



Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 3 February 2022.

PRESENT

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

Mr. B. Champion CC
Dr. R. K. A. Feltham CC
Mr. T. J. Pendleton CC

Mrs B. Seaton CC
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC

25. Minutes of the previous meeting.

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2021 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

26. Question Time.

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

27. Questions asked by members.

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

28. Urgent items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

29. 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.

30. Gender Pay Gap.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which presented the initial results regarding Gender Pay Gap reporting for Leicestershire County Council. The report showed results for 31 March 2021, and comparison was also made against the results for the previous three years. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 7' is filed with these minutes.

An error in paragraph 14 of the report was noted; 'December 2022' should have read 'December 2021'.

In response to questions, the following points were noted:

- i. Conversations with Leicester City Council around its own Gender Pay Gap data had not taken place; however, County Council officers would liaise with the City Council to ascertain how their data had been calculated.
- ii. Detailed data which analysed the split of male and female employees at each grade was available and had been used in compiling the report presented to members. An increase in the number of female employees at grade six to eight accounted for a change in the Median Gender Pay Gap. The split between male and female employees at lower grades, particularly in part-time roles, was not untypical in Local Government organisations.
- iii. Gender Pay Gap data would be reviewed in March 2022 to evaluate progress and to understand any impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

RESOLVED:

That the initial results regarding Gender Pay Gap reporting for Leicestershire County Council, and the requirement to publish the data by 30 March 2022, be noted.

31. Becoming an Anti-Racist Organisation.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources on the proposal for Leicestershire County Council to make a formal commitment to becoming an anti-racist organisation. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 8' is filed with these minutes.

In introducing the report, the Director of Corporate Resources clarified that the County Council already had a good record with regard to race relations and it was not being suggested otherwise. However, under the new proposals it was expected that the County Council would become more proactive in addressing any perceived inequalities.

Arising from discussions the following points were noted:

- i. Members expressed support for the proposal and agreed that it was important to tackle discrimination and any perception of discrimination within the County Council. Managers and staff needed to be given the confidence to challenge discrimination, bullying and harassment and there needed to be a consistent approach across the Authority. Where staff had a perception of discrimination, that perception needed to be acknowledged by managers rather than dismissed.
- ii. It would be important that the County Council dealt with these issues in an honest and transparent way.
- iii. Members noted the duty to promote anti-racism in their own roles and welcomed additional specific training on the topic where necessary.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the proposal for Leicestershire County Council to make a formal commitment to becoming an anti-racist organisation be fully supported and submitted to the County Council for approval at its meeting on 23rd February, subject to the views of the Cabinet.
- b) That the comments now made be forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration at its meeting on 11 February 2022.

32. Update on Pay.

The Director of Corporate Resources provided a verbal update on Local Government pay arrangements following an update from The National Employers.

Members were informed that:

- i. Negotiations for the 2021/22 Local Government pay arrangements had been ongoing since early 2021 and remained unresolved. The initial trade union request was for a 10% pay increase across the board.
- ii. In relation to the National Joint Council negotiations, the National Employers made a final offer in July 2021 of a 1.75% pay increase at pay points 2 and above, 2.75% to those on pay point .The National Joint Council offer also included offers of joint discussions on term time only arrangements, homeworking, mental health joint guidance, and maternity and other related leave. In relation to the Joint National Councils for Chief Officers and Chief Executives, a 1.5% increase was tabled.
- iii. All three union bodies (Unison, Unite and GMB) had rejected the offer and had moved to ballot their members on strike action. Unison had completed its ballot which resulted in no strike action due to less than 50% of members taking part in the ballot. Unite had an ongoing ballot. GMB had not yet started to ballot members.
- iv. The National Employers were now considering how to proceed.

It was noted that there would be a possibility for tax implications if a backdated pay award was provided in tax year 2022-23. A pay award in the next tax year would also coincide with planned changes to rates of National Insurance contribution.

The Committee would be notified when an agreement on pay arrangements had been made. In the event that a deal was accepted, or that the Council chose to implement an award to its own employees, before a meeting of the next Employment Committee, the Director of Corporate Resources would write to the Chair of the Committee and opposition party Spokesman to seek approval. A report would then be presented at the next Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the update on Local Government pay arrangements be noted.

33. 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.

34. Date of Next Meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held on Thursday 26 May 2022 at 10:00am.

10.00 - 10.45 am
03 February 2022

CHAIRMAN