

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

23 February 2009

Attendance:

Councillors:

Worrall (Chairman) (P)

Achwal (P)
Biggs
Collin (P)
Cook (P)
Howell (P)

Learney (P)
Nelmes (P)
Tait (P)
Verney
Weston (P)

Deputy Members

Councillor Gemmell (Standing Deputy for Councillor Verney)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Godfrey (Portfolio Holder for Performance and Organisational Development)

1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 15 January 2009 (less exempt item) be approved and adopted.

2. **HUMAN RESOURCES – PERFORMANCE MONITORING – QUARTER 3 2008/09**

(Report [PER161](#) refers)

The Head of Organisational Development advised of the following text (shown in italics) was inadvertently not included in the final printed version of the Report:

The final sentence of the second paragraph of Appendix 1a should continue: "...however due to the current financial *climate*, we may not see the same increase in volume turnover in Q4".

The first paragraph on the second page of Appendix 1b should continue: "...causing work to have a *detrimental affect on their health*".

The fourth paragraph of Appendix 1e should continue: "...The management of absence policy *seeks to keep those staff who become*

disabled during employment in their jobs where possible, or redeployed into alternative employment”.

Councillor Godfrey advised that additional background information had been provided in the Report on sickness absence monitoring. He would welcome comments on whether further information may be of assistance to the Committee.

The Committee referred to the performance information set out in the appendices to the Report.

During discussion of Appendix 1a, the Chief Executive explained increases in the organisation's staff establishment since 2002. He reported that the Council had, since that time, adopted several new initiatives (such as the Neighbourhood Wardens) as well as other officers required in response to new legislation. Some posts were funded externally and over a fixed period. There were also some 'technical' increases to the permanent staff numbers in response to employment law relating to casual staff. In practice, as the report showed, several vacant established posts remained unfilled across the organisation, as officers sought to manage within budget targets. This meant that fewer staff were in post than the Establishment figures provided for. It was appropriate that managers take a more flexible approach which allowed them, from time to time, to utilise their equivalent budgets elsewhere, in response to business demands. An example of this was within the Elections Team of the Democratic Services Division.

During debate, it was suggested that changes in technology and also the recent introduction of flexible working practices should have influenced an overall reduction in staff, as opposed to an increase over the previous six years. However, Members were mindful that requests to increase the Council's full time equivalent (FTE) establishment was considered by the Committee and each was supported by a business case. It was suggested that occasionally, it may be appropriate for the Committee to monitor whether new posts were fulfilling their objectives as specified in the original business cases put forward.

The Head of Organisational Development also reminded the Committee that it considered the detail of the Council's Establishment annually. Following a request, she agreed to reflect within the next Establishment Report information of those areas of the Council's work that had been impacted by recent legislation and required additional posts, and also identify which posts were linked to statutory requirements.

With regard to the Attendance Scorecard (Appendix 1b) the Head of Organisational Development advised that although indicators showed that, overall, long term sickness absence had increased during Quarter 3, individual cases continued to be 'managed' back to work. Therefore, it was likely that the figures would also show some impact during the next quarter. She also drew attention to seasonal variations in short term sickness absence and reported that, during Quarter 3 2008/09, the organisation had

experienced a particularly bad period of colds/flu and similar illnesses. It was also confirmed that the Council compared favourably with other local authorities on average numbers of sickness absence and was in the top quartile. With regard to a breakdown of sickness absence figures for each Division of the Council, she apologised that this information had not been included within the Report, due to technical problems. This information would be circulated outside of the meeting and would continue to be included in future monitoring Reports.

With regard to the Training Scorecard (Appendix 1d), it was explained that training spend from the Corporate Training Budget was part of a planned programme, whereby individual training needs were identified via the appraisal process. Therefore, corporate training spend was generally low during Quarter 1 and then more consistent throughout the remainder of the year. The Training budget would be centralised from 2009/10 to enable the budget to be more effectively linked to training needs and improve efficiencies where ever possible.

During discussion of Appendix 2 to the Report - Business Plan Monitoring, the Head of Organisational Development reported that the Council's Race Equality Scheme was currently in draft form and subject to consultation before completion by 31 March 2009.

RESOLVED:

That the performance information in the Report be noted

3. **VOTE OF THANKS**

The Chairman thanked Members and Officers for their hard work and support during the Municipal Year. The Committee reciprocated appropriately.

4. **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 item 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>
##	Exempt Minute of meeting held 15 January 2009:) Information relating to a particular individual. (Para 1 to Schedule 12A refers).))
	• Review of Design, Print & Office Services) Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual (Para 2 to Schedule 12A refers)))
##	Cultural Services Division: Minor Establishment Changes) Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising)
##	Restructure of Estates & Office Support) between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority. (Para 4 to Schedule 12A refers)))

5. **EXEMPT MINUTE**

The Committee considered the exempt minute of the previous meeting of the Committee held 15 January 2009 with regard to a review of Design, Print and Office Services.

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minute of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 15 January 2009, be approved and adopted.

6. **CULTURAL SERVICES DIVISION: MINOR ESTABLISHMENT CHANGES** (Report PER160 refers)

The Committee considered the above exempt Report, which detailed proposed changes to the Cultural Services Division establishment (detail in exempt minute).

7. **RESTRUCTURE OF ESTATES & OFFICE SUPPORT** (Report PER162 refers)

The Committee considered the above exempt Report, which detailed changes to staffing levels in the Estates and Office Support teams (detail in exempt minute).

The meeting commenced at 7.10pm and concluded at 8.55pm.