

Medway Council
Meeting of Employment Matters Committee
Wednesday, 19 November 2014
7.00pm to 7.20pm

Record of the meeting

Subject to approval as an accurate record at the next meeting of this committee

Present: Councillors: Avey, Mrs Diane Chambers, Clarke,
Christine Godwin, Paul Godwin and Wicks (Chairman)

In Attendance: Elizabeth Benjamin, Principal Lawyer
Wayne Hemingway, Democratic Services Officer
Carrie McKenzie, Head of HR and Organisational Change
Tricia Palmer, Assistant Director, Organisational Services
Tim Silver, Employee Relations Manager
Michael Turner, Democratic Services Officer

524 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 3 September 2014 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

525 Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Mackinlay.

526 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

527 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

528 Review of Annual Leave Policy and Guidelines

The Assistant Director, Organisational Services introduced this report which sought Members' agreement to the revised Annual Leave Policy and Guidelines, the purpose of which was to:

- ensure a uniform and equitable approach to the calculation of annual leave entitlement under a number of scenarios
- provide clarity and guidance on the annual leave request and approval process
- provide guidance to the Council's approach where annual leave is disrupted through sickness
- establish the Council's expectations concerning the use of SelfServe4You as the single media for employees to request and managers to approve annual leave

Decisions:

The Employment Matters Committee:

- a) agreed to approve the revised Annual Leave Policy and Guidelines (as set out in Appendix 1 to the report)
- b) agreed to review the policy in two years time and that any proposed changes be referred to the Employment Matters Committee.

529 Budget Proposals and Implications for Staff

Discussion:

The Head of HR and Organisational Change introduced a report which covered new reviews and transfers since the last meeting.

A Member expressed some concern at the high number of compulsory redundancies reported to this meeting given the Council's long-standing position of avoiding compulsory redundancies wherever possible. The Assistant Director, Organisational Services commented that the level of compulsory redundancies in the report were not typical and had largely come about as a result of changes in how services were delivered by providers the Council contracted with as opposed to restructurings within the Council as a result of budget pressures. As the staff were still Council employees the costs of redundancy had been met by the Council. The Council had in fact been very successful in avoiding compulsory redundancies. The Committee asked for further information on the numbers of redundancies and the associated costs. It was agreed this would be reported to the next meeting.

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Decisions:

The Employment Matters Committee:

- a) noted the present position and the support arrangements for staff.
- b) agreed that a report be brought to the next meeting detailing numbers of redundancies and the costs involved
- c) asked that their best wishes to those staff leaving the employment of the Council be placed on record.

530 Equalities Working Group Update

The Assistant Director, Organisational Services presented a report which informed the Committee of the outcome of a meeting of the Equalities Working Group held on 15 October 2014. She drew attention to the low number of Medway staff who stated they had a disability (3.6%) compared to people living in the community (16%). Whilst she felt the actual figure of disabled staff employed by the Council was likely to be higher (due to differences in the definition of disability between the census and the Council and also a reluctance amongst some members of staff to self declare a disability) the low figure remained a concern for the Council.

The Assistant Director, Organisational Services commented that the Council hoped to enter into the Top 100 regarding the Stonewall workplace quality index. Members congratulated those involved for the significant progress made in this area and also the re-accreditation of the Positive about Disability “Two Tick” symbol.

A Member asked if the Council kept records of employees who were citizens of other EU countries. The Assistant Director, Organisational Services replied that she suspected this information was not requested when staff were employed but would check.

Decision:

The Employment Matters Committee noted the report.

531 Whistleblowing, Anti-Bribery and Anti-Money Laundering Policies: Report on Instances September 2013 - September 2014

The Assistant Director, Organisational Services presented a report which advised Members about the nature of concerns raised, between September 2013 and September 2014, under the Council’s Whistle blowing, Anti-Bribery and Anti-Money Laundering Policies.

Decision:

The Employment Matters Committee noted the report.

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Chairman

Date:

Michael Turner, Democratic Services Officer

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