

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
11TH JANUARY 2012

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Slater)
The Vice-chair (Councillor Youell)
Councillors Barkley, Bradshaw, Hampson,
J. Hunt and Snartt

The Strategic Director of Corporate Services, the Head of Strategic Support and C. Fairchild of Leicestershire County Council Human Resources attended to assist the Committee.

12. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3rd August 2011 were confirmed as a correct record and signed.

13. DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor J. Hunt declared a personal interest in respect of item 4 on the agenda (Home Working) as a shareholder in a company providing broadband services and a former employee of that company (BT).

14. AGENDA VARIANCE

RESOLVED that item 6 be considered prior to items 4 and 5 on the agenda.

Reason

Trade Union representatives were in attendance in respect of item 6 and it was appropriate to consider it first, so that those representatives were not waiting unnecessarily.

15. HOME WORKING POLICY

A report of the Strategic Director of Corporate Services was submitted setting out proposed amendments to the Home Working Policy (relating to broadband allowances), together with the consultation steps taken to date, and requesting that this Committee approves the introduction of the amended policy (item 4 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED

1. that the revised Home Working Policy, as set out in the report, be approved;
2. that the Director of Corporate Services be asked, when undertaking a comprehensive review of the Council's Home Working Policy as part of future work on the Council's Office Accommodation Strategy, to consider

the broadband services available and their suitability for the requirements of officers and councillors.

Reasons

1. To regularise and cap monthly broadband allowances payable to staff.
2. The revisions to the Home Working Policy in the submitted report related to the broadband allowances payable to staff. The Director of Corporate Services confirmed at this meeting that a more comprehensive review of the Home Working Policy would be undertaken in due course, as part of future work on the Council's Office Accommodation Strategy, outlining briefly the likely timescale for that and the issues likely to be considered (including review of health and safety issues relating to home working). Members of the Committee considered that it would be useful to include within that work consideration of the broadband services available and their suitability for the requirements of officers and councillors, with a view to better guidance/information being available in that respect.

16. RETIREMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

A report of the Head of Strategic Support was submitted setting out a revised Retirement Policy and Procedure and requesting that this Committee endorses the revised policy (item 5 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

RESOLVED that the revised Retirement Policy and Procedure, as set out in the report, be endorsed.

Reason

To ensure the Council complies with the Employment Equality (Repeal of Retirement Age Provisions) Regulations 2011 and has in place a retirement policy and procedure document which includes all forms of retirement.

17. JOB EVALUATION PROCEDURE

A report of the Head of Strategic Support was submitted setting out proposed arrangements with Leicestershire County Council for carrying out the Job Evaluation procedure for this Council (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Further to the report, the Head of Strategic Support referred the issue in the proposals on which agreement had not been reached with Trade Union representatives, that of the composition of the Moderating Panel. With the consent of the Committee, Mr D. Noble (representing Unison) and Mr C. Lambert (representing GMB) outlined their views on that issue to the Committee.

RESOLVED that the proposed Job Evaluation procedure, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved with a view to its adoption for Charnwood Borough Council jobs at the earliest opportunity, but that the suitability of the Moderating

Panel arrangements in that procedure be evaluated fully once those arrangements have been operating for 12 months.

Reason

To ensure that there is a consistent Job Evaluation procedure, to minimise the risk of equal pay claims being lodged against the authority.

In particular, the Committee considered the likely benefits and disadvantages of both the Moderating Panel arrangements set out in the report and the alternative proposal for a larger Panel outlined by Trade Union representatives at this meeting. On balance, it considered that the Moderating Panel arrangements set out in the report were appropriate, particularly as the Committee had been reassured by both the arrangement having worked well for the County Council to date and the training that would be available for Trade Union representatives taking part in such panels. However, it would be appropriate to check after a period of time that the agreed Moderating Panel arrangements were working effectively, in particular to ensure that the concerns expressed by Trade Union representatives had not materialised.

Notes:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the Council meeting on 27th February 2012 unless notice to that effect is given to the Team Leader – Democratic Services and Mayoralty by five members of the Council no later than five working days following the publication of the minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record of the Committee's decisions at the next meeting of the Committee.