

14 SEPTEMBER 2023

NEW FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL

HR COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the HR Committee held on Thursday, 14 September 2023

Cllr Jill Cleary (Chairman)

* Cllr Steve Davies (Vice-Chairman)

Councillors:

- * Mark Clark
- * Keith Craze
- * Kate Crisell
- * Sean Cullen

Councillors:

- * Jeremy Heron
- * Colm McCarthy
- * Joe Reilly

*Present

Officers Attending:

Kate Ryan, Sophie Taylor, Karen Warner, Heleana Aylett, James Loring and Andy Rogers.

12 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 June were confirmed by the Chairman as correct record.

13 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the Chairman, Cllr J Cleary.

(Vice – Chairman, Cllr S Davies in the Chair)

14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest.

15 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There were no issues raised in the public participation period.

16 HR UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received the HR Update report.

The update covered the following areas:

- Learning Management System
- Recruitment
- Additional Voluntary Contributions
- MyLifestyle Benefits
- New Staff Engagement Groups
- Leadership Development Programme

The above issues were in addition to the reactive caseload which included job evaluations, restructuring advice, grievances, disciplinaries and sickness absence matters. The team also continued to provide Payroll and HR Advisory services to the National Park Authority.

In response to a query on the Leadership Development Programme, it was explained that the intention was to combine elements of existing programmes into a common and consistent programme for Band 10 to Assistant Director - level managers across the Authority. This would use a modular framework, which would commence in January 2024 with 360 appraisals using the SOLACE model, taking place in October / November, with feedback sessions being held in November / December.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

17 EMPLOYEE WORKFORCE REPORT 2022-2023

The Committee received the Employee Workforce Report for 2022/23.

The report included employee statistics on age, grade, diversity, gender, disability, pregnancy and maternity, employee benefits, recruitment and retention, development, performance, conduct, reward, and apprenticeships.

The report also included an overview of initiatives in the last year to support employees. It was reported that the Council's workforce was representative of the New Forest community and the diversity of applicants had increased in the last year.

Work had been ongoing with how the Council engaged with new starters, including induction. The Council continued to invest in corporate, apprenticeship, and role - specific training. External turnover had reduced in the last 12 months.

Equality, diversity and inclusion issues were being worked on through the EDI group, and the organisation continued to look at health and well-being measures across the workforce. Reference was also made to the learning management system and how that would continue for employee development as well as the Leadership Development Programme.

Members referred to the aim to be an Employer of Choice (EoC) and queried how this message was being put over in recruitment and retention. In reply, it was emphasised that the employee benefits package would continue to be reviewed, and would in part be informed by the staff survey group.

Consideration was also being given to benchmarking other organisations to measure progress on EoC. Members further noted that the HR team would be working within a broader corporate team, looking at undergoing a Peer Review in collaboration with the LGA including consideration of EoC.

The Committee noted queries raised by Employee Side, to which answers were being given, and noted the conclusions of the report and the next steps and actions.

RESOLVED:

That the content of the report be noted.

18 UPDATE ON LEAVERS' QUESTIONNAIRE

The Committee received a report outlining the use of information gathered from employees leaving NFDC employment, including a new updated Leavers' Questionnaire launched in June 2023.

The information gathered included reasons for leaving, NFDC rated as an employer, rating feeling valued by the employer, and comparative data. The data gathered will be used to identify trends and improvements, which would be submitted to EMT twice a year.

Members queried whether more could be done to help operational staff engage, and it was explained that ICT staff were assisting employees in depots with this.

It was noted that there was a range of reasons why people left the Authority, and the Questionnaire had been redesigned to elicit more specific and informative responses.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

19 QUARTERLY HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT (Q1 2022-23)

The Committee received the Quarterly Health and Safety Report covering the period April to June 2023.

The report included detailed accidents and incidents data, a merged action plan from the safety panels, progress and actions completed by the health and safety team, and the occupational road risk grey fleet policy. The Committee also noted related actions identified going forward.

The report was summarised and a number of points were highlighted. Details of RIDDOR incidents were outlined, as well as lessons learned, and it was noted that risk assessments had been reviewed in each case.

In respect of the Grey Fleet Occupational Road Risk Policy, it was noted that 20 essential and casual user staff would be spot checked annually for vehicle tax, insurance and driving licence.

It was noted that meetings were being held concerning risk assessments at Keyhaven, and members were keen to see how this progressed.

RESOLVED:

That the report, together with the Occupational Road Risk (Grey Fleet) Policy, be noted.

20 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED:

That the following dates be agreed for meetings of the HR Committee in 2024/25:

(Thursdays at 10am)

13 June 2024

5 September 2024

9 January 2025

13 March 2025

21 ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES ARE URGENT

CHAIRMAN