

Minutes of previous meeting

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SCRUTINY PANEL

THURSDAY 12 JULY 2018 AT 10.00AM

PRESENT: Councillors, Bomford, Carrigan, Crawford, Finlayson, Harid, Layden, McDonald (as substitute for Councillor S Sidgwick).

ALSO

PRESENT: Councillor Miss Sherriff – Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder

OFFICERS: Deputy Chief Executive
Policy and Communications Manager
Policy and Performance Officer

HWSP.39/18 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR MEETING

It was moved and seconded that Councillor Crawford be appointed Chairman of the meeting.

RESOLVED – That Councillor Crawford be appointed Chairman of the meeting.

Councillor Crawford thereupon took the Chair.

HWSP.40/18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor J Mallinson, Paton and S Sidgwick.

HWSP.41/18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

HWSP.42/18 PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED - It was agreed that the items of business in Part A be dealt with in public and Part B be dealt with in private.

HWSP.43/18 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2018 be approved.

HWSP.44/18 CALL IN OF DECISIONS

There were no items which had been the subject of call-in.

HWSP.45/18 ANNUAL EQUALITY REPORT 2017/18 AND EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2018/19

The Policy and Performance Officer submitted the Annual Equality Report 2017/18 and Equality Action Plan 2018/19 which provided an overview of equality work, including workforce profile, details of Equality Impact Assessments, customer satisfactions, complaints, consultation and engagement, training and employee support. The Equality Action Plan set out actions that Council intended to implement in continuing to work towards equality objectives.

The Policy and Performance Officer drew Members' attention to paragraph 2.3 of the report, and noted that in the coming year, the Council would look to refresh its equality objectives in partnership with other organisations in the city, with a view to bringing them in line with the proposals from the current Green Paper. She noted that the development of new objectives was potentially an area of interest for the Panel and invited Members to consider how they may wish to be involved in such work.

The report provided data on a number of equality measures, the Policy and Performance Officer noted that the gender balance of the organisation was roughly equal, and that the average age of the workforce remained static indicating that the authority was taking on new, younger staff and apprentices. In addition the proportion of employees who declared themselves to be disabled had increased slightly since the previous year, however the percentage of employees having declared themselves as Black Minority Ethnic (BME) remained low.

In considering the report raised the following comments and questions:

- A Member noted the total number of employees had reduced in recent years, he sought clarification as to whether the workload for the organisation had remained the same and if consequently staff workloads had increased?

The Policy and Performance Officer responded that a number of changes had occurred to the staffing structure since 2010 and confirmed that there had been a reduction in staff numbers. She further noted that the number of functions carried out by the Council had also reduced and advances in technology had enabled working practices to change.

- Had reasons for the low proportion of BME people taking employment at the Council been identified?

The Policy and Performance Officer advised that in the coming year analysis of equality data submitted through the recruitment and selection process would be undertaken which would enable Officers to identify whether the Council was attracting applications from BME communities. Data from that analysis would be incorporated in next year's Annual Equality report.

Another Member noted that in the data reported on ethnicity, 9.4% of respondents had chosen not to declare their ethnicity, he asked if the ethnicity of those employees was known and why they had chosen not to declare that information?

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder explained that the scheme for collecting equality data was anonymous and that those participants had selected not to provide the data. In addition the data provided by participants was based on their opinion of which ethnic group they belonged to.

The Policy and Performance Officer noted that the number of BME employees in the organisation was not reflective of the wider community, however, the data relating to population figures had been compiled as part of the last census which had taken place in 2011 and was now considered as old data.

- Were agile working practices now the norm for Council employees or was the programme still being rolled out?

The Deputy Chief Executive responded that overall the programme was working well, however, time needed to be taken to ensure the appropriate equipment was provided to employees and that technology devices were correctly connected to the Council's information technology

infrastructure. The Deputy Chief Executive hoped that when the next Annual Equality report was produced, he would be able to report that agile working was a standard working practice in the Council.

- A Member commented that the attendance at the “Prevention Matters” course, as detailed on page 26, was very low.

The Policy and Performance Officer explained that particular course had been provided for Elected Members, however an Officer had attended. Overall, participation in equality related training was good with e-learning modules being particularly well undertaken.

- A Member suggested that as part of its equality work, the Council consider its website accessibility particularly in relation to users with dementia.

The Communities, Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holder advised that she was in dialogue with the Carlisle Dementia Access Alliance about how best the Council could take on and implement measures to make the Council more accessible to residents who had dementia.

In response to a question from a Member regarding the level of take up of Council provided food hygiene courses, the Policy and Performance Officer undertook to provide a written response.

- A Member requested that a “co-habiting” category be added to marital status data.
- A Member commented that the gender pay data for the authority was very positive and better than the national average.

The Panel conduct a detailed and in-depth discussion of the graphical analyses of gender pay contained in the report, and felt it would be beneficial for an investigation to be carried out into the roles comprised within the quartiles used for reporting purposes.

- A Member was pleased to see that the authority had taken on a number of apprentices, however only a quarter of that number remained with the authority, she sought clarification as to why that was the case.

The Deputy Chief Executive indicated that there were a range of factors which affected whether apprentices remained with the organisation such as their suitability to the role, whether they enjoyed the role and wished to continue and progress with the authority. He noted that latterly a new scheme had been introduced at the Council where Service Managers were able to bid to have an apprentice in their team.

The Chairman thanked the Policy and Performance Officer for the report, she requested that the refresh of the Council’s equality objectives be added to the Panel’s Work Programme and that the Overview and Scrutiny Officer identify an approach for the Panel to consider how the work was able to be taken forward.

RESOLVED – 1) That the refresh of the Council’s Equality objectives be added to the Panel’s Work Programme.

2) That the Policy and Performance Officer conduct an investigation into the roles contained within the reported quartiles of the gender pay gap figures.

3) That the Annual Equality Report 2017/18 and Equality Action Plan 2018/19 (PC.10/18) be noted.

HWSP.46/18 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Policy and Communications Manager presented report OS.17/18 which provided an overview of matters relating to the work of the Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel.

The Policy and Communications Manager reported that the most recent Notice of Executive Key Decisions, copies of which had been circulated to all Members, had been published on 25 June 2018. There were no items within the Panel's remit contained in the Notice.

The report included a table of the progress on resolutions from previous meetings of the Panel, the Policy and Communications Manager updated Members as follows:

- Homelessness Reduction Act – a report would be submitted to the Panel's October 2018 meeting;
- The draft Green Spaces Strategy was in the process of being consulted on, following which the Task and Finish Group may be reconvened to look at how the work was able to be taken forward;
- Item 6 – The Policy and Communications Manager had held discussions with the relevant Service Managers about potential areas for the Panel to scrutinise, the following had been identified – Air Quality, Enviro-Crime, Health and Safety Enforcement. A report on Air Quality would be submitted to the Panel's August 2018 meeting.

The Policy and Communications Manager advised that the Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel had requested that Highways be added to its Work Programme, he suggested that the area of work may link with the Health and Wellbeing Panel's interest in Health and Safety and that the joint work may be the subject on an enquiry day. He undertook to update the Panel on the progress of the work.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Overview Report and Work Programme (OS.17/18) be noted.

2) That the Work Programme be updated in line with the discussion of the progress on resolutions from previous meetings.

(The meeting ended at 10:51am)