

**Medway Council**  
**Meeting of Employment Matters Committee**  
**Wednesday, 2 December 2015**  
**7.00pm to 7.22pm**

**Record of the meeting**

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

- Present:** Councillors: Avey, Fearn, Godwin, Hicks, Murray and Wicks  
(Chairman)
- Substitutes:** Councillors:  
Tejan (Substitute for Saroy)
- In Attendance:** Rebecca Channon, Lawyer  
Wayne Hemingway, Democratic Services Officer  
Carrie McKenzie, Head of HR and Organisational Change  
Tricia Palmer, Assistant Director, Organisational Services

**507 Record of meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 9 September 2015 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**508 Apologies for absence**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Saroy.

**509 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances**

There were none.

**510 Declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other interests**

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

**511 Review of pay progression scheme**

**Discussion:**

Members considered a report on suggested changes to the MedPay pay progression scheme following staff consultation as agreed at the last meeting of the Committee. It was noted that no comments had been received by the Trade Unions with 9 comments received from staff (of which only 5 related to the proposed changes).

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken on the proposals, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, which indicated that the revisions to the scheme were unlikely to have an adverse impact.

The Joint Consultative Committee had referred to the Pay Progression Scheme earlier in the evening as part of the wider discussion on the pay claim from GMB and Unison for 2016/2017.

Members raised a number of points and questions including:

- Automatic Level 2 for staff with long term absences – clarification was sought on how the proposed change (i.e. no longer automatically awarding Level 2 to staff with long term absence) would be implemented and whether this could lead to inconsistencies or discrimination when undertaking reviews on a case by case basis.

Following debate, the Assistant Director offered to report back to the next meeting with proposals on how this policy change will be managed.

**Decisions:**

- (a) The Committee agreed the revision to the existing policy by increasing to four levels of assessment by changing Level One to 1(A) and 1(B) (to be implemented with immediate effect).
- (b) The Committee asked the Assistant Director, Organisational Services, to report back to the next meeting with proposals on how the change to policy (Automatic Level 2 for staff with long term absences – colleagues who are absent for sickness reasons are no longer given an automatic level and each case will be treated individually) will be implemented.
- (c) The Committee noted that the following proposed change – to change the criteria for automatic Level 2 to apply only to staff on maternity, adoption, and other authorised leave – will be suspended pending the outcome of decision (b) above.

**512 Review of the treatment of ex offenders policy**

**Discussion:**

Members considered a report which set out proposals for a revised Treatment of Ex-Offenders Policy. The Policy had been updated to take account of the updated Disclosure and Barring Service Policy, with further amendments being made to reflect revisions in statutory legislation and updates to current post titles. It was noted that no comments had been received from the Trade Unions and Employee Forums.

A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken on the proposals, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report, which confirmed that the revisions to the Policy would ensure compliance with current legislation.

Members raised the following point:

- Whilst a number of references had been removed from paragraph 10.1 of the Policy (eg Medway Managers Personnel Handbook), it was now unclear as to where employees would be able to find relevant guidance.

The Head of HR and Organisational Change stated the references had been removed because all relevant policies/guidance were now available on the Council's Intranet site. She undertook to ensure suitable referencing would be included in paragraph 10.1 of the Policy prior to final publication.

The Head of HR and Organisational Change also stated that following agreement by this Committee, the policy would also be presented to the Teachers Forum for consideration of adoption as a schools based policy.

**Decisions:**

- (a) The Committee approved the revised Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.
- (b) The Committee agreed that this Policy be reviewed in two years' time and any proposed changes be referred to this Committee.

**513 Proposed reorganisations**

**Discussion:**

Members considered a report which covered new reviews and transfers since the last report.

Members raised a number of points and questions including:

- Transfers to Academies – whether HR had sufficient capacity to support these transfers.

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The Head of HR and Organisational Change confirmed that whilst her Teams faced a challenge owing to the numbers of transfers, they were able to manage the process.

- Overall numbers of redundancies – that the overall number of redundancies (21) should be considered in the context of redeployments and the overall number of Council employees.

### **Decision:**

The Committee noted the present position and the support arrangements for staff.

### **514 Equalities Working Group Update**

#### **Background:**

Members considered a report which provided details of the recent meeting of the Equalities Working Group (21 October 2015). The Working Group discussed Declaration Week plus issues raised by the Disabled Workers Forum, Black Workers Forum and the LGBTQ Forum. It was considered that the numbers of declarations would increase on an annual basis owing to initiatives such as Declaration Week.

#### **Decision:**

The Committee noted the report.

**Chairman**

**Date:**

**Wayne Hemingway, Democratic Services Officer**

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