

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

8 March 2004

Attendance:

Councillors:

Collin (Chairman) (P)

Allgood (P)
Baxter
Bennetts (P)
Coates (P)
Cook (P)

Craig
Goodall (P)
Hatch (P)
Learney (P)
Merritt (P)

1195. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Baxter and Craig.

1196. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 10 December 2003 be approved and adopted.

1197. **RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING CONTRACT**
(Oral Update)

The Chief Executive explained that the tenders returned had been evaluated by a Member and officer panel on which the Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee had served. Cabinet had agreed to the recommendation at its meeting on the 3 March 2004. The contract for the provision of Recruitment Advertising services had been awarded to Lawton Ware Ltd.

The new contract would run for three years commencing 1 April 2004 with the possibility of a two-year extension by mutual agreement.

The Committee thanked Miss Pickering of the Chief Executive's Department for her assistance in the tender process.

1198. **PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT PERFORMANCE MONITORING**
(Report PER67 refers)

The Director of Personnel reported that a new recruitment selection procedure had been implemented and managers retrained accordingly including guidance on equal opportunities issues. Members noted that although there was an apparent indication of a lack of appointment of minority ethnic groups; this was in no way linked to Council's selection procedures. The Director reminded Members that ethnicity percentages for appointments reflected that of the district population overall.

Members noted a possible discrepancy between the figures as set out in Appendix 3 and Appendix 4 of the report regarding equal opportunities monitoring of current staff and that during the recruitment process. The Director reported that this discrepancy may be linked to time scale, however officers would investigate accordingly and report findings to the Committee.

Further to questions, the Director reported that an initial investigation had been carried out regarding potential future childcare policies and flexible working initiatives. This study had been completed and further work would be undertaken as outlined in the Business Plan for the forthcoming year. It was noted that some financial initiatives such as tax benefits would need to be discussed and implemented by the Council's payroll section.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet be recommended to consider the report and the comments as set out above.

1199. **PERSONNEL DEPARTMENT DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2004/05**
(Report PER68 refers)

Members noted that section 7 'Proposals for Public Consultation' was a standard heading within the corporate business plan template. However, it was suggested that, in the case of the Personnel Department Business Plan, this heading could be renamed 'Consultation with User Groups', or alternatively an appropriate comment added.

RESOLVED:

That Cabinet be recommended to consider the report and the comments as set out above.

1200. **RECEPTION AREAS FIRST PHASE - IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE THROUGH ESTABLISHING A CONTACT CENTRE**
(Report CAB793 refers)

The Committee noted that this report had been considered at Cabinet on the 11 February 2004. It had been forwarded to the Personnel Committee for the consideration of the approval of an increase of establishment of 1FTE for a Customer Services Manager.

The Committee also debated the wider aspects of the establishment of a Customer Service Centre, including the implications for existing staff.

The Director of Finance reported that Cabinet had given approval in principle to the establishment of a Customer Service Centre and to the post of Customer Service Manager as outlined in the report. Cabinet had also given approval in principle to the Customer Service Centre being provided in-house. Members agreed to the approach as it would utilise the experience of existing staff. The Director also advised that a Project Board had been established and that she was the overall Project Manager for the process.

The Director of Personnel advised that consultation with UNISON and regional representatives would be ongoing throughout the process. The Council's redundancy policy would be initiated and that the new posts would be ring-fenced for interviews with existing affected staff. The Director stated that the staff recruited would have vigorous training in knowledge of Council services, technical aspects of the systems operation and customer care initiatives.

Further to discussion, the Director also stated that examples of good practice (and lessons learnt) would be obtained from other local authorities in the area who had experience of Customer Service Centres.

RESOLVED:

1. That approval in principle be given to the establishment of a Customer Service Centre and to the post of Customer Service Manager as outlined in the report.
2. That approval in principle be given to the Customer Service Centre being provided in house.
3. That an increase in establishment of 1FTE for a Customer Service Centre Manager be approved.

1201. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

RESOLVED:

That the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt information' as defined by Section 100I and Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

<u>Minute Number</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Description of Exempt Information</u>
1202 & 1203	City Secretary and Solicitors Department-Minor Establishment Changes	Information relating to a particular employee, former employee or applicant to become an employee of, or a particular office-holder, former office-holder or applicant to become an office-holder under the authority. (Para 1 to Schedule 12A refers).

1202. **CITY SECRETARY AND SOLICITORS DEPARTMENT-MINOR ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES**

(Report PER66 refers)

The Committee considered a report that detailed a request for authority to be given to the City Secretary and Solicitor to engage up to 1.2 FTE in the Legal Division to accommodate changes in workload. (Detail in exempt minute)

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.05pm

