

## **EMPLOYMENT PANEL**

**TUESDAY 31 OCTOBER 2017 AT 10.00AM**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Glover (Chairman) Councillors Bloxham, J Mallinson, Mitchelson, Stothard and Dr Tickner.

**OFFICERS:** Chief Finance Officer  
HR Advisory Services Manager  
Workforce Development Manager  
HR Advisor

### **EMP.14/17 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence submitted.

### **EMP.15/17 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

### **EMP.16/17 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.17/17 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 June and 24 July 2017 which had been approved by Council on 12 September 2017 be signed by the Chairman.

### **EMP.18/17 APPRENTICESHIP PAY**

The Workforce Development Manager submitted report RD.26/17 which highlighted the potential impact of the current Apprenticeship Pay rewards on Carlisle City Council, including the impact of the pay rates on attracting talent and paying a reasonable rate for the work undertaken by apprentices within the Council.

The report detailed the Government's commitment to delivering three million apprenticeships by 2020 and the target of 10 apprentices proposed for the City Council. The City Council had 7 apprentices and had encountered difficulties in recruiting apprentices to some services within the authority. Section 1.10 set out the pay currently on offer for apprentices within the Council and Section 1.11 set out the comparative pay for other Councils within Cumbria. She also detailed the City Council's obligation to pay the Apprenticeship Levy which was based on a percentage of payroll costs and was to pay for the delivery of training to apprentices.

The Workforce Manager set out the proposals as detailed in section 2 of the report along with the additional costs of the proposals and reminded the Panel that changes regarding pay would be incorporated into the Apprenticeship Framework. The proposed increase in the pay rate would have a low impact on the annual pay bill and would be offset by the ability to attract and maintain talent. There was also the potential to reduce the need to re-advertise vacant posts and positively impact the diversity of the age profile of the Council workforce.

The Panel discussed the report in some detail and had some concerns regarding the recruitment of apprentices. The Panel agreed the whole package needed to attract apprentices

and the salary was only one part of the package. The Panel sought clarity on how apprentices were recruited and what promotion of the apprentice scheme at the City Council was carried out. The Panel discussed the minimum criteria which was used in the recruitment process and felt strongly that the request for minimum qualifications may be a deterrent for some people. They suggested that the qualification requirement be reviewed and, where possible and appropriate, alternative minimum criteria should be used.

**RESOLVED** – That the following be agreed, as detailed in report RD.26/17:

- Increase to pay the age appropriate pay for the first year of apprenticeships for all levels up to and including level 2 (intermediate) then increasing to a job evaluated rate for the second year of the apprenticeship, a job description should be available; this may include career grade opportunities.
- For those studying the level 3 (advanced) pay the age related pay for the first year and for progressive years pay the job evaluated rate for the post, a job description should be available, this may include career grade opportunities.
- For those studying a level 4 (higher) and above, pay the job evaluated rate for the post from year one, this may include career grade opportunities.
- For current employees and those recruited into vacant posts that were then afforded the opportunity to complete additional qualifications via the apprenticeship route (levy funding) pay the job evaluated rate for the post.
- That the changes to the Apprenticeship pay be implemented from 1 November 2017.

## **EMP.19/17 REVIEW OF SPECIAL LEAVE POLICY**

The Chief Finance Officer presented report RD.25/17 which detailed the review of the Special Leave Policy following changes to legislation, best practice and management roles and contacts within the Council.

The Special Leave Policy had been introduced in 2007 and updated in 2014. To support changes within best practice, employment law and, to afford additional clarity and support for managers and employees, the Policy had been further updated. The proposed updated Policy had been attached to the report as appendix 1 along with a table of the changes which highlighted whether the change was paid or unpaid at appendix 2.

The revised Policy demonstrated that the Council was a caring and supportive employer and should assist with improving employee recruitment, retention and experience. Some proposed changes form part of employees' terms and conditions and would therefore require full consultation. Informal consultation had been carried out with Unions and the Policy had been well received. Formal consultation with Union representatives and employees would take place following approval by the Panel.

In considering the draft Policy the Panel asked for the following clarity and changes to be made to the Policy before it went out to consultation:

### ***1.3 Bereavement Leave***

1.3.1 Include more detail on the Manager's discretion and flexibility, how each case would be considered individually with the support of HR and information which took into account the change in family dynamics.

#### *1.4 Stuck Not Sick Days*

Provide some clarity on how the hours would be repaid at a later date.

#### *3.0 Medical and Dental Appointments*

3.0.1 Give more clarity on the type of hospital appointment which staff would be entitled to two hours paid leave to attend

#### *4.11 Volunteering/Charity Work*

4.11.1 Include information that clarifies that the volunteering/charity work being supported must be one that is seen to most benefit the community and therefore prior to any paid time being awarded the Council will take into consideration the type of volunteer/charity work being undertaken, service provision and the affordability.

The Panel wanted to ensure that Managers had some flexibility and discretion when applying the Policy, as they understood the individual circumstance and requirements. Each case should be determined individually and Managers should contact HR for advice to ensure that some consistency was applied across the authority.

The Panel asked that, following adoption of the Policy, the number of volunteers taking up the three paid days leave be monitored and reported back to a future Panel meeting.

RESOLVED – That the updated Special Leave Policy as set out in report RD.25/17, with the above amendments included, be approved for consultation purposes.

(The meeting finished at 11.25am)