

EMPLOYMENT PANEL

MONDAY 11 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 3.00PM

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

OFFICERS: Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
Corporate Director of Finance and Resources
Interim HR Management Adviser
Workforce Development Manager

EMP.01/19 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

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

EMP.02/19 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

EMP.03/19 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.04/19 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – To note that Council, on 11 September 2018, received and adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 19 July 2018. The minutes were signed by the Chairman.

EMP.05/19 PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2019/20

The Corporate Director of Governance and Regulatory Services and the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources were not in the room for the discussion of the following matter.

The Interim HR Management Adviser presented report RD.40/18 which contained the Pay Policy Statement 2019/20 for Chief Officers.

The Interim HR Management Adviser 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 2019/20 and was subject to the approval of full Council. The salary for all Chief Officers had been amended to reflect the Chief Officers Pay Agreement 2018/19 – 2019/20.

The Interim HR Management Adviser reminded the Panel that they had previously requested comparison information on car allowances in other local authorities, other offers that were available to chief officers and the effect of any potential changes to the car allowance scheme on existing staff and the Council's pension contributions. The required information had been included in section 3 of the report and showed a decline in the use of company cars and car allowances across the 12 other local authorities that were used for benchmarking purposes. Where such allowances were available they were for directors and managers rather than staff.

The Interim HR Management Adviser added that were the current car allowance to be subsumed within the salary and meet the HMRC definition of earnings in respect of pensionable pay there would be additional employer costs incurred for the authority and additional employee costs.

The Panel discussed the comparison information and examples within the report and felt that there were too many separate schemes available. The Panel asked that a review of all of the schemes take place with a scope to introducing more incentives to reduce the carbon footprint of the authority and to streamlining the schemes available.

The Interim HR Management Adviser gave clarification with regard to pensionable benefit and explained that the value of the car allowance scheme was the same if Chief Officers took the car or the cash sum. The choice was a personal decision for chief officers.

The Panel discussed the options available to the Authority with regard to the Chief Officers pay and annual increments, the Workforce Development Manager reminded Members that the policy reflected the national Chief Officers Pay Agreement and it would be difficult for the authority to go against the agreement.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Employment Panel approved the 2019/20 Policy Statement on Chief Officers' Pay, for recommendation to Council on 5th March 2019 (RD.40/18).

2) That the Employment Panel had considered the comparator information as set out in report RD.40/18 on Chief Officer car allowances and made no changes to the current Scheme.

3) That further work be undertaken on reviewing and streamlining the existing schemes and incentives which the City Council offer and that incentives be introduced to encourage the reduction of the Council's carbon footprint.

EMP.06/19 PENSION DISCRETIONS

The Corporate Director of Finance and Resources submitted a review of the Council's pension discretions following amendments to the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations 2018 (RD.41/18).

The Corporate Director of Finance and Resources drew the Panel's attention to section 2.2 of the report which set out the four main changes to the pension discretions, adding that all amendments to the Statement of Policy had been shaded grey in the document attached as appendix A to the report.

In response to a question the Corporate Director confirmed that the Council would be proactive in ensuring that employees were aware that they must elect to enter the Additional Pension Contribution contract within 30 days of their return to work.

RESOLVED – That the Employment Panel:

- 1) Noted the changes as a result of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations 2018 as set out in RD.41/18
- 2) Approved the revised Council's "Employer Discretions – Statement of Policy" in compliance with the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) regulations 2018: and
- 3) Request that officers forward these to Cumbria County Council in its role as the administering authority of the pension fund.

(The meeting finished at 3.31pm)