

5 JULY 2013

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the General Purposes and Licensing Committee held at Appletree Court, Lyndhurst on Friday, 5 July 2013.

ap Cllr G C Beck (Chairman)
p Cllr W H Dow (Vice-Chairman) (in the Chair)

Councillors:

p S J Clarke
ap J D Heron
ap Miss A J Hickman
p Mrs M McLean
p J Penwarden
p L R Puttock
ap R F Scrivens

Councillors:

p M H Thierry
p S S Wade
p Mrs C V Ward
ap P R Woods
ap Mrs P A Wyeth
Vacancy

Officers Attending:

Ms M Stephens and S Stone, and, for part of the meeting, Mrs M Sandhu.

3. MINUTES.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meetings held on 15 April and 13 May 2013 be signed by the Chairman as correct records.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.

Cllr S Wade in Minute No. 6.

5. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.

No issues were raised during the public participation period.

6. A REVIEW OF ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE POLICIES & PROCEDURES (REPORT A).

Cllr S Wade disclosed a non-pecuniary interest in this item as his daughter-in-law worked for the Authority. He concluded that there were no issues under common law which prevented him from speaking and voting.

The Committee reviewed the Council's current Organisational Change Policies in support of the Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Efficiency and Savings Plan. The key changes proposed would take effect on 1 August 2013.

The key changes proposed were as follows:

- Staff would need to have 2 years' continuous service before they were entitled to be placed on the Redeployment Register (previously 1 year)
- A reduction of the Redundancy Compensation Scheme to x1.5 (previously x2) of statutory redundancy (continuing to be based on actual weekly pay) to a maximum of 45 weeks.

The report stated the Council's commitment to the establishment of effective organisational structures which were flexible and responsive to changing needs. The Authority, in consultation with the Employee Side, would seek to minimise the effect of the changes and to achieve wherever possible any reductions in the numbers of employees through natural turnover by retirement or resignations. The report also covered:

- The vacancy management procedure
- Age retirement
- Policies where employee numbers exceeded requirements
- The selection of employees for posts in a revised/new organisational structure
- Redeployment procedure

The Industrial Relations Committee (IRC) had considered the proposals on 6 June. There had been a full discussion at IRC on concerns expressed by the employees' side.

The Committee considered the concerns of employees' side on some of the proposals and the employers' side responses to these concerns. In particular, the Committee considered the proposed redundancy compensation scheme and how it compared to the current market. Members on the whole, felt that the proposal balanced the needs of the Council as an employer and also those of staff in the current difficult job market.

The Committee also felt that adopting flexible organisational structures that were responsive to changing needs would be advantageous to the Council and its employees.

The Committee, while mindful of the employees' side's arguments, supported the employer's side's proposals.

RECOMMENDED:

That the proposed changes to the Council's organisational change policies, as detailed in sections 7 & 8 of Report A to the Committee, be agreed and implemented from 1st August 2013.

7. HEALTH & SAFETY INTERVENTION PLAN FOR 2013/14 (REPORT B).

The Committee considered the proposed Health and Safety Intervention Plan for the coming year. The plan reviewed the work of the service for the previous year and proposed a full range of work for the year ahead.

Members considered the various aspects of the plan in detail including the Health and Safety Executive's identified priorities for Local Authorities and the Council's local priorities for the coming year. In particular the Committee requested that the national priority of 'violence at work' be included in the Council's programme for 2013/14. Members felt that as the District contained a large number of leisure businesses, which could be placed under pressure during the summer months, the Council should be proactive in protecting staff. They requested that the change to the Intervention Plan be emailed to them at the end of the summer, including an update of incidents that might have required intervention from the Council.

Mr Stone was congratulated on the comprehensive report.

RESOLVED:

That the Health and Safety Intervention Plan for 2013/2014 as set out in Appendix 1 be approved subject to the inclusion of violence at work in the table of planned work for the year ahead.

Action: Stephen Stone

CHAIRMAN

(GPLC050713)