

**Medway Council**  
**Meeting of Employment Matters Committee**  
**Thursday, 16 September 2010**  
**7.00pm to 7.50pm**

**Record of the meeting**

- Present:** Councillors: Avey, Kenneth Bamber, Carr (Chairman),  
Tony Goulden, Maple and Ruparel
- Substitutes:** Councillors:  
Hicks (Substitute for Mackinlay)
- In Attendance:** Elizabeth Benjamin, Senior Lawyer - Litigation  
Paula Charker, Head of Human Resources  
Wayne Hemingway, Cabinet Coordinator  
Richard Lynn, Head of Organisational Development and Service  
Improvement  
Tricia Palmer, Assistant Director, Organisational Services

**342 Record of meeting**

The record of the meeting held on 28 July 2010 was agreed and signed by the Chairman as correct.

**343 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mackinlay.

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

There were none.

**345 Declarations of interest**

Councillor Maple declared a personal interest in all items on the agenda because he is a Trade Union employee (GMB) and retained his right to speak and vote on the items.

**346 Budget Proposals and Implications for Staff**

**Discussion:**

The Assistant Director, Organisational Services, submitted a report which updated the Committee on progress on staffing issues in relation to the current in-year budget reductions, as agreed at Council on 29 July 2010.

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The report set out that the consultation process for a number of service areas had completed during August 2010 and that consultation responses and alternative proposals had been considered by Directors and the Chief Executive as appropriate. This information was set out in paragraph 4 of the report.

The Head of Human Resources referred to the Corporate Bidding Unit (paragraph 4.3 of the report) and that further work was being undertaken on the proposals, therefore, the two employees affected had had their notice periods extended to January 2011. With regard to the Finance teams (paragraph 4.5 and 4.6 of the report), the process for selecting employees for redundancy was due to finish on 17 September 2010.

The Head of Human Resources reported that the consultation period for the School Improvement Team had ended on 10 September 2010 and that the Council was due to consider a counter proposal by 20 September 2010. She also reported on the support for staff including Next Step (career advice) and Care First (employee assistance) and the number of employees successfully redeployed so far.

Members discussed a range of issues including the take up of services offering support to staff, the future contractual basis of the Corporate Bidding Team, the capacity of HR to support the process and lessons learned from the process. Officers responded that it was too early to provide detailed statistics on the take up of services, that the Corporate Bidding Team would likely be employed on a fixed term basis in the future (if the proposals were agreed), and that HR would look at new procedures to simplify the process in the future.

### **Decision:**

The Committee noted:

- The outcomes of the consultation process
- The present position
- The support arrangements for staff.

## **347 Workforce Monitoring and Strategy Update**

### **Discussion:**

The Assistant Director, Organisational Services, submitted a report which updated the Committee on the Workforce Strategy and reported on workforce monitoring for 2009/2010. The report examined performance against the four workforce priority areas together with the key challenges facing the Council in planning its future workforce requirements.

The Head of Organisational Development and Service Improvement highlighted a number of key issues including greater employment opportunities for young people, disability issues and the implications of the Equality Act 2010.

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Members discussed a range of issues including the graduate placement scheme, apprenticeships, exit interviews and the potential impact of further staffing reductions on future workforce monitoring statistics. Officers responded that the administration of the apprenticeship scheme had now been incorporated into day-to-day HR functions and were working with Children's Services to provide additional support for more vulnerable apprentices and those young people on pre-apprenticeship training and that Economic Development were helping to provide support for apprenticeships arranged with local businesses. The Council would continue to grow the graduate placement scheme as far as the Council could support the process.

### **Decision:**

The Committee noted the report.

### **348 Allocation of Seats on Joint Consultative Committee**

#### **Discussion:**

This report set out the position regarding the allocation of seats on the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) following the review of the allocation of seats of Committees as agreed at Council on 29 July 2010. It was noted that the composition of the JCC included one place for the Independent Group at the expense of a Labour Group place.

#### **Decision:**

The Committee noted the membership of the Joint Consultative Committee, as set out in paragraph 2.3 of the report.

### **349 Early Retirement and Severance Payments**

#### **Discussion:**

The Assistant Director, Organisational Services, submitted a report which set out information on early retirements and severance decisions between 1 June 2010 – 31 August 2010.

#### **Decision:**

The Committee noted the report.

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**Chairman**

**Date:**

**Wayne Hemingway, Cabinet Co-ordinator**

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