

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

**11 March 2013**

Attendance:

Councillors:

Lipscomb (Chairman) (P)

Achwal (P)  
Byrnes (P)  
Cook (P)  
Nelmes (P)

Phillips (P)  
Sanders (P)  
Warwick (P)  
Witt (P)

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillor Godfrey (Portfolio Holder for Finance and Administration)

Others in attendance who did not address the meeting:

Councillor J Berry

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1. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 3 January 2013 (less exempt items) be approved and adopted.

2. **ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2012/13 – QUARTER 3**

(Report PER233 refers)

During discussion, it was clarified that the technical issues referred to in Paragraph 2.3 of the Report were not affecting the day to day operational aspects of the HR Selima system. The problems in retrieving the most up-to-date data had occurred following the moving of the software to a new server to enable a future software upgrade to the system. It was anticipated that this would be resolved in time for the next quarter's monitoring report.

The Head of Organisational Development explained that a small increase to the actual number of full-time equivalents in post at the Council since the previous year (page 4 of Appendix 1) was mostly due to the employment of the Council's 11 apprentices and two national graduate trainees' posts. Members requested that the more detailed reporting of establishment totals (for example, further broken down to show temporary posts paid for by time limited funding streams and also temporary maternity cover) be brought quarterly to the Committee, in addition to this being included in the annual

Establishment Report. It was also acknowledged that the table on page 5 of Appendix 1 contained an error as actual number and percentage of full-time and part-time staff employed in each quarter should have totalled 100%.

With regard to the number of leavers as a percentage of the total headcount (page 6 of Appendix 1), the Chief Executive reported that the recent Times "Best Places to Work" Survey had not indicated any particular underlying reason, such as general low morale, for staff leaving the organisation. He advised that measures had been taken to lower staff turnover and to address reasons for any staff dissatisfaction in a few areas of the Council.

During discussion of the analysis of number of appointments made to vacant posts (page 8 of Appendix 1), the Chief Executive reminded Members that the Corporate Management Team decided whether to recruit to each vacant post.

The Committee discussed the detailed performance information relating to sickness absence and Members were reminded of the intervention measures taken by the Council in particular cases. For example, absence due to stress/depression/anxiety was dealt with on a case-by-case basis and individuals were offered counselling, or, where appropriate, were referred to the Occupational Health Physician. The Chief Executive reported that the Council was shortly to analyse the results of a recent survey of staff regarding stress levels so as to identify any particular trends that could be influenced at the corporate level.

Referring to the total number of days absent by team as a percentage of the total available days across the Council (page 15 of Appendix 1), the Head of Housing Services acknowledged the concerns of the Committee that this appeared particularly high for his area of responsibility. However, the team was the largest in the Council and the figures should be seen in the context of the other, much smaller teams. He was also satisfied that the rolling 12 month figures would show marked improvement as some individual cases of long-term absence had recently been resolved and a particular area where this had been an issue (extra care support) were no longer part of the Council's establishment.

With regard to the percentage of appraisals completed by each Team (Page 17 of Appendix 1), further to the concerns of the Committee (including possible correlation with high sickness rates for those Teams where appraisals had not been completed), the Chief Executive reported that all managers had been reminded of the importance of their timely completion. The figures presented were for the previous year and he expected that the 2013/14 figures would show marked improvement.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Organisational Development Performance Monitoring Report 2012/13 – Quarter 3 be noted.

3. **LIVING WAGE**  
(Report PER230 refers)

Councillor Godfrey introduced the Report and reported on the likely benefits to the Council arising from it applying for accreditation as a Living Wage employer. In response to discussion, he acknowledged the additional cost from the initiative, however he believed that this would provide good value for money to the taxpayer from a more motivated and productive workforce who felt valued by their employer. He also clarified that as the Living Wage was discretionary, it was not pensionable.

The Chief Executive acknowledged some concerns raised by Members that as a Living Wage employer, the Council might seek to encourage its contractors to apply the same principles through the procurement process and he advised that this was still an area under discussion. He clarified that it would only be imposed to the extent permitted by law and where it could be shown that it provided best value for the organisation. The Council's major service contracts were not to be reviewed for some time.

RESOLVED:

1. That a living wage hourly rate of pay for staff directly employed within the Council and for casual staff (excluding apprentices and canvassers) of £7.45 per hour be implemented.

2. That it be agreed that the "living wage" element of the hourly pay rate be based initially on a discretionary supplement, commencing from 1st April 2013 which is to be covered within the existing employee budget through vacancy management.

3. That, as part of the annual budget process the uplift to the living wage rate annually be reviewed where appropriate, based on national local authority pay negotiations.

4. That the Council's ongoing commitment to the apprenticeship scheme be acknowledged, and the case for a living wage for apprentices be considered.

5. That the case for including the living wage in the Council's procurement policies by April 2014 be considered and, should committee agree to do so, develop an action plan with key milestones identified to achieve this for contracts commencing after a specified date.

6. That accreditation as a living wage employer be applied for, complete with an intended implementation plan.

4. **WINCHESTER CITY COUNCIL – PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2013-2014**  
(Report PER231 refers)

The Chief Executive corrected an error in the first sentence of paragraph 1.4 on page 2 of the Report noting that 2013 should read 2012.

The Chief Executive referred to the changes required to the Pay Policy Statement in response to recent DCLG guidance. This was related to remuneration packages for new appointments and severance packages (including contributions to the pension fund) which were in excess of £100,000, or at a level the Council considered appropriate. In the case of the Council, it was recommended that the requirements related to remuneration packages for new appointments should apply to senior staff at Scale 12 or above. At present, this referred to the Chief Executive and Corporate Director posts. He advised that the DCLG guidance required that such payments required approval of Full Council, who would be advised of the broader principles behind the matters requiring their authorisation. It was noted that appointments to these posts would be by a suitably constituted appointment panel, and in the case of the Chief Executive, a recommendation to Full Council. Members also noted that the calculation of severance packages was based on statute, and guided by a locally adopted scheme within a range of discretion set by regulations. The severance payments in excess of £100,000 required approval of Full Council who would be advised of the broader principles behind the matters requiring their authorisation.

The Committee discussed the revised Pay Policy Statement as set out as an Appendix to the Report. The Chief Executive reminded Members that incremental pay progression was according to the capability of the individual in their role, and could be withheld. Therefore, although individual incremental progression was discretionary in line with this process, our adoption of incremental progression was a component of the Council's wider Pay and Reward structure which had been adopted by Council and was based on a nationally agreed framework. This element could not be revised in isolation. This also precludes separately reviewing terms and conditions of new appointments to the organisation.

The Head of Organisational Development clarified that incremental progression was part of the whole pay and reward framework which in its entirety helped attract and retain a high calibre of staff. It was also noted that the Council also paid below the median average for Hampshire local authorities.

**RECOMMENDED:**

**THAT THE COUNCIL ADOPT THE PAY POLICY STATEMENT  
AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX 1 TO THE REPORT.**

**RESOLVED:**

That the further development of a Winchester City Council Pay and Reward Policy be supported.

5. **CONCLUSIONS OF SICKNESS AND APPRAISALS INFORMAL GROUP**

(Report PER234 refers)

As Chairman of the Informal Group, Councillor Sanders introduced the Report. He advised that the Group had concluded that the Council's procedures to manage sickness absence in the organisation were robust and effective.

The Committee discussed whether the Council could implement an initiative that acknowledged those staff who had not been absent through sickness during the previous 12 months, without penalising the majority of those officers who had been genuinely too unwell to come to work.

Members referred to the second to last sentence of paragraph 3.2 on page 3 of the Report that suggested that there was a variation in sickness levels in local government compared to the private sector due to the 'local government workforce (having) a different demographic to that of the private sector, employing a higher proportion of women and with an older workforce.' The Head of Organisational Development explained that this was not the findings of the Informal Group, rather, was the conclusions of a study undertaken by the Office for National Statistics (Sickness and Absence in the UK Labour Market, April 2012).

RESOLVED:

That the proposed actions as set out in the Report to address sickness rates and non completion of appraisals be endorsed.

6. **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 3 January 2013: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial Services</li> </ul>	) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule

- Review ) 12A refers)
- Housing Services )
- Staff Proposals ) Information relating to a
- Organisational ) particular individual. (Para 1 to
- Development ) Schedule 12A refers).
- Phase 5 )
- ) 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)
- )
- )
- ## Housing Services Staffing ) Information relating to a
- Proposals ) particular individual. (Para 1 to
- ) Schedule 12A refers).
- )
- ) 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)

## 7. **EXEMPT MINUTES**

RESOLVED:

That the exempt minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 3 January 2013 be approved and adopted.

8. **HOUSING SERVICES STAFFING PROPOSALS**  
(Report PER236 refers)

The Committee considered the Report which sought approval for the staffing changes to the Housing Services (detail in exempt appendix).

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 9.10pm.