

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
PERSONNEL BOARD
HELD ON 15 MARCH 2022 FROM 7.45 PM TO 8.20 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: John Halsall (Chairman), John Kaiser (Vice-Chairman), Clive Jones, Simon Weeks and Rachel Bishop-Firth

Officers Present

Madeleine Shopland, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist
Christine Bennett, Interim Assistant Director HR&OD
Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director Governance
Marcia Hazzard, Acting Head of Workforce & Organisational Development

27. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence was submitted from Councillors Stephen Conway and Pauline Helliar-Symons.

28. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 7 February 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

29. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

30. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

31. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

32. WOKINGHAM BOROUGH GRADUATE ACADEMY

The Board received a report regarding the Wokingham Borough Graduate Academy.

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

- The Council was participating in the National Graduate Development Programme (NGDP), a two-year scheme, led by the Local Government Association (LGA).
- The Graduate Academy was created in 2019 and had grown exponentially over the last 3.5 years, with a cohort of 6 welcomed onto the programme in 2020 and a further 2 added in 2021. Graduates were working on various projects in the Council.
- Feedback from managers had been very positive.
- Councillor Bishop Firth questioned why the number of graduates had increased by 6 in 2020 and then only by 2 in 2021. The Interim Assistant Director HR & OD commented that it likely related to volumes of work during the pandemic.
- Councillor Jones asked how many graduates the Council expected to take on during 2022 and was informed that there was not a target. Numbers depended on how many graduates the LGA had of a suitable calibre and the level of competition.
- Councillor Jones questioned what happened after the two year placement period and was informed that the Council and likely the LGA helped the graduates to find positions.

- Councillor Weeks noted that the scheme had begun in 2015 and questioned whether any graduates had remained with the Council. It was noted that some had whilst others had sought positions elsewhere. Whilst they were with the Council the graduates provided valuable work and support.
- Councillor Jones noted comparisons with Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Bracknell and Slough, and questioned whether Reading Borough Council participated in the scheme.

RESOLVED: That the future direction of the Graduate Academy be supported.

33. RECRUITMENT AND APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS AND ASSISTANT DIRECTORS (PERMANENT AND INTERIM)

The Board received a report regarding the appointment of Directors and Assistant Directors.

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

- Councillor Halsall explained the proposed changes to the appointment processes for Directors and Assistant Directors.
- Councillor Jones commented that the proposal raised at the previous meeting that the Leader of the Opposition be involved in the process had not been included. He noted that the relevant Executive Member, Leader of the Council, and the Chairman of the Personnel Board would be consulted. He emphasised that Councillor Halsall was both the Leader of the Council and Chairman of the Personnel Board, which he felt limited consultation.
- Councillor Halsall proposed that the recommendation of the report be amended so that the changes went direct to Council on 24 March and not first via Constitution Review Working Group, and that the changes not apply to recruitment processes which were already underway.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) changes to the appointment processes for Directors and Assistant Directors be recommended to Council.
- 2) These changes not apply to recruitment processes already underway.

34. 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.

35. AGENCY WORKER USAGE Q3 2021/2022

The Board received the quarterly Agency report.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations set out in Part 2 of the report be agreed.