

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PERSONNEL BOARD
HELD ON 22 MARCH 2018 FROM 6.15 PM TO 6.55 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Stuart Munro (Vice-Chairman), UllaKarin Clark, Lindsay Ferris, Charlotte Haitham Taylor, Pauline Helliard-Symons and Charles Margetts

Officers Present

Madeleine Shopland, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist
Sarah Swindley, Lead Specialist, HR

35. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Alistair Auty.

36. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Extraordinary meetings of the Board held on 5 December 2017, 21 December 2017, 8 January 2018 and 6 February 2018 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Vice Chairman.

37. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

38. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

39. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

40. HR UPDATE REPORT

The Board considered the Gender Pay Gap report, the Annual Equalities Workforce Monitoring Report and the Apprenticeship Policy and Guidance.

During the discussion of this item the following points were made:

- Gender pay reporting legislation requires employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations every year showing how large the pay gap is between their male and female employees. The Council was required to publish its Gender Pay Policy on its website by 31 March 2018.
- The Board considered the Equality Monitoring Workforce Report 2017-18. The annual report demonstrated the Council's compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty in relation to its workforce.
- Members were informed that the Council did not have significant data on the religion or sexual orientation of employees. Only 12% of employees had provided this information. An action was to increase staff confidence in disclosing their personal information to increase the accuracy of workforce monitoring, particularly with regards to sexual orientation, disability and religious beliefs. In response to a Member question Sarah Swindley commented that the Council had a duty to ensure that there was not indirect discrimination. Employees could choose not to provide personal information if they wished.
- An action was for HR to continue to closely monitor and review BME data in relation to Capability, Discipline and Grievances. Members asked that equalities data by

departments, be monitored and that this action be added to the action plan. Sarah Swindley indicated that she would bring data on this matter to the next Personnel Board meeting.

- Charlotte Haitham Taylor asked whether training was provided to Members regarding equality matters. Sarah Swindley commented that this should be part of the new Member induction training. The Board requested that a refresher session also be provided for more experienced Members.
- The Board considered the Apprenticeship Policy. Members were informed that on 6 April 2017 the new Apprenticeship Levy came into force.
- The Council was required to take 25 Apprentices, non schools, or 69 including schools by April 2021. It was anticipated that the Council would meet its targets. There were currently no teaching apprenticeships so the schools would be supported in offering the required apprenticeships.
- The Apprenticeship Policy was compliant with all legislation with regards to employing Apprentices and the use of the Apprenticeship Levy which costed Wokingham Borough Council approximately £14,250 per month for its centrally employed staff.
- Members discussed the proposed pay rates. It was proposed that more than the minimum wage be offered as it was appreciated that it was a difficult market. It was noted that the starting salary for Level 2 or Year 1 or L4 or above would be £15,115.
- Councillor Clark asked who could apply for apprenticeships and was informed that those living within and outside the Borough could apply. In some circumstances apprenticeships could be offered to existing employees.
- The Board discussed apprenticeships that would be offered within the Council. Sarah Swindley commented that three degree level apprentices were being recruited; in legal and project management and also a surveyor.
- Members asked how Apprentices were selected and how the mixture of different skills levels was decided. Sarah Swindley indicated that there was an interview and selection process. Currently the Council was responding to demand.
- Members requested an update on Apprentices at the next Board meeting.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the Gender Pay Gap report that would be published on the Council's website before 31 March 2018, be noted;
- 2) the Equalities Workforce Monitoring Report be approved;
- 3) the Apprenticeship Policy that will enable the Council to be compliant with the requirements now set down in legislation and maximise the use of the Apprenticeship Levy, be approved.