

30 JANUARY 2020

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

HR COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the HR Committee held on Thursday, 30 January 2020

Cllr Barry Rickman (Chairman)
* Cllr Mark Steele (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

Hilary Brand
* Keith Craze
* Kate Crisell

Councillors:

* Michael Harris
* Maureen Holding
Mahmoud Kangarani

*Present

Officers Attending:

Heleana Aylett, Kerri Dibben, Megan Dollman, Colin Read, Manjit Sandhu,
Sophie Thompson and Karen Wardle

Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Rickman

The Vice-Chair (Cllr Steele) in the Chair.

21 MINUTES

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

22 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no issues raised in the public participation period.

24 HR UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received an update on the activities of the HR department since the last meeting, which covered the following areas:

- iTrent HR system
- Equalities training
- Managing suicidal conversations
- DBS checks
- HR brief bite sessions

- Apprenticeship training
- Pay adjustment
- Pay award 2020
- Employee Survey
- NPA partnership
- Flu vaccination vouchers
- Employee Assistance Programme

The iTrent HR system had been used successfully for processing the pay for the Hythe and Dibden Referendum. It was questioned whether payroll services could be offered commercially and it was noted that the possibility of this would be investigated by officers.

An employee survey was anticipated to be carried out in February / March. Staff would be encouraged to participate in this independently run survey. Members also proposed that an employee suggestion scheme be introduced.

The use of the Employee Assistance Programme was proposed to be presented to the next meeting of the HR Committee. It was acknowledged that those who had used the service had reported excellent feedback.

Members discussed mental health issues for employees. It was noted that there were 12 qualified NFDC mental health first aiders, which were the first point of contact for assistance. The NHS 111 service had been used in the last two months for a member of staff in need of help and the quality and speed of the service provided had been very positive.

25 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Committee considered the Pay Policy Statement for the financial year 2020-21.

The Council has a requirement under the Localism Act 2011 to prepare a pay policy statement each year and this must be prepared and approved by the end of March each year. The recommended statement for 2020-21 detailed the policies in place from 1 April 2020.

The Committee noted that the National Pay Award for 2020-21 was being negotiated nationally and had yet to be agreed. When it was agreed, the Pay Policy statement, attached as Appendix 1 to the report would be updated to reflect this.

RESOLVED:

That it be recommended to the Council that the Pay Policy Statement 2020-21, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

26 APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE

The Committee received an update on apprenticeships undertaken at the Council since the introduction of the 'Levy' in 2017.

36 people had undertaken apprenticeships with the Council since the levy introduction. 26 of these had been undertaken by current employees and 10 as newly recruited apprentices.

Members noted the benefits associated with apprentices who were in employment, such as higher levels of motivation and additional in house training.

It was highlighted to members that for some apprenticeships, often in years 3 / 4 of the apprenticeship, that these members of staff would still be on a salary based on the national minimum age. It was important to retain any employee in the more advanced stage of their apprenticeship, due to the benefits and experience they could bring to the service area, therefore a more attractive salary would help to retain staff in recognition of their expertise. An example was given of the vehicle mechanic qualification, where by the time they were in year three of their apprenticeship, private companies were willing to offer them a role as a semi skilled mechanic on a much better salary.

It was suggested that a report be presented on what the Council had spent on apprenticeships and an evaluation of the benefits and value they have added.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update be noted; and
- (b) That apprenticeships continue to be supported in the future.

27 HEALTH & LEISURE REVIEW - VERBAL UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the health and leisure centre review.

Six expressions of interest had been received in September 2019. Four of these had been invited to tender for the contract and the deadline for the bids was 31 January 2020. During the bidding process, officers had responded to over 150 points of clarification and had arranged visits to the leisure centres. The bids would be evaluated on 40% Financial and 60% on Quality, this included staffing and resources.

It was anticipated that by the end of April, a preferred bidder would be selected and that a report would be presented to the Community & Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting in June, followed by Cabinet and Council in July. The HR implications would be considered by the Employee Side Liaison Panel and also the HR Committee at the appropriate time. The earliest date for the contract start was proposed to be 2 January 2021.

Staff had received regular updates on the health and leisure review but it was acknowledged that the process was unsettling for employees working in this service. The Employee Side Liaison Panel had been working through a number of issues, including pensions.

500 health and leisure staff had been reported to be on the TUPE list, which equated to approximately 130 full time equivalent positions. No support service staff had currently been identified as meeting the criteria for the TUPE list.

CHAIRMAN