

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 14 June 2012.

PRESENT

Mr. G. A. Boulter CC
Mr. J. G. Coxon CC
Mrs. J. Fox CC
Mrs. R. Page CC

Mr. N. J. Rushton CC
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC
Mr. R. M. Wilson CC

214. Election of Chairman.

It was noted that Mr. N. J. Rushton CC had been appointed Chairman-elect at the Annual meeting of the County Council on 23 May.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. N. J. Rushton CC be appointed Chairman of the Employment Committee until the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2013.

Mr. N. J. Rushton CC – in the Chair

215. Appointment of Vice-Chairman.

It was proposed, and seconded "That Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC be appointed Vice-Chairman".

It was proposed, and seconded "That Mr. G. A. Boulter CC be appointed Vice-Chairman".

Following a vote on the matter, the Chairman declared that Mr. Shepherd was the successful candidate.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC be appointed Vice-Chairman for the period ending with the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2013.

216. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2012 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

217. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 35.

218. Questions asked by Members.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

219. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

220. Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in the item entitled 'People Strategy – Progress Report' as a School Governor. Mrs. J. Fox CC also declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest in the same item as her son-in-law was a teacher and her daughter was a head teacher. The report mentioned that schools had been audited as part of the employee health, safety and wellbeing agenda (Minute 224 refers).

221. Managing Attendance 2011/12 Outturn Position.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning the Council's outturn position in respect of staff absence. A copy of the report, marked 'B', is filed with these minutes.

The Director reported that, from 1 April 2013, reports on attendance management would no longer include data for schools, as they were increasingly moving to an academy model which was outside of Local Authority control. From October 2012, it would be obligatory in the Council's self service system, Oracle, for staff to include a reason for absence.

The rise of 'stress, depression, mental health and fatigue' in Quarter 4 as a reason for absence was a cause for concern. It was noted that the Council's Counselling and Support Service was now handling some 380 cases, some of which were long-term sick leave cases.

Absence levels remained comparatively high in the Adults and Communities Department and the Environment and Transport Department. Members were informed that nationally, the Council's absence rate compared favourably, however it was recognised that further work would be necessary to ensure that absence levels in these Departments improved.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Council's average sickness absence performance of 7.46 days per FTE for the financial year 2011/12 be noted and that it be noted that the Council's target for 2012/13 remains at 7.5 days per FTE;
- (b) That, in future, officers be requested to provide a breakdown between short and long-term sick leave by Department;
- (c) That, in light of increased take-up, a report be submitted to the Committee's next meeting informing on the work carried out by the Council's Counselling and Support Service.

222. East Midlands Shared Services (EMSS) Progress Report.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning an update on the East Midlands Shared Services Programme, including a position statement and a summary of the changes which Leicestershire County Council staff and managers would experience as a result of the Programme. A copy of the report, marked 'C', is filed with these minutes.

It was reported that a Joint Committee had been established in Autumn 2011 to oversee the development of the Programme and was administered by Nottingham City Council. It was hoped that, as the Programme developed, which would become a marketable opportunity for other Local Authorities to make similar long-term efficiency savings. It was known that some Councils were already interested in acquiring the service.

The management of risk was an important part of the Programme due to issues around data protection. Both Nottingham City and the County Council were able to access only their own data.

RESOLVED:

That the progress being made to create a new shared organisation with Nottingham City Council to process finance, HR and procurement transactions on behalf of the partners be noted.

223. Leading for High Performance - Stage 2.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning the continuation of the Leading for High Performance Programme which was being run by the County Council for staff. A copy of the report, marked 'D', is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the continuation of the Leading for High Performance Programme to include delivery of Stage 2 of the Programme to managers and staff at grades 13 and 14 be supported;
- (b) That it be noted that an evaluation of the outcomes achieved through the Programme will be carried out in April 2013.

224. People Strategy Progress Report.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning an update on the delivery of the Council's People Strategy. A copy of the report, marked 'E', is filed with these minutes.

It was reported that the Council's annual 'You're A Star' staff recognition scheme would continue with an awards ceremony in autumn 2012.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted and that the achievements of the People Strategy thus far be welcomed;
- (b) That a further progress report be submitted in 2013.

225. Report on ESPO Bonus Scheme.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning an update on the progress of the ESPO Bonus Scheme buy-out. A copy of the report, marked 'F', is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the action taken to 'buy out' the ESPO Bonus Scheme on the grounds set out in the report be approved.

226. Organisational Change Policy: Summary of Action Plans.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive regarding the summary of current Action Plans which contained provision for compulsory redundancy, and progress with their implementation. A copy of the report, marked 'G', is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

227. Date of next meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on Thursday 18 October at 10.00am.