutes

28 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2017 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

29 Apology for Absence/Declaration of Substitute Member

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor R Robertson. Councillor Catlin declared he was acting as substitute for Councillor Robertson for the duration of the meeting.

Action

30 Update on the Joint Transformation Programme

The Assistant Director for Human Resources and Transformation provided a verbal update on the progress of the Joint Transformation Programme (JTP); a restructuring programme (currently in Phase Two) which aimed to deliver the majority of Lewes District Council and Eastbourne Borough Council's services via shared teams and by adopting new ways of working.

Members' discussion included:

- The difference in role responsibilities between a Case Worker and a Specialist Advisor as part of Phase 2 of the JTP.

Officers responded that:

- Elements of work activity had been broken down and divided between a Case Worker and a Specialist Advisor, with the Case Worker handling more general requests by the public and the Specialist Advisor taking on more complex cases.

Employees' Side representatives commented that:

- They wished to discuss employee feedback from Phase 2 of the JTP with HR before making any further comments.

Resolved:

1. That the verbal update on the Joint Transformation Programme be noted.

Reason:

The Employment Committee had requested regular updates regarding progress of the Joint Transformation Programme.

31 Attendance Management Policy Review

The Committee considered the report which provided an update on the review of the Attendance Management Policy as previously requested by UNISON once the policy was in operation.

Resolved:

1. That the full review of the Attendance Management Policy in collaboration with a wide variety of stakeholders and amendments made as a direct result, be noted.

Reasons:

1. Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils had jointly committed to bringing policies and procedures together as part of the Joint Transformation Programme, which was an important step towards aligning our people and business practices;

2. The Attendance Management Policy was the first of the HR policies to be aligned in September 2016 and at that time Unison had requested that a review be conducted once the policy was in operation; and
3. The Attendance Management Policy had been in use for 17 months and HR had collated feedback amongst the team, from managers using the policy and from Unison.

32 Sickness Report

The Committee received the report which provided an update regarding the Council's sickness figures for the period 1 October 2017 to 31 December 2017 (Quarter 3 of 2017/2018), together with the reasons for staff absences as set out in the appendices to the report.

Members' discussion included:

- Whether or not absence information would be combined across both Lewes District Council and Eastbourne Borough Councils from Quarter 1 of 2018/19.

Officers responded that:

- Absence information would be combined across both Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils from Quarter 1 2018/19 onwards and that absence information would be broken down by service areas.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted.

Reason:

The Employment Committee had asked for a regular item to be presented regarding the absence statistic within the Council.

33 Accidents to Lewes District Council staff from April 2017 to February 2018

The Committee considered the report which presented the statistics on accidents sustained by staff working for the Council, as reported between 1 April 2017 and 10 February 2018.

Members' discussion included:

- That Council staff were active and aware of safe ways of working.
- It was the Health and Safety Officer's last meeting prior to her departure from the Council. The Committee wished to express its sincere gratitude for all of the work the Health and Safety Officer had done during her time with the Council, including the upgraded reporting system for accidents.

- Whether there would be one or two Health and Safety Officers across both LDC and EBC after the current Health and Safety Officer's departure.
- Concerns about how the health and safety work load would be covered across both Councils in future during the remaining Health and Safety Officer's periods of absence, for example annual leave or sick leave.
- The new Waste Services strategy would reduce injuries, and whether a graph/structure chart could be presented which highlighted the statistics at future meetings of the Committee.

Officers responded that:

- 'Health and Safety' is a mandatory item on the agenda of all Team Meetings, so that staff could bring up any issues, and so that safe ways of working were reviewed with toolbox talks.
- The Health and Safety Officer wished to express her gratitude, as her current role was one she sincerely enjoyed.
- There would be one Health and Safety Officer across both Councils.
- Although there would only be one Health and Safety Officer across both Councils, there would be more than one person available to cover the health and safety workload during periods when the Health and Safety Officer was on leave.
- The new Waste Services strategy should significantly reduce injuries and that officers would provide a graph/structure chart which highlighted the statistics at future meetings of the Committee.

Employees' Side representatives commented that:

- There were concerns regarding having only one Health and Safety Officer working across both Councils, and it was a situation they would continue to monitor.

Resolved:

1. That the report be noted.

Reason:

The Report provides regular information on accidents and near misses to the Employment Committee as necessary to fulfil certain requirements of the Committee's Remit (namely Section 5, parts 2.4 (c) and 2.5 (g) and (k) of the Council's Constitution).

Resolved:

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 items 11 and 12 on the Agenda 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.

35 Consideration of Matters Raised by the Employees' Side

Ms McGreal, Regional Organiser, Unison, explained that there had been no meeting with HR regarding the Waste Services proposal, but that the Employees' Side hoped that a meeting would be scheduled for late March 2018 in order for meaningful consultation on the proposal. She further explained that the Waste Services proposal was an ongoing discussion with the Head of Customer & Neighbourhood Services, particularly the Group Task and Finish aspect of the proposal.

In response to the statements made by Ms McGreal, the Head of Human Resources highlighted that during the initial consultation regarding the Waste Services proposal, there were five main points addressed, including the Group Task and Finish aspect. She further highlighted that 91% of those who provided feedback during the initial consultation did not want the Group Task and Finish aspect to end.

The Head of Human Resources explained that the current Group Task and Finish policy allowed employees in Waste Services to go home once their waste and recycling rounds had been completed. She further explained in Phase 2 of the JTP consultation pack the Group Task and Finish policy was still in place, but it had been amended to read that employees in Waste Services could not go home until every group's waste and recycling rounds had been completed.

The Head of Human Resources informed the Committee that working groups would be put in place to monitor aspects of the policy.

Ms McGreal explained that if the Employees' Side could not reach an agreement with HR on the final Phase 2 JTP consultation pack, it would regard the change in the Group Task and Finish policy as a change in contract. Ms McGreal further explained that the Employees' Side wished to work together with HR to have a meaningful consultation on the final JTP Phase 2 consultation pack.

36 Consideration of Health and Safety Matters Raised by the Employees' Side

There were no additional health and safety matters raised by the Employees' Side over and above those which had been recorded in the Minutes of the meeting of the Employment Committee.

37 Date of Next Meeting

Resolved:

1. That it be noted that the next meeting of the Employment Committee was scheduled to be held on Monday, 18 June 2018 in the Telscombe Room, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes commencing at 10:00am.

All to note.

The meeting ended at 10:50am.

E Merry
Chair