

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 6 December 2018.

PRESENT

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

Ms. L. Broadley CC
Mr. T. Gillard CC

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

In the absence of the Chairman, the meeting was chaired by Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC.

28. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 September 2018 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

29. Question Time.

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

30. 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).

31. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

32. 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.

33. Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2017 - 18.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources concerning the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report for 2017/18. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 6' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- i. Slips, trips and falls continue to be the biggest cause of accidents resulting in injury; the data for Leicestershire was in line with national incident rates. The data showed that the location which experienced the highest level of incidents was the

LTS Catering Service, which provided food to Local Authority schools; the majority of incidents were due to slips, trips and falls in kitchens;

- ii. The data for the Learning Disability Service had been disaggregated to cover various sites; Members were concerned that, when aggregated, it showed a higher level of incidents than for the LTS Catering Service. It was agreed that a breakdown of the type of incident by location, and the extra support being given to the service, would be provided to the Committee prior to the next meeting;
- iii. It was recognised that the number of physical assaults on staff had increased; it was felt that a campaign to encourage the reporting of such incidents had resulted in the increase;
- iv. Some locations were included twice on the table on page 14 which showed the location of incidents, as there were two separate buildings on site. It was agreed to differentiate clearly in future reports;
- v. Accident investigations for all RIDDOR reportable incidents could generate a cost to the County Council should an improvement notice be issued. It was agreed to include details of any costs incurred in future annual reports;
- vi. Whilst the increase in the number of referrals to Occupational Health was concerning, it was seen as a positive indication that managers were making effective use of the service offered.

RESOLVED:-

That

- a) the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report 2017-18 be noted;
- b) future Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Reports would include details of costs incurred related to RIDDOR reportable incidents and improvement notices issued; and
- c) a breakdown of the type of incident by location for the Learning Disability Service, and the extra support being given to the service, would be provided to the Committee prior to the next meeting.

34. Attendance Management

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the County Council's overall position on sickness absence as at the end of September 2018. It also informed of the wellbeing support offer available to the workforce, particularly those who are absent or who are at risk of being absent from work due to stress, depression or mental health issues. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 7' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- i. Members agreed that further detail was required in the report to show the number of employees affected, in order to put in context the percentages detailed in the

tables showing the reasons for absence and the split between short and long term absence.

- ii. Regarding absence for stress, depression and mental health, it was recognised that comparisons to the private sector could not be made reliably as the sheer complexity and wide variety of roles within local authorities presented a very different work environment and challenges to that in the private sector.
- iii. Most cases of absence due to stress, depression and mental health resulted in long term absence, and were either due to personal circumstances outside of work, or a combination of personal and work related issues. These cases can be complex for managers to deal with. A minority of cases were due to work related issues only.
- iv. The Wellbeing offer to employees was welcomed. Wellbeing Champions were volunteers from staff interested in health and wellbeing; all attended an accredited Public Health course which was delivered by external providers. Members were informed that the Assistant Director of Corporate Resources was currently exploring with Public Health the potential refresh of the role of the champions.
- v. Members were concerned that, despite a number of measures being put in place to reduce absence, sickness levels did not appear to be improving. They were informed that the range of measures put in place and the work of the Intensive Support Team would take some time to show an impact on the data provided in the report.
- vi. The role and responsibilities of the manager in managing the attendance of their staff was discussed. Members expressed concern that the policy, training and guidance in place adequately supported managers in managing a variety of situations, and that managers had the confidence and time to do so effectively.

RESOLVED:-

That

- a) the update on the County Council's position on sickness absence as at the end of September 2018 be noted; and
- b) all data provided within the report in future would detail the number of employees affected in order to set in context the data provided.

35. Review of Performance Development Review Process.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an overview of the changes made to the County Council's performance review process and guidance. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion the following points were raised:-

- i. The new Annual Performance Review (APR) was currently being rolled out, with e-learning available for line managers and staff. The APR was aligned with the County Council's Performance Management Framework and Values and

Behaviours. Appraisal could be spread out throughout the year, which would help to improve the quality of reporting where managers had large teams;

- ii. The APR included a discussion about wellbeing and attendance of the individual; for line managers this would also include a discussion about how well they were managing the wellbeing and attendance of their staff. It was hoped that, over time, this would impact on levels of absence;
- iii. Members welcomed the increased involvement of the employee in the APR and the requirement for personal reflection;
- iv. Completion of the APR would be monitored; Directors would receive reports on completion rates to ensure that all staff received and were involved in the APR. a review of the roll-out would be completed in 12 months.

RESOLVED:-

That

- a) The report on the changes made to the County Council's performance review process and guidance be noted; and
- b) A further report be submitted to the Committee in Spring 2020 regarding the post-implementation review of the Annual Performance Review Process.

36. Re-Engagement of Former Employees Policy

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided further information to clarify:

- i. The application of the policy with regard to casual workers;
- ii. The national provision for redundancies; and
- iii. The County Council's approach to redeployment.

following approval of the Policy by the Employment Committee at its meeting on 13 September 2018. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 9' is filed with these minutes.

Members were informed that those who had taken voluntary redundancy or received a redundancy payment were not able to return as a casual worker until the 12 month time period had elapsed, unless approval was granted in exceptional circumstances only. However, if this was the case, they may be requested to pay back all or a proportion of any severance payment received. Those who had been made compulsorily redundant were excluded from the re-engagement policy although the County Council's approach was to minimise compulsory redundancies, and this was set out in further detail in the report.

RESOLVED:-

That the practical application of the agreed policy on the re-engagement of former employees, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be supported.

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

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which presented an update of the current Action Plans which contained provision for compulsory redundancy and details of progress in their implementation. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 10' is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:-

That the update on the current Action Plans which contain provision for compulsory redundancy and details of progress in their implementation be noted.

38. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee has been changed and will be held on 28 February 2019 at 10.00am.

39. Exclusion of the Press and Public.

RESOLVED:-

That under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 4 and 10 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and that, in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information -

NJC Pay Award 2019/20.

40. NJC Pay Award 2019/20.

The Committee considered an exempt report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided the Committee with an update on the consultation and implementation of the 2019/20 NJC Pay Award and clarified previous 'pay multiples' set out in preceding pay policy statements. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 14' is filed with these minutes. The report was not for publication by virtue of paragraphs 4 and 10 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

RESOLVED:-

That the update on the consultation and implementation of the 2019/20 NJC Pay Award be noted.