

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE****23 November 2009****Attendance:**

## Councillors:

Worrall (Chairman) (P)

Achwal (P)  
Collin (P)  
Cook (P)  
Gemmell (P)  
HowellLearney (P)  
Nelmes  
Thynne (P)  
Verney (P)  
Weston (P)**Deputy Members:**

Councillor Read (Standing Deputy for Councillor Howell)

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**1. MINUTES**

## RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 14 September 2009 be approved and adopted.

**2. HUMAN RESOURCES – QUARTER 2 PERFORMANCE MONITORING 2009/10**  
**([Report PER168 refers](#))**

The Head of Organisational Development corrected an error in the performance information in the appendices to the Report. In the third table on Appendix 1A to the Report (percentage quarterly turnover of the Council's establishment), the decimal points in the table's figures were incorrectly positioned. For example, the average annual turnover rate for Quarter 4 2007/08 was 16% (not 0.16). The last table at Appendix 1D (percentage of appraisals completed) also had its information incorrectly presented in the same way. The correct information for both tables was circulated to the Committee at the meeting.

The Committee referred to Appendix 1B and 1C and during discussion, the Head of Organisational Development confirmed that it was the responsibility of managers to ensure that, if necessary, work was reallocated in teams during periods of sickness. She advised that, following occupational health referral, a likely period of absence could be ascertained and that this would help inform any further re-distribution of work.

Further to this, depending on the reasons behind the absence, some work may be able to be dealt with through home working and flexible working arrangements.

During discussion, the Chief Executive stated that any likely customer contact with the absent officer would also be dealt with by managers as a matter of priority. This should include urgent revising of voicemail messages with updated information, and he undertook to remind managers of this important area.

The Chief Executive also drew attention to the Council's flexible resource management policy that may assist during periods of long term absence. However, it was likely that there may be some areas of specialised work that could not be easily dealt with in this way. He also reported that much of the Council's business had been processed mapped to ensure that it was efficiently undertaken. Managers utilised various IT tools such as Covalant and Retriever to manage workloads, in addition to specific measures and triggers related to statutory performance indicators.

The Committee referred to the Sickness Absence by Reason information at Appendix 1B, and the Head of Organisational Development undertook to investigate particular comparisons of stress related absence at neighbouring authorities and report this to Members. It was accepted that, although reported separately within the table, it was often difficult to separate 'personal' and 'work related' stress as the actual reason for the absence. She reminded the meeting that all managers had been trained in stress management procedures and were aware of the Council's staff counselling service and occupational health referral process.

Responding to questions, the Chief Executive was satisfied that the Council's Vacancy Management policy looked carefully at each vacancy and whether its role could be achieved in other ways, or was still required, and would not deliberately place more pressure on individual officers or on teams.

Following a request, the Head of Organisational Development undertook to investigate whether a new report card could be presented as part of future Reports on matters related to the Council's Vacancy Management policy.

With regard to particular instances of long-term sickness absence in the Landlord Services Division, the Head of Organisational Development advised that these were primarily related to organisational change in the sheltered housing area. She confirmed that the absence figures continued to be proactively managed.

Members also noted that initiatives (such as the Alfies staff achievements awards) to recognise those members of staff who had achieved a 100% attendance record over the previous year, were still under investigation.

At conclusion of discussion, the Committee was mindful that although sickness absence figures remained reasonably good at the Council, with an increase of those who have had no sickness absence during the previous 12 months, the overall figure was increasing. The Chairman therefore undertook to discuss this matter further with the Head of Organisational Development, with a view to possibly producing a report on the subject to a future meeting of the Committee.

## RESOLVED:

1. That the monitoring information in the Report be noted.
2. That the Chairman discuss the concerns of the Committee regarding an apparent overall increase in sickness absence figures at the Council with the Head of Organisational Development, with a view to possibly producing a report on the subject to a future meeting of the Committee.

3. **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>
##	Guildhall Catering Contract – Further Update	) Information relating to a particular individual. (Para 1 to Schedule 12A refers). ) ) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 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)

4. **GUILDHALL CATERING CONTRACT – FURTHER UPDATE**  
(Report CAB1894 refers)

The Committee considered the above Report which gave further details regarding the Guildhall catering contract and recommended a way forward (detail in exempt minute).

The meeting commenced at 6.40pm and concluded at 7.40pm.

Chairman