

Minutes

Name of meeting	EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE
Date and time	MONDAY, 5 DECEMBER 2011 COMMENCING AT 10.00 AM
Venue	COUNCIL CHAMBER, COUNTY HALL, NEWPORT, ISLE OF WIGHT
Present	Cllrs David Pugh (Chairman), George Brown, Vanessa Churchman, John Howe, Stuart Hutchinson
Other Cllrs Present	None
Officers Present	Steve Beynon, Davina Fiore, April Ross, Claire Shand
Apologies	Cllr Dawn Cousins

14. **Minutes**

RESOLVED :

THAT the Minutes of the meeting held on [5 September 2011](#) be confirmed.

15. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Pugh declared a personal interest as his wife was an employee of the Council.

16. **Urgent Business**

There was no urgent business.

17. **Consultation on the Local Government Pension Scheme Changes**

The Director of Corporate Governance briefly outlined the contents of the report, which informed the committee of the consultation being carried out by the Government on proposed changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme, and the views of the Isle of Wight Pension Fund Committee.

Members discussed the information which was made available to staff and the public as to the reasons for and consequences of the changes being proposed. It was agreed that once the local government response was known that it would be helpful for briefing sessions for staff to be arranged.

Cllr Howe declared a personal interest in the topic being discussed as his wife was in receipt of a council pension.

RESOLVED :

THAT the Employment Committee note the report and fully support the submissions made by the Isle of Wight Pension Fund Committee as set out in paragraph 28 of the report.

THAT when final proposals for the funded local government pension scheme are published by the government the council set up a series of briefing meetings for council staff setting out the implications for their pensions.

18. Absence Monitoring

The Head of Human Resources introduced the report which provided data for the second quarter 1 July 2011 to 30 September 2011, as well as cumulative data for the same period 1 April 2011 to 30 September 2011.

Long term sickness absence was the main focus of work in this area.

Members queried the extensive categories of sickness and were informed that to reduce the number of categories would require extensive work to the SAP system. However, future reports to the committee would be presented with similar categories having been merged.

It was noted that sickness absence in schools and in the Community Services areas was higher than in other areas. Members were advised that it was for head teachers to manage staff absences in schools, and in Community Services those staff who worked directly with vulnerable clients were specifically told not to come into work if they were infectious. Flu jabs has been provided for these staff.

The absence management policy was explained, which included the return to work interview process and the option for managers to request medical certificates or make referrals to occupational health. Members were also advised that directorate management teams regularly reviewed sickness patterns and that a corporate group had been set up to review sickness absence across the organisation.

Members queried how the council compared with other councils in terms of sickness absence and were advised that the council belonged to various benchmarking clubs and on were well within average levels.

RESOLVED :

THAT the sickness absence data quarterly report be noted.

19. Joint Working with Southampton

The Chief Executive provided a verbal update on the joint working with Southampton as no written report was available.

In the area of school improvement the council was very close to entering into a legal agreement with Southampton. Further areas of joint working were also being explored and an additional meeting of the committee may be required in the new year to deal with those. It was emphasised that this joint working was a partnership where both councils were putting in money and expertise.

Cllr Pugh left the meeting at this point and did not return.

The committee then considered passing a resolution to exclude the public and press for the final agenda item.

RESOLVED :

THAT under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the final agenda item on the grounds that there was likely to be disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

20. Terms and Conditions Review Update

The Head of Human Resources outlined the report and explained that as a result of consultations with staff and unions further concessions had been identified which it was recommended be included in the review.

Members discussed the concessions and were again advised about the process for implementing the terms and conditions review, including the necessary steps should a collective agreement not be reached.

RESOLVED :

THAT the progress made with the terms and conditions review be noted and the proposed concessions to the terms and conditions review be endorsed.

CHAIRMAN