

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

20 September 2007

Attendance:

Councillors:

Godfrey (Chairman) (P)
Nelmes (Vice Chairman – in the Chair) (P) for item ## only

Chapman	Learney (P)
Collin	Read (P)
Cooper	Weston (P)
Fall (P)	Worrall (P)
Goodall (P)	
Johnston (P)	

Deputy Members

Councillor Howell (Standing Deputy for Councillor Cooper)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting

Councillor Allgood (Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources)

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillors Chapman, Collin and Cooper.

2. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meetings of the Committee held on 20 June 2007 and 17 July 2007 (less exempt item), be approved and adopted.

3. **HUMAN RESOURCES – PERFORMANCE MONITORING QUARTER ONE - 2007/08**

(Report [PER127](#) refers)

The Head of Organisational Development advised that the following amendments should be made to Appendix 1 of the Report:

Page 1 – BVPI 14 – Number of early retirements as a percentage of staff – 2007/08 Q1 – 0.44% should be corrected to read 0.22%

Page 3 - Establishment Numbers Q1– the figures should read:
Establishment FTE 529.17, Headcount 571, Vacant FTE 38.29

The Head of Organisational Development then drew attention to a reduction in sickness absence during the period. She also reported on a possible correlation,

which had been observed nationally, between impromptu absence during fine weather.

In discussing the improvement, the Committee requested that the positive progress be communicated to staff via the Chief Executive. It was also noted that the Committee had previously agreed to six monthly progress reports on sickness absence, including progress on the implementation of the recommendations of the Sickness Absence Action Plan, as previously endorsed by the Committee.

Councillor Allgood referred to the recent progress on implementing both a 'learning portal' and a 'recruitment portal' in partnership with Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Authorities (HLOWLA). He explained that this would eventually provide a facility to share resources that would be beneficial to the Council.

During discussion, Councillor Allgood also detailed the Council's current vacancy management process, following a recent freeze on the re-appointment of certain posts. He undertook to make available the criteria that had been set to assess whether or not a post was critical to the organisation, customers and partners, or whether an exception to the policy should be made from the outset of the vacancy. He confirmed that to date, approximately three exceptions had been made, of which two posts were in the Planning Control Division and another was externally funded.

Responding to questions, the Head of Organisational Development reported that discussions were taking place with the Royal Hampshire County Hospital regarding the current Training Officer vacancy, to enable a joint provision for this post. She confirmed that this would assist in achieving the key objectives in this area, including a positive outcome to the Council's Investors in People (IIP) reassessment.

Referring to Appendix 2 of the Report, the Head of Organisational Development explained that the Council continued to work closely with appropriate organisations, to ensure that disabled applicants were not placed at any disadvantage in employment terms. All applicants were considered against the criteria set out in the Person Specification for that vacancy. Responding to questions, she undertook to check the accuracy of some of the figures shown in the Appendix and report this to the Chairman outside the meeting.

During discussion of Appendix 4 to the Report, the Committee referred to the Council's continued responsibilities for the health and safety of its staff, as flexible working initiatives were expanded throughout the organisation, including home working. It was requested that Members be directed to the specific health and safety guidance with regard to their work.

RESOLVED:

1. That the content of the Report be noted.
2. That the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Resources be asked to commend the Chief Executive on the improvement in sickness absence in the organisation during the first quarter and that the Chief Executive communicate this positive progress to staff.

4. **2007/08 WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL STAFF ESTABLISHMENT**
(Report [PER126](#) refers)

At the Chairman's request, the Committee agreed to deal with the report in open session and therefore lifted the exempt embargo, as it was considered that the information relating to the individual posts was already in the public domain.

The Committee considered the staffing establishment of the City Council and information regarding changes in full time equivalents as at March 2007, together with detail of the posts within each Directorate, inclusive of those externally funded.

The Head of Organisational Development circulated to the Committee three addendums to the Divisional structure charts as appended to the Report that had not been previously available. These items had not been notified for inclusion on the agenda within the statutory deadline. The Chairman agreed to accept them onto the agenda, as matters requiring urgent consideration, as they assisted in the overall reconciliation between the structure charts and the organisation's agreed establishment numbers. The structure charts circulated were as follows: Financial Services Division (including Design and Print Section), Environment Division (including the Community Safety Team that had joined the Division as part of the Council's restructure in May 2007), Landlord Services Division and the Corporate Management Team including their administrative staff.

During discussion, it was noted that the Corporate Director (Policy) was leading a review of the Council's publication processes. Councillor Allgood agreed to refer to the appropriate officers the offer of assistance with the review from Councillors Johnston and Read, who both had knowledge of the design and print industry from their professional lives.

During further discussion of the appendices to the Report, the Head of Organisational Development undertook to clarify the grade of the Mayoral Functions Assistant, within the Democratic Services Division and report this to the Chairman outside the meeting.

The Committee noted that there were approximately 38 vacancies currently 'frozen' as part of the Council's current vacancy management policy. Responding to questions, Councillor Allgood advised that it was envisaged that, following a review of these posts with regard to their required need, it was hoped that they could be reinstated within the Council's establishment by March 2008 when the Council's budget was finalised. Members also noted that the establishment figures within the Report were as at April 2007 and it was acknowledged that there would be changes during the year. The Chairman suggested that it might be helpful in future to consider this Report earlier in the financial year.

The Head of Organisational Development also responded to questions on the Council's spend on agency staff, as set out in Appendix 5. In noting the concerns of the Committee of significant overspend during 2006/07 in some Divisions, she explained that the Council had contractual obligations in some instances to provide staff at all times (such as for the provision of care in sheltered housing schemes). In such instances, sufficiently skilled agency staff (that could also work out of hours) were required. She also pointed out that the Council was now achieving preferential rates for agency staff as part of the joint contract with Hampshire County Council and Manpower. This was now impacting on associated costs and she confirmed that the use of the contract by officers was monitored by her.

RESOLVED:

1. That the exempt embargo on the report be lifted and the content be dealt with in open session.

2. That the Full Time Equivalent staff establishment of Winchester City Council for 2007/08, as set out in Appendix 2 of the Report, be agreed.

5. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

RESOLVED:

1. That in all the circumstances, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

2. 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>
##	Staff Restructure at Extra Sheltered Housing Schemes) Information relating to a particular individual. (Para 1 to Schedule 12A refers).))) Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority. (Para 4 to Schedule 12A refers)

6. **STAFF RESTRUCTURE AT EXTRA SHELTERED HOUSING SCHEMES**

(Report PER128 refers)

The Chairman (Councillor Godfrey) declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this matter as he was employed by Hampshire County Council Adult Services, which contracted with the City Council's Extra Sheltered Housing Service to provide care to elderly residents. He left the room during consideration of this item and the Vice Chairman (Councillor Nelmes) assumed the Chair for this item only.

The Committee considered proposed changes to the staffing structure of the Extra Sheltered Housing Service within the Landlord Services Division of the Operations Directorate (detail in exempt minute).

The Head of Landlord Services circulated representations from TACT with regard to the proposals.

This document had not been notified for inclusion on the agenda within the statutory deadline and the Chairman agreed to accept the item onto the agenda, as a matter requiring urgent consideration, to allow the Committee to have regard to TACT's representations.

The meeting commenced at 6.45pm and concluded at 8.30pm.

Chairman