

Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 1 February 2024.

PRESENT

Mr. L. Breckon JP CC (in the Chair)

Mr. N. D. Bannister CC
Mr. P. Bedford CC
Mrs. L. Broadley CC

Mr. B. Champion CC
Mr. B. Harrison-Rushton CC
Mrs B. Seaton CC

39. Minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2024.

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 December 2023 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

40. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 34.

41. 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).

42. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

43. Declarations of interest in respect of items on the agenda.

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.

44. Presentation of petitions under Standing Order 35.

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

45. Attendance Management.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided an update on the Council's overall position on sickness absence, as at the end of December 2023 (quarter 3, 2023/24), and details of next steps following an attendance

management communication campaign in November 2023. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 7' is filed with these minutes.

Members noted that there was an error in the table on page 13 of the report. The Days per FTE, 12 months cumulative figure for 2023/24 Q3 (Dec 23), in Environment and Waste Management, should have read 11.48.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. A recent media story reported on a national increase in sickness absence levels across all sectors. The Council would continue to support managers in enforcing the sickness absence policy and to support staff who required time off. It was anticipated that a recent Corporate Attendance Management communication campaign, which delivered messages to all levels of management and staff about expectations relating to attendance, as well as attendance management training for managers, would have a positive impact on sickness absence levels.
- ii. Mental health absence had increased in the majority of departments and remained the main cause of absence in the Children and Families department. It was acknowledged that there were some areas of the organisation which had experienced demand pressures, high workload, and issues with recruitment and retention, which could have led to stress. However, an analysis of absence data had indicated that this type of illness was a result of a range of sources, both in the workplace and at home, including bereavement. The Council had support and resources in place for employees, including the Wellbeing Service, and training was also in place for managers on supporting staff with mental health. In addition, there was a range support for managers within the Ways of Working Programme on setting up a good working environment and a positive culture for their teams.
- iii. Sickness absence levels remained above average in the Environment and Transport department. The Director agreed to provide a detailed analysis of attendance management activity in the Environment and Transport department, at the meeting on 23 May 2024.
- iv. In addition to the departmental data provided within the report, the Director agreed to provide a long-term trend of the core departmental absence reason within the Attendance Management report, at the meeting on 23 May 2024.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the update provided on the Council's overall position on sickness absence as at the end of December 2023, and details of next steps following an attendance management communication campaign in November 2023, be noted.
- b) That the Director of Corporate Resources be requested to provide a long-term trend of the core departmental absence reason within the Attendance Management report, at the meeting on 23 May 2024.
- c) That the Director of Corporate Resources be requested to provide a detailed analysis of attendance management activity in the Environment and Transport department, at the meeting on 23 May 2024.

46. Gender Pay Gap.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which presented the initial results regarding Gender Pay Gap reporting results for 31 March 2023, and a comparison against the results for the previous three years. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

Arising from discussion, the following points were raised:

- i. It continued to be difficult to present comparative Gender Pay Gap data for the current reporting period due to the deadline for local authorities to publish data by 31 March. However, the Director agreed to conduct further analysis on comparative data, against other councils. A detailed analysis of this data would be included within a report on the Council's Equal Pay Audit, which would be presented to the Committee on 23 May 2024.
- ii. Some services within the organisation continued to retain an unrepresentative gender split. However, the Council was focussed on attracting individuals from all backgrounds into roles. To encourage this, statements on underrepresentation had been included on job advertisements.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the content of the report, be noted, and the publication of Gender Pay Gap by 30 March 2024, be supported.
- b) That the Director of Corporate Resources be requested to conduct further analysis on comparative Gender Pay Gap data, against other councils, and provide the information in a report on the Council's Equal Pay Audit would be presented to the Committee on 23 May 2024.

47. Organisational Change Policy and Procedure: Action Plans.

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

RESOLVED:

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

48. Date of Next Meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 23 May 2024 at 10:00am.