

EMPLOYMENT PANEL

WEDNESDAY 1 FEBRUARY 2017

PRESENT: Councillor Glover (Chairman), Councillors Bloxham (as substitute for Councillor J Mallinson), Councillor Mrs Bowman (as substitute for Councillor Mitchelson), Burns, Stothard and Dr Tickner.

OFFICERS: Deputy Chief Executive (for agenda item A.2)
Chief Finance Officer
HR Advisory Services Team Leader
HR Officer

EMP.01/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor J Mallinson and Councillor Mitchelson.

EMP.02/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest affecting the business to be transacted at the meeting.

EMP.03/17 PUBLIC AND PRESS

It was agreed that the items of business in Part A be dealt with in public and the items of business in Part B be dealt with when the public and press were excluded.

EMP.04/17 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meetings held on 23 August 2016 and 16 October 2016 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

EMP.05/17 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2017/18

The Legal Services Manager advised that although the Chief Finance Officer was a Statutory Chief Officer the role was specified in the Constitution not to be a chief officer for the purposes of the internal staffing structure. The Chief Finance Officer could, therefore, remain to present the report.

The Chief Finance Officer presented report RD.52/16 which contained the Pay Policy Statement 2017/18 for Chief Officers.

The Chief Finance Officer reported that the Localism Act 2011 required all English and Welsh Authorities to produce and review a pay policy statement for the Chief Executive and Chief Officers for 2012/13 and for each subsequent financial year.

The Statement attached to the report detailed the pay and associated benefits for Chief Officers and had been amended where necessary for 2017/18 and was subject to the approval of full Council. The salary for all Chief Officers had been amended to reflect the review of service in October 2016 and the Chief Officers Pay Agreement 2016/18 announced in March 2016.

Officers clarified for Members how the authority evaluated the Chief Officer roles, the robustness of the Chief Officer job descriptions and some of the legislation that determined the

wording within the Policy Statement. Officers also outlined how members of the public could access the Policy Statement.

The Panel discussed the Statement and asked that section 8.5 of the Statement be amended to emphasise that the Council would initially seek to identify an internal candidate to cover work at Chief Officer or Chief Executive level on an interim basis.

RESOLVED – That the 2017/18 Policy Statement on Chief Officers' Pay, with an amendment to Section 8.5 as detailed above, be recommended to Council for approval.

EMP.06/17 REVIEW OF PROBATION POLICY / ENGAGEMENT POLICY

The Deputy Chief Executive joined the meeting.

The Chief Finance Officer submitted report RD.53/16 which detailed the review of the Probation Policy including a replacement draft Engagement Policy.

The HR Officer reported that, in accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services Conditions of Service, the City Council had historically operated a probation period as a term and condition of employment.

A review of the City Council Probationary Policy had been undertaken and had revealed that, although the Probation Policy had been varied in 2008, there was no record of the appropriate approval from Members being sought. Members were assured that no employees had been adversely affected by the changed processes.

The HR Officer explained that in addition to individual research as part of the review, a staff survey had been undertaken and management across the Council took part in organised discussions to provide feedback on existing working practices. Several issues were revealed with regard to the Policy and had been set out in section 2.1 of the report.

The proposed updated and revised Policy had been attached to the report and it was recommended that the Probationary Policy should evolve into an Engagement Policy which set out how the Council would induct new employees. The purpose of the Policy was to ensure that new staff felt valued and appreciated as soon as they began work but, importantly, it also ensured that the Council had at its disposal an appropriate mechanism which allowed it to, fairly but quickly, cease the employment of those employees new to Local Government that did not reach the required standard expected of a public sector employee.

Informal consultation began in May 2016 with Unison and GMB being fully involved in the development of the Engagement Policy and deletion of the Probation Policy. The Employment Panel were asked to approve the proposed new Policy for consultation purposes.

Members congratulated the HR Officer on the work undertaken on the Policy. In discussing the Policy, Officers explained that the work of the Learning and Development Team would complement the Engagement Policy. The Induction Policy was a separate document, however, consideration would be given to combining them in the future so one Policy would cover everything for a new employee. Officers responded to Members questions confirming that the consultation would include Unions and staff as the Policy was a change to employees terms and conditions.

Members asked that section 1.1 of the Policy be amended to reflect any anxiety that new employees may be feeling when they joined the Council.

Members discussed the recommendation in the report and asked that it be amended to clarify that the document was being agreed for consultation purposes.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Engagement Policy, as set out in the Appendix of Report RD.53/16 with the amendment to section 1.1 as detailed above, be approved for consultation purposes.

2) That the Engagement Policy be brought back to the Employment Panel following the consultation period for final approval.

(The meeting finished at 2.45pm)