

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PERSONNEL BOARD
HELD ON 1 JULY 2019 FROM 6.00 PM TO 7.05 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Carl Doran, Lindsay Ferris, John Halsall (Chairman), Pauline Helliard-Symons, Clive Jones, John Kaiser (Vice-Chairman) and Simon Weeks

Officers Present

Madeleine Shopland, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist
Sarah Swindley, Lead Specialist HR
Lee Washbrook, Assistant Director Business Services

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN 2019-2020

RESOLVED: That Councillor John Halsall be elected Chairman for the 2019-2020 municipal year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor John Kaiser be appointed Vice Chairman for the 2019-2020 municipal year.

3. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 13 March 2019 and the Minutes of the Extraordinary meetings held on 13 March and 26 March 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

6. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

7. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

8. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Board considered the Pay Policy.

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

- Under sections 38 to 43 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council was required to prepare, approve by Full Council (as a Part 1 item), and publish on its website a pay policy statement for the financial year 2019/2020.
- Members were advised that while there had been a slight increase to Senior Management pay the gap was narrowing due to the higher increases at the bottom end of the pay-scales as a result of National Minimum Wage increases. Councillor Helliard Symons asked whether any concerns had been raised about this and was informed that there had not.

- Councillor Weeks noted that the Personnel Board appointed Directors. He went on to ask where the creation of Assistant Director posts were agreed. Sarah Swindley indicated that it was the responsibility of the Chief Executive. There were currently 17 Assistant Directors.
- In response to a question from Councillor Jones regarding the appointment of Assistant Directors Sarah Swindley indicated that the appointment of the Assistant Directors by the Personnel Board would require changes to the Constitution and would also be difficult to resource from HR point of view. She indicated that if there was not sufficient budget for an Assistant Director post the relevant service area would have to request a supplementary estimate which would be considered by the Executive.
- Councillor Jones asked how many Assistant Director posts had been in place prior to the 21st Century initiative. Sarah Swindley indicated that she would circulate this information outside of the meeting.
- Councillor Jones asked what was meant by the 'wider market' in terms of benchmarking. Sarah Swindley stated that Wokingham benchmarked salaries against other unitaries and some county councils in the South East using E-Paycheck. The search could be widened if necessary.
- Members asked how often increments had been withheld in the event of unsatisfactory performance and were informed that this had not happened and that this would only occur if it was a sanction as part of a formal capability.
- It was at an individual manager's discretion to raise a member of staff up more than one more increment at a time. There had to be sufficient budget. Sarah Swindley clarified that the budget manager was usually at Lead Specialist or Assistant Director level.
- The Council did not enhance the number of statutory week's redundancy pay an individual was entitled to under the Employment Rights Act 1996. Any requests would be considered by the Personnel Board.
- A Member questioned at what age was the earliest a member of staff could retire and was informed that it depended on their age and the length of service. Currently if a member of staff was made redundant aged over 55, the Council was required to release non-actuarially pension. At present there was legislation under consideration that would put a limit of £90,000 on exit payments. Councillor Kaiser asked if an employee who was over 55 and who had been made redundant could choose to not take their pension and was informed that they could not.
- As at 31 March 35 honoraria were being paid totalling approximately £130,000. 60 market supplements totalling approximately £300,000 were being paid. Market supplements were reviewed every three years to ascertain whether they were still required. It was agreed that Sarah Swindley would circulate the quarterly Workforce Dashboard to Personnel Board.
- Councillor Helliard-Symons commented that she felt that honoraria helped to save on advertising and agency costs in the short term if a member of staff was acting up temporarily.
- Sarah Swindley agreed to find out how many members of staff qualified for overtime. Managers grade SM1 and over did not qualify for over time.
- Councillor Doran asked what was meant by capability. Sarah Swindley explained that the Council's Disciplinary Policy related to conduct whilst the Capability Policy related to attendance and performance.

RESOLVED: That the draft Pay Policy Statement for 2019 be agreed and recommended to Full Council on 18 July 2019 for agreement.

9. ANNUAL EQUALITY MONITORING WORKFORCE REPORT

The Board considered the Annual Equality Monitoring Report. The Council had a duty to have an equality action plan for its workforce. The Equality Monitoring Report was owned by the Equality Action Group.

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

- The annual report provided information on employees obtained from the Council's monitoring processes and procedures, which allows the Council to meet the reporting requirements outlined in the Equality Act 2010.
- A key challenge was getting staff to include their equality data on BWO, even if they put 'prefer not to say.'
- The Council looked at the data it received to ascertain whether its workforce was representative of its population.
- Councillor Halsall asked the Council were less represented in some areas. Sarah Swindley commented that it was not.
- In response to a question regarding staff paid over £50,000 Lee Washbrook indicated that there was information on the Council's website under the transparency section regarding this. Sarah Swindley agreed to send the link to the website to Members.
- Councillor Helliard-Symons referred to work on recruitment and retention of Children's Services staff that a Task and Finish Group had undertaken. She hoped that the Task and Finish Group's final report which contained a number of recommendations would be taken into consideration.
- Councillor Doran asked about the number of staff that worked flexibly. He was informed that the workforce data would indicate the make up of the workforce.
- Councillor Ferris asked about staff morale. Sarah Swindley indicated that an employment engagement survey was being developed and would be circulated in September. The results would be presented to the Personnel Board.

RESOLVED: That the 2019-2020 Annual Equality Workforce Monitoring Report be approved.

10. AGENCY WORKER USAGE

The Board received the Agency Worker usage update.

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) as appropriate.

12. AGENCY WORKER USAGE

The Board received an update on Agency Worker Usage.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.