

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

12 September 2011

Attendance:

Councillors:

Huxstep (Chairman) (P)

Achwal (P)

Cook

Gemmell (P)

Higgins

Nelmes (P)

Rutter (P)

Phillips (P)

Sanders (P)

Warwick (P)

Deputy Members:

Councillor Jackson (Standing Deputy for Councillor Higgins)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Godfrey (Portfolio Holder for Administration, Innovation and Improvement)

Councillor Weston (Portfolio Holder for Environment & Transport)

Councillor Verney

1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 6 June 2011 (less exempt item) be approved and adopted.

Arising out of consideration of the Minute referring to the Organisational Development Outturn Report 2010/11 (Report PER189 refers), the Chief Executive stated that Corporate Management Team would consider the options for providing seasonal influenza vaccinations. This would include encouraging their take-up by all staff and the cost implications involved. It was noted that key staff with a high degree of public interface were already given the option to be vaccinated at the Authority's expense.

In respect of considering any correlation between the reduction in staffing levels and customer satisfaction, the Chief Executive stated that he had spoken to the Head of Customer Service, who considered that customer satisfaction did not relate to the numbers of staff involved, but more to their attitude and approach to customers in terms of providing a positive customer experience. The Chief Executive added that the introduction of a recognition award for employees with no sickness absence over a two year period was still under consideration.

It was noted that under the item relating to Customer Service Apprenticeship Scheme Proposal (Report PER195 refers), two apprentices had now been appointed and were progressing well in their new roles.

2. **ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – PERFORMANCE MONITORING**
QUARTER 1 REPORT 2011/12
([Report PER196 refers](#))

The Head of Organisational Development informed the meeting that the report had been presented in a new format to improve the clarity of information and that feedback from the Committee for its further improvement would be welcomed.

The Committee discussed whether the employment of part time-staff resulted in an additional financial cost to the Authority and impacted on the effectiveness of service delivery. The Chief Executive explained that the Authority had a policy of considering requests for part-time working and that it had proved a good way to retain skilled employees, as was the case for example with Planning Officers. The additional administration costs associated with part-time workers, for example in terms of payroll, were marginal.

The information contained within Report PER003 (number of leavers (quarterly)), included movement of staff between teams under the 1-team approach and was not simply those leaving the Council's employment. It was agreed that future reports should include a distinction between internal team transfers and external leavers, to be more meaningful.

In considering the number of periods of sickness per person over a rolling year, it was agreed that future reports should include a division between full-time and part-time employees, to provide improved clarity. The Committee also discussed various levels of sickness between private sector employees and those in the public sector. The Head of Organisational Development explained some of the methods undertaken to reduce levels of sickness. These included the use of anti-bacterial wipes for those using shared space under flexible working practices, the use of Occupational Health expertise to assist those on long term sick and early interventions with staff when repeated absences were highlighted, through a traffic light system when using the Bradford Index Indicator.

An explanation was also provided to the Committee on the distinctions between team training budgets and areas funded from central budgets, including customer care training and IT training. Personal development was covered by the 1-team approach and through the Aspire programme.

In respect of the percentage of completed 2011 Appraisals by Team, the Chief Executive informed the meeting that, although some appraisals had been completed, the information had not been entered onto Selima to be recorded as an appraisal completion. Managers were being reminded to keep their appraisal records up to date and the Senior Managers Team would be

requested to ensure that all appraisals were completed by the Committee's next meeting on 7 November 2011. However, he noted that in the current climate, all staff were under pressure to constantly juggle competing priorities, so failure to complete electronic records did not indicate a lack of willingness. The Committee agreed that, if there was no evidence of progress, the Environment and Legal Heads of Teams should be invited to the Committee's next meeting, to provide an explanation for their non-completion.

Councillor Godfrey added that the Committee might also reflect on its scrutiny role following the ending of the Resources Scrutiny Panel.

At the conclusion of debate, the Committee welcomed the new format of the report and suggested that, with a number of minor modifications, the clarity of information could be further improved.

RESOLVED:

1. That the performance information for Quarter1 2011/12 for Organisational Development be noted.
2. That the Committee raises the following issue with the Portfolio Holder for Administration, Innovation and Improvement arising from the Performance Indicators:

That if all appraisals were not completed by the Committee's next meeting, the Environment and Legal Heads of Teams be invited to the Committee to provide an explanation for their non-completion.

3. That no items of significance be drawn to the attention of Cabinet.

3. **WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL STAFF TRAVEL PLAN**
[\(Report CAB2140 refers\)](#)
MINUTE EXTRACT FROM CABINET 16 MARCH 2011
[\(Report PER192 Refers\)](#)

Councillor Jackson declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of this item as she was the owner of a business associated with cycling. Councillor Jackson spoke in the debate and voted thereon.

The Committee noted that, at the last meeting of the Committee, consideration of the Staff Travel Plan was deferred for consideration at this meeting.

Councillor Godfrey stated that, for the Staff Travel Plan to be implemented, it was required to be affordable and achievable. Councillor Weston added that, at present, it was in draft form and she encouraged its adoption.

The Head of Access and Transport stated that the Staff Travel Plan had been based on the conclusions of a staff survey and was being progressed by a

staff working group. Further ideas were encouraged and an update on progress would be provided to Cabinet annually.

In response to a Member's comment that 75% of staff lived greater than 6 miles away from the City Offices, the Head of Access and Transport agreed that this distance discouraged the use of cycling, but it also increased the importance of bus routes, trains and car sharing. Also of importance was flexible working methods, including home working facilitated through broadband links, which were now available to in excess of 250 staff.

At the invitation of the Chairman, Councillor Verney commented that on visiting Exeter the opportunities for car sharing were advertised on lampposts and also on the Council's website. He added that there were also tax advantages for home working that could be further explored to encourage take-up.

It was also commented that, if walking was to be encouraged, then air quality within the Winchester town area should be improved. It was noted that the Air Quality Informal Scrutiny Group was currently considering such issues. There should also be more encouragement to promote walks in Winchester, including schemes to park and cycle or walk, rather than just park and ride. In addition, more effort should be made to encourage all buses to be environmentally friendly to reduce air pollution and their possible exclusion from an inner city air control area should also be given consideration.

It would also be advantageous if the reasons for non take-up of cycling were established so that they might be addressed. For example, if respondents were of the opinion that cycling was too dangerous or that the "Bike About" scheme cycles were too heavy and difficult to manage, then such matters could be improved upon. The Assistant Director (Environment) stated that in respect of the Bike About scheme, some mountain bikes were now available to loan and other options such as electric bikes were being considered. It was agreed that these points be brought to the attention of the Carbon Footprint Informal Scrutiny Group.

The Committee also discussed the staff incentives provided for use of the park and ride facility, which equated to £1.50 per day per employee. Essential car users were permitted to park closer to the City Offices due to their business needs. A bike shed was provided for cyclists next to the City Offices. It was noted that, to encourage the use of alternative fuel vehicles, the Council had negotiated longer leases (five year terms rather than three years) to make their use more financially viable.

RESOLVED:

That the Staff Travel Plan be agreed and implemented and other points arising above be brought to the attention of the respective Informal Scrutiny Groups.

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 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>
##	Exempt Minutes of previous meeting held 6 June 2011:) Information relating to a particular individual. (Para 1 to Schedule 12A refers).
	• Environmental Services – Pest Control and Street Care Teams Services) Information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual. (Para 2 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)

5. **EXEMPT MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 6 June 2011 be approved and adopted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 8.20pm.

Chairman