

EMPLOYMENT PANEL

TUESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2018

PRESENT: Councillors Lisa Targowska (Chairman), Eileen Quick (Vice-Chairman), Dr Lilly Evans, Lynne Jones, MJ Saunders and Samantha Rayner

Officers: Alison Alexander, Terry Baldwin and Karen Shepherd

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors Bicknell and Carroll.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Alison Alexander and Karen Shepherd declared interests in the item 'Review of the Pay Reward Scheme' as officers affected by the scheme.

Councillor S Rayner declared a personal interest in the item 'MOD Employer Recognition Scheme – Silver Award' as the borough's Armed Forces representative.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2018 be approved.

GENDER PAY GAP

Members considered a number of gender pay gap indicators reflecting a snapshot of employees in post on 31 March 2017.

The Head of HR explained that as per paragraph 2.2, the council paid men and women the same grade for work of equal value. The gender pay gap looked at variations between the pay of men and women across all levels of the organisation. Members noted the data that was required to be published as detailed in paragraph 2.4. Bonuses referred to lump sum payments under the Pay Reward scheme; the data had been adjusted for full time equivalent. Members noted the mean and median figures for the council in comparison to national figures, those in the public sector and a number of other councils.

The Head of HR explained that not all councils published commentary alongside the required data. The borough would look at other commentaries and learn from best practice, updating proposed actions where appropriate. It was noted that the data would change as people left and joined the organisation. The council would next be required to publish a snapshot in March 2019. Councillor Jones suggested it would be useful for Members to be aware of the direction of travel given the changes in the council in the last year. The Managing Director agreed that a snapshot of the current situation would be brought to the next meeting of the Panel for noting. Members could then consider if the actions proposed remained relevant. It was noted that significant numbers of low paid female staff would have transferred to Optalis, but that also many of the senior positions in adult services were held by women.

It was confirmed that over 4% of workers were part time and of these, more than 80% were female. Fractionally more men than women held positions in the Senior Leadership Team.

Councillor Saunders commented that those councils above the borough in Table 2 had meaningfully greater median scores than mean scores. Below, with one exception, the median was notably lower. This was an interesting indicator which meant that not only was the mean lower, but also the spread. He therefore suggested that the council should seek to understand using data as available from those listed lower in the table as to why their spreads were consistently lower. The Chairman suggested that if the data was not published, officers should directly ask for the information. The Managing Director highlighted that a number of the councils listed were district councils with different functions and structures to a unitary authority such as the borough.

It was noted that, when adjusted for full time equivalent, there was no gender pay gap in relation to bonuses.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Employment Panel notes the report and:

- i) Approves the commentary about the council's gender pay gap for publication on the council's website and the gov.uk website.**
- ii) Approves the actions identified in the commentary.**

MOD EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME - SILVER AWARD

Members considered actions required by the council to successfully achieve the Ministry of Defence (MOD) Silver Employer Recognition Scheme award and the progress made to date in doing so. Members noted the assessment measures detailed in Table 1 including the requirement for a reservist policy. All requirements needed to be submitted by 15 March 2018 to be considered for the silver award this year.

Councillor S Rayner highlighted that there were two barracks in the borough therefore there was a strong possibility of reservists, veterans or their spouses being employed by the borough. The award would be a strong signal that the borough recognised the talents and strengths such employees could bring.

Councillor Saunders commented that section 8.6 of the Reserve Forces policy did not match the statement in section 8.1 that there would be no loss of continuous service or service related benefits. Officers were requested to amend the policy to make it clear that if an employee chose not to make pension contributions there would be an impact.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Employment Panel notes the report and:

- i) Agrees the Reserve Forces Policy, subject to delegated authority to the Head of HR to amend section 8.1.**
- ii) Delegates authority to the Managing Director in conjunction with the Lead Member for Adult Services, Public Health and Communications and the Lead Member for Culture and Communities to ensure appropriate internal publicity**

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 6.35 pm, finished at 8.48 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....