

Medway Council
Meeting of Employment Matters Committee
Wednesday, 28 July 2010
7.00pm to 7.20pm

Record of the meeting

- Present:** Councillors: Avey, Kenneth Bamber, Carr (Chairman) and Shaw
- Substitutes:** Councillors:
Smith (Substitute for Ruparel)
- In Attendance:** Elizabeth Benjamin, Senior Lawyer - Litigation
Sandy Eldridge, Advice and Consultancy Manager
Wayne Hemingway, Cabinet Coordinator
Tricia Palmer, Assistant Director, Organisational Services

200 Record of meeting

The record of the meeting held on 10 June 2010 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

201 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Mackinlay, Maple and Ruparel.

202 Urgent matters by reason of special circumstances

There were none.

203 Declarations of interest

There were none.

204 Budget Proposals and Implications for Staff

Discussion:

The Assistant Director, Organisational Services, submitted a report which set out the staffing issues in relation to the current in-year budget reductions and outlined the discussion at the Joint Consultative Committee of Elected Members and Trade Unions on 13 July 2010. The report also set out the timetables for redundancies and identified the support mechanisms in place for affected staff.

The recent announcements made by the Government had resulted in mid-year reductions in Medway of £6 million. The background to these reductions had

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been reported to Cabinet on 29 June 2010 and would be referred to Council on 29 July 2010 for decision.

It was noted that a total of 54 posts had been identified to be at risk of redundancy as a result of the budget reductions and the report set out the process around formal consultation on the proposals.

A revised timetable was tabled at the meeting which would apply to the whole of the School Improvement Service (which replaced existing appendices 2c and 2d). The Assistant Director, Organisational Services, explained that following formal consultation with staff and trade unions the previous week, it was noted that the responses to proposals for staff on "Soulbury" terms and conditions could not reasonably be considered in advance of consideration of counter proposals from staff on teaching terms and conditions as they directly impacted on each other.

Members discussed a number of issues including the proposed four additional redundancies following the recent notification of the cessation of the Training Development Agency (TDA) grant which supported workforce development in schools, and the approach taken by the Council with regard to identifying potential redundancies. The Assistant Director, Organisational Services, responded that the 54 posts at risk of redundancy had been identified, as soon as possible, where funding had been withdrawn in specific service areas and then through a review of support services. With regards to workforce development in schools, it was noted that some work carried out by this team would cease if the proposed redundancies were made.

Decision:

The Committee noted:

- (i) the timetables and arrangements for consultation, and that the Chief Executive and Directors will be considering the consultation responses and any alternative proposals;
- (ii) the discussion at Joint Consultative Committee and the proposals to be taken forward;
- (iii) the support arrangements for staff.

205 The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) Registration

Discussion:

The Assistant Director, Organisational Services, submitted a report which provided details of the Government's decision to put the registration requirements of the Independent Safeguarding Authority's (ISA) Vetting and Barring Scheme on hold.

The Committee had previously considered reports on this scheme in September 2009 and April 2010. The Government announced on 15 June 2010

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to remodel the Vetting and Barring Scheme with a revised scheme to be introduced in due course.

Decision:

The Committee noted the report and asked officers to report back to Committee when details of the remodelled scheme were announced.

Chairman

Date:

Wayne Hemingway, Cabinet Co-ordinator

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