

12 JANUARY 2023

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

HR COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the HR Committee held on Thursday, 12 January 2023

* Cllr Jill Cleary (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

* Diane Andrews
* Hilary Brand
Mark Clark
* Keith Craze

Councillors:

* Kate Crisell
Michael Harris
* Maureen Holding

*Present

Officers Attending:

Kate Ryan (remote attendance), Heleana Aylett, Zoe Ormerod, Sophie Thompson, Spencer Scott, and Andy Rogers

27 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs M Clark and M Harris.

28 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Cleary be appointed Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

29 APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED:

That Cllr Andrews be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

30 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 August 2022 were confirmed by the Chairman as correct record.

31 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

32 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no issues raised in the public participation period.

33 HR UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received an update on the activities of the HR service since the last HR Committee meeting

Various staff recruitment and retention measures were highlighted, and a portable corporate - branded exhibition stand was displayed at the meeting which employed a QR code.

Members noted other aspects of the HR service, including their reactive caseload, issues relating to job evaluations, restructuring advice, grievances, disciplinaries and sickness absence matters.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

34 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Committee considered a proposed Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24.

The Localism Act 2011 required the Council to prepare a pay policy statement for each financial year. A recommended statement for 2023/24 was included at Appendix 1 to the report and detailed the policies in place from 1 April 2023. This also contained the Pension Policy Statement.

The pay award for 2022/23 had been agreed nationally for Chief Executives, Chief Officers and those covered by the Green book.

RESOLVED:

That it be a recommendation to the Council that the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24 as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

35 REASONABLE ADJUSTMENT REPORT

The Committee considered updated guidance to support employees with long - term health conditions and disabilities through 'Reasonable Adjustments'.

The proposed amendments to the guidance were shown in paragraphs 20.4 to 20.10 of the report.

The aim of the updated guidance was to provide enhanced management direction and support in agreeing reasonable adjustments, as well as increased employee awareness, improved records, monitoring and reporting.

RESOLVED:

That the introduction of updated reasonable adjustment guidance for managers and employees, including the documentation of agreed reasonable adjustments using the 'Reasonable Adjustments Employee Plan', be supported.

36 QUARTERLY HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT Q2 2022/23

The Committee received an update on the significant health, safety, and welfare work across the Council from July to September 2022, as well as feedback from the three Safety Panels and accident, incident and near - miss statistics.

Accidents, incidents and near misses in the period reported were within normal parameters, down from 79 in the last quarter to 45. There had been one RIDDOR incident (an over 7-day injury). Near miss reports were up from 17 on the previous Q2 report (2021/22) at 25.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the quarterly update and ongoing actions, be noted.

37 APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE

The Committee received an update on the current situation with apprenticeships across the Council.

Numbers of apprenticeships had improved since the decline during the pandemic and HR continued to work with service managers to maximise the benefits of apprenticeships through taking on new apprentice recruits, using apprenticeship training for upskilling existing employees, and alongside trainee roles.

Members were pleased to note the number of new apprenticeships across the Council.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the report be noted and the continued use of apprenticeships where appropriate be supported.

38 RECRUITMENT UPDATE

The Committee received an update on Council recruitment over the 6 months to 30 September 2022, progress made with recruitment tools, and plans to improve branding and generic tools in the coming months.

It was noted that, in the year to 31 March 2022, there were 248 recruitment campaigns with 1,573 applications received. 92% of advertised posts were filled first time. The doubling of vacancies in the last year had led to a corresponding increase in the workload of the Team, at every stage from discussing advertising through to induction.

Between 1 April and 30 September 2022, there had been 85 vacancies, 9 of which were new posts, the remainder filling vacancies, with 429 applicants for those roles. 73% of these were filled first time. Recruitment and retention had been challenging during this period.

Members acknowledged that some recruitment difficulties may be due to lack of availability of public transport, particularly for young people, and they felt it was important that the District Council continued to support community transport grants. It was confirmed that the Community, Partnerships and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel were shortly to consider a recommendation from a Council Task and Finish Group that such support should continue.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the report be noted and that the proactive steps aimed to improve recruitment campaigns as set out in the report be supported.

39 DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2023/24

RESOLVED:

That the following dates for Committee meetings in 2023/24 be agreed:

8 June 2023
14 September 2023
11 January 2024
21 March 2024

CHAIRMAN