

Minutes of Personnel Committee

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 20 March 2019 starting at 6.30pm
Present: Councillor R J Elms (Chairman)

Councillors:

P Ainsworth G Mirfin
P Dobson D Taylor
A Knox

In attendance: Chief Executive and Head of HR.

699 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors S Hore and J White.

700 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2019 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

701 DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY AND NON-PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interest.

702 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

703 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES OF OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies.

704 MEMBER INDUCTION

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking Members' views on a draft Member Induction programme for new Councillors after the Borough Council Elections take place on Thursday, 2 May 2019. A draft outline plan had been produced and Members' thoughts on the plan and suggestions for any additional points or issues were welcomed. The Chief Executive informed Committee that he felt it was important for Members and in particular the Leader to be included in the programme.

Members felt it may be useful to consider having the inductions in the evening rather than daytime in order to accommodate any new Councillors that may be in full time employment.

RESOLVED: That Committee approve the Member Induction Plan for 2019 as outlined in the report.

705 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That by virtue of the fact that the following items of business by exempt information under Category 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting.

706 HUMAN RESOURCES CAPACITY

The Director of Resources submitted a report seeking Committee's approval to address capacity issues within the Human Resources section. The Head of HR reminded Committee that in September 2015 they had approved a request to increase staffing within the Human Resources section by way of the creation of a two year HR modern apprentice post. Upon completion of the apprenticeship the postholder would then have moved to a permanent HR Assistant post on the establishment and provision was made for such in the budget. This post had remained within the budget since 2015. The post had been duly advertised but a suitable candidate could not be appointed.

In November 2018 a report was submitted to Personnel Committee to inform them of current workloads and ongoing capacity issues within the section. Since that time, the Head of HR had revisited the HR structure that was approved in 2015 and had spent some time working with the HR team to establish the specific capacity issues in the section based on monitoring and analysis of tasks, processes and workloads. It was now felt that capacity issues could be better addressed by increasing capacity within HR administration rather than at a technical HR Assistant level and change the previously approved role from HR Assistant to Senior HR Administrator. Revised job descriptions were included for Committee's information to reflect the changes proposed.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. approve the proposal to significantly increase the capacity in the HR section by creating a new full time post of Senior HR Administration Officer;
2. approve the necessary changes to the Council's establishment; and
3. recommend to Policy and Finance Committee to agree the financial implications and budgetary provision.

707 APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee to consider with regard to appointments and resignations that had taken place since the last meeting.

The Head of HR drew particular attention to the retirement of the NNDR Billing and Recovery Assistant after 43 years of service.

RESOLVED: That Committee

1. note and approve the decisions taken by the Corporate Management Team as outlined in the report; and

2. write letters of thanks to those staff retiring from the authority where appropriate.

708 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The Director of Resources submitted a report updating Members on action taken to help recruitment and retention.

At the last meeting of Committee Members had asked for a report on salary benchmarking data and recruitment difficulties. The Head of HR reported that at present there was no formal system for benchmarking salary data with other authorities or sectors. However, as part of the Lancashire Heads of HR network, salary information was informally checked on an ad hoc basis.

She highlighted that over the last 12 months there had been a number of occasions where vacancies had been advertised several times due to poor response or lack of suitable candidates. In the past 18 months the use of online recruitment sites had also been increased in an effort to widen the audience for vacancies and improve response rates.

To help monitor salary data more systematically, the Council had now signed up for a 12 month subscription to North West Employers' E-Paycheck service. This was an online pay benchmarking service developed specifically for local government. Salary survey information was also received from the LGA and Hays Recruitment UK which looked at salary data across the UK in both the public and private sectors.

Promotion of all aspects of remuneration/benefits was a feature of the Council's recruitment advertising along with the promotion of local government as a good career option via work experience programmes.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

709 TRAINING REPORT

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information on the training courses approved since the last meeting.

The Head of HR highlighted specific training where a number of staff had taken place in driver CPC training, various levels of IT training and Prevent training.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

710 ANALYSIS OF EXIT INTERVIEWS

The Director of Resources submitted a report for Committee's information relating to staff who had left Ribble Valley Borough Council between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2018.

As an aid to improve recruitment and retention strategies for the future, exit interviews were helpful in obtaining information about why an employee was leaving the authority and highlighted what the Council did well and areas for improvement. Information was shared with both the Corporate Management Team and the relevant Head of Service to ensure that consideration was given to any points raised.

Whilst there is no specific level at which employee turnover becomes detrimental to an organisation, it is important that the monitoring of leavers continued and that the data was used to highlight any emerging or unexpected trends and issues. Although the authority does not have a high turnover of staff, there may be potential implications for service delivery where staff are not replaced or where particular skills are lost from the organisation.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

The Chief Executive thanked those long serving Members on the Committee who will not be standing again the Elections.

The meeting closed at 7.08pm.

If you have any queries on these minutes please contact Marshal Scott (414400).