

EMPLOYMENT PANEL

FRIDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2016 AT 2.05pm

PRESENT: Councillor Glover (Chairman), Councillors Bowditch (as substitute for Councillor Ms Quilter), Burns, J Mallinson, Mitchelson and Stothard.

OFFICERS: Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Director of Governance
Financial Services and HR Manager
HR Advisory Services Team Leader

ALSO

PRESENT: Mr K Thomas – Independent Member
Ms J Elliot – Independent Member

EMP.01/16 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor Ms Quilter.

EMP.02/16 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Ms Elliott declared an interest in accordance with the Council's Code of Conduct in respect of the agenda item A.1. The interest related to the fact that the Director of Resources was known to her.

EMP.03/16 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.04/16 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 November 2015 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

EMP.05/16 VOLUNTARY REDUNDANCY APPLICATIONS – CHIEF OFFICERS

The Chairman welcomed Mr Thomas and Ms Elliott to their first meeting of the Employment Panel.

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive submitted report CE.02/16 which detailed voluntary redundancy applications from two chief officers; the Director of Resources and the Director of Local Environment.

The Director of Governance reminded the Panel that the post of Director of Resources included the Section 151 officer post which meant that there was a statutory procedure for his dismissal. In accordance with the regulations in the Local Authorities (Standing Orders (England)(Regulations) 2001/3384 the Council appointed the two Independent Persons to advise the Employment Panel on the dismissal of any officers holding one of the statutory posts (redundancy in law was deemed to be dismissal by way of redundancy).

The Chairman reported that the decision for the dismissal by way of redundancy for the two Chief Officers would be taken separately; the Director of Local Environment would be

considered first then the Director of Resources, with contributions for the decision in relation to that post from the Independent Persons.

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive reminded the Panel of the Council's need to deliver a further £3.475m of savings, £1.360m of which was targeted at staffing reductions. The Council's aim of avoiding compulsory redundancy where possible led to the development of a voluntary redundancy/early release scheme.

Applications for voluntary redundancy had been received by the Director of Resources and the Director of Local Environment. Authority to delete the posts sat with the City Council following a recommendation from the Employment Panel. The costs of redundancy for the two posts totalled £124,810 with a recurring revenue saving of £161,000.

If the Council agreed the applications for voluntary redundancy it would facilitate and necessitate a restructure that would deliver savings required in the Medium Term Financial Plan and ensure adequate arrangements for the Council's statutory Section 151 officer were secured.

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive held a firm view that the City Council could operate effectively with two fewer chief officers due to the high potential and talent in the next tier of management.

The report detailed the relevant regulations and constitutional rules which must be applied when processing voluntary redundancy requests.

The Panel considered the two applications and sought clarity on the new structure and transitional period. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive reiterated that the Council could operate with four Chief Officers as the strength and depth of the next tier in both the Local Environment and Resources Directorates would ensure that an adequate level of service would be maintained.

The restructure of the authority would enhance the role of the next level of senior managers and the new structure would be brought before the Employment Panel to gain their views. The restructure would begin immediately following approval by Council in March and would not be effected by the exit strategies for the two Chief Officers.

The Panel discussed the proposed exit strategies for the two Chief Officers and the benefits to the authority which allowed a smooth transitional period. They also discussed the effects the enhanced roles of senior officers would have on the targeted savings and the effect reduced resources would have on services.

RESOLVED – 1) That the Employment Panel recommends that the Council note the application for Voluntary Redundancy made by the Director of Local Environment and, subject to a settlement agreement, approve the said officer's dismissal by way of redundancy;

2) That the Employment Panel, including the Independent Persons, recommends that the Council note the application for Voluntary Redundancy made by the Director of Resources and, subject to a settlement agreement, approve the said officer's dismissal by way of redundancy;

3) That the Employment Panel recommends that the Council:

- a) Agree the deletion of the posts of Director of Resources and Director of Local Environment;

- b) Delegate authority to the Town Clerk and Chief Executive to negotiate and agree the above settlement agreements in line with current policy and the exit arrangements of the two Directors with such arrangements ensuring that the Council complies with the legal requirement to have a section 151 officer.

(The meeting finished at 2.50pm)