

EMPLOYMENT PANEL

TUESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Lisa Targowska (Chairman), Eileen Quick (Vice-Chairman), Lynne Jones, MJ Saunders and Edward Wilson

Officers: Alison Alexander, Terry Baldwin and Karen Shepherd

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bicknell, Carroll and Dr L Evans.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2017 be approved.

APPROVAL OF PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2017/18

The Panel considered approval of an updated Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18 as required by the Localism Act 2011, for onward submission to Full Council. The local authority was required to publish a Pay Policy statement by 31 March each year. Members noted seven updates to the statement, as detailed in paragraph 2.2 of the report. It was also noted that further changes to the council structure from 1 April 2017 would require further updates to the statement. Any revisions would come back to the Panel.

The Chairman requested that comparisons to other local authorities in relation to pay ratios be included at paragraph 4.4 of the statement.

The Head of HR explained that the government was proposing to introduce an exit cap for public sector workers on the amount paid to staff as severance, including any employer contribution to pension, known as pension strain. The cap, proposed at £95,000, could include delayed pension payments for those in the LGPS who are aged 55 or over. Members noted that it would be possible for an individual to leave an organisation and receive a pension, then go on to work for another local authority. Councillor Saunders referred Members to paragraph 5.1 of the Pay Policy statement in this respect.

It was confirmed that the information in the statement relating to the Returning Officer was correct at the present time; if changes were made then a revised policy would be published. Officers were requested to update the Heads of Service list in paragraph 2.21 as, for example, the Head of Planning was not included.

Councillor Saunders raised concerns relating to paragraphs 2.21-2.23 given that a large part of the council's current priorities related to property and regeneration, for

which contractors would be the default position for specific timetabled projects. At minimum, he wished for the phrase 'short-term' to be replaced with 'medium-term'. The Managing Director suggested the whole section should be reworded to reflect the council's needs; Members agreed that changes should be delegated to the Chairman in conjunction with officers.

The Head of HR confirmed that pay ratios were tracked and a comparison to the previous year was given in the statement. He would look into comparisons for earlier years and provide the information to Members.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Employment Panel notes the report and:

- i) Approves the updated Pay Policy Statement for 2017/18, subject to a delegation to the Chairman in conjunction with the Managing Director and Head of HR to revise sections 2.1-2.3, and any other minor amendments as requested by the Panel during the discussion at the meeting, and recommends the revised statement to Council for approval on 21 February 2017**
- ii) Note that further revisions will be required to the statement following the external transfer of some council services on 1 April 2017 and for the implementation of the Government's reforms to public sector exit pay arrangements**

EMPLOYMENT/RESTRUCTURE DELEGATIONS TO EMPLOYMENT PANEL

Members received a briefing on proposed changes to future reporting at Employment Panel. The Head of HR reminded Members that in November 2016, subject to Full Council approval, the Panel agreed to delegate authority to Directors, in conjunction with the Head of HR, payments relating to employment matters up to £25,000. This impacted on future reporting to the Panel in that reports would only come forward if payments totalled more than £25,000 or there was a significant restructure, defined as five or more employees.

Members noted two further proposals as detailed in paragraph 2.3 of the report relating to requests to appoint Directors, Deputy Directors and Heads of Service.

- A new role is created as part of a restructure. In these cases it was recommended that the Employment Panel report setting out the proposed restructure would seek to delegated responsibility to create the position and undertake recruitment to any new Head of Service role. The delegation would be to the relevant Lead Member and the Chair of Employment Panel, in consultation with the Managing Director and the Head of Human Resources
- Like for like replacement following the resignation of the post holder. The recruiting manager would obtain agreement from the relevant Lead Member, Chair of Employment Panel, Managing Director, Head of Human Resources and Director to recruit. If a suitable candidate were identified, make an offer of employment as long as it was within the salary band and agreed budget for the service.

Additionally, Members were asked to consider removal of the requirement in the constitution that 'an offer of employment as a Director or Deputy Chief Officer shall only be made where no substantial and justified objection from any Member of the

Cabinet has been made to the appointment'. It was noted that there had been no recorded incidents when Cabinet had disagreed with a decision by the Panel.

Councillor Saunders highlighted that a comma was required after the word 'Cabinet' as below:

- a) Employment Panel will appoint Directors and Deputy Chief Officers in accordance with the provisions set out in the Local Government & Housing Act 1989. Employment Panel may delegate the recruitment of a Director or Deputy Chief Officer, where it is a 'like for like' recruitment with the same grade and salary scale being used, to the relevant Lead Member, who should also be a member of Cabinet, and the chair of Employment Panel, in consultation with the Managing Director, Head of Human Resources and service Director.

Councillor Saunders asked whether the intention at the last meeting to increase the value of payments where Panel approval was required was to allow for up to four payments of up to £24,999? It was agreed that this was not the intention and therefore the wording of i) and iv) of D5.1 would need to be amended. It was also requested that reference to pension costs be included.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Employment Panel agree to the revised wording to the constitution, subject to delegated authority to the Chairman in conjunction with the Managing Director and Head of HR to amend D5.1 i) and iv), and subject to full Council approval.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion takes place on items 7-9 on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 8.06 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....