

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 19 October 2017.

PRESENT

Mr. J. B. Rhodes CC (in the Chair)

Ms. L. Broadley CC  
Mr. D. Jennings CC

Ms. Betty Newton CC  
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC

14. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2017 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

15. Question Time.

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

16. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

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

17. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

18. 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.

No declarations were made.

19. Values and Behaviours, Employment Deal and Performance Management Framework.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning Values and Behaviours, Employment Deal and Performance Management Framework. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 6", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i) The "Employment Deal", which outlined the values of the organisation and set out the employment offer to current and prospective employees, was available in a variety of formats, including digital and paper, for promotion to current employees

and through the recruitment portal for prospective employees. One of the aims was to attract young people to work for the County Council;

- ii) The new Performance Management Framework would support managers in managing their teams, including managing performance and attendance, two key elements within the new Framework. Tools to support managers in managing teams within the new framework would be available on the Intranet;
- iii) Regarding motivational work and improving absence and sickness rates in some Departments, it was pointed out that the new framework set out clear expectations of managers. The success of the effectiveness of the Performance Management Framework and how it was embedded across the County Council would be reflected in a range of management indicators including the attendance management data in the future.

#### RESOLVED:

That the report and the approach being taken on the following be noted:-

- a. Revised organisational values and behaviours;
- b. Introduction of the Employment Deal; and
- c. Introduction of a Performance Management Framework.

#### 20. Attendance Management.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning Attendance Management at the end of August 2017. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 7", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i) The change to the coding of illnesses and the introduction of new categories from 1 April 2017, for example "cough, cold, flu", would take some time to be reflected in the absence management figures. It was expected that it would take a further 9 months before a realistic comparison could be made between year on year data. The Committee welcomed the introduction of the new category "cancer – all forms";
- ii) Data for "stress/depression, mental health" and "other musculo-skeletal" showed that these were in the top 3 illness categories. A comparison of all absence data had been completed with that for other County Councils; with Leicestershire County Council in the lowest quartile. This comparison would be included in the attendance management report in the future;
- iii) Members acknowledged the increased pressure on staff following reductions in staffing levels due to austerity measures and highlighted that it must be recognised that this could be reflected in levels of sickness due to stress, depression and mental health. The Committee also recognised that sickness absence levels were reducing in most Departments;
- iv) The challenge of managing staff back in to work following illness, whilst recognising the cases of genuine long term illness, was acknowledged. Members

were informed that an equitable approach would be taken, working with the Trade Unions, on a case by case basis;

- v) Reasonable adjustments to work could be made on a temporary basis, including the possibility of taking a less demanding role, for staff suffering from stress, depression and mental health in order to encourage a return to work. This would be discussed with the employee concerned, to ensure that they were aware of any potential impacts before proceeding. Managers would be supported in handling this within their teams;
- vi) A draft Wellbeing Strategy was being developed, in conjunction with Public Health colleagues, to address absence levels due to stress, depression and mental health. Officers had considered a variety of best practice from other Local Authorities in developing the Strategy;
- vii) The Committee recognised the importance of managing the attendance of staff and was encouraged by the improvement in the absence data. It was important that the robust measures that had been put in place were embedded and the focus maintained. It was recognised that the levels of absence in some areas was attributable to the higher levels of stress within those roles and that the reduction in absence levels would be directly affected by first line managers and their determination and dedication in encouraging people to come to work;
- viii) The scope of staff eligible for the flu vaccination programme had been extended and the range of locations for administering the programme increased.

RESOLVED:

That the report on Attendance Management at the end of August 2017 be noted.

21. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual report. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 8", is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the work undertaken by the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Service be supported;
- b) That the Annual Report be noted.

22. Apprenticeships.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning Apprenticeships. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 9", is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:-

- i) The provision of leadership qualifications through the Institute of Leadership and Management under the Apprenticeship levy was being explored; this also added benefit to the Employment Deal;

- ii) Delivery of apprenticeships was gaining momentum at a national level, including apprenticeship routes for social workers and teachers;
- iii) Members suggested that it would be beneficial to highlight the opportunities presented by apprenticeships in Leicestershire Matters.

RESOLVED:

That the progress made in relation to the apprenticeship levy and the implementation of the new Apprenticeship Strategy be noted.

23. Organisational Change Policy and Procedure: Summary of Action Plans.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive concerning Organisational Change Policy and Procedure: Summary of Action Plans. A copy of the report, marked "Agenda Item 10", is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

24. Date of Next Meeting.

It was noted that future meetings of the Committee were scheduled to take place at 10am on the following dates:

- 7 December 2017 (*cancelled*)
- 1 February 2018
- 21 June 2018
- 25 October 2018
- 6 December 2018

10.00 - 11.10 am  
19 October 2017

CHAIRMAN