

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 7 JULY 2011 AT 2.00 p.m.**

- A Councillor Beynon
- P Councillor Comer
- P Councillor Eddy
- P Councillor Emmett
- A Councillor Hance
- P Councillor Jackson (substitute
for Councillor Beynon)
- P Councillor Wollacott (Chair)

HR

20.7/11

APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillors Beynon and Hance. It was noted that Councillor Jackson was substituting for Councillor Beynon.

HR

21.7/11

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

(Note: the general declarations for the 2011/12 municipal year are noted in the minutes of the annual meeting - minute no. HR 7.6/11 refers.)

In relation to this meeting, it was noted that Councillor Jackson's wife was a Council employee (this had no direct relevance to any of the decisions to be taken at this meeting).

HR

22.7/11

MINUTES - HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 2 JUNE 2011

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the annual meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 2 June 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matter arising:

Minute no. HR 11.6.11 – Agency worker regulations:
government guidance:

With regard to resolution (3), it was noted that the agency and casual worker code of practice would now be submitted to the committee on 1 September 2011.

HR

23.7/11

PUBLIC FORUM

It was noted that no public forum business had been received for this meeting.

HR

24.7/11

CONSTRUCTION CRAFT OPERATIVES PAY SCHEME

The committee considered a joint report of the Strategic Director - Corporate Services and the Strategic Director - Neighbourhoods and City Development (agenda item no. 5) setting out details of the proposed construction craft operatives pay scheme.

The following main points were raised / noted:

1. Members noted an addendum to the report, advising that in light of a trade union ballot on 28 June, management had formally withdrawn recommendation (2) as set out in the report.
2. It was noted that management had been advised (by the trade union) that the proposal (as set out in the appendix to the report) had been supported by a very large majority, in terms of the trade union ballot.

Following further discussion, during which members generally welcomed the proposals, it was

RESOLVED (unanimously) –

- **That approval be given to the proposed pay scheme for construction craft operatives, as set out in the appendix to the report, for implementation by April 2012.**

HR

25.7/11

SICKNESS ABSENCE (information report)

The committee considered a report of the Strategic Director - Corporate Services (agenda item no. 6) setting out an update on sickness absence.

(Note: Councillor Emmett arrived at the meeting during the committee's consideration of this item.)

The following main points were raised / noted:

1. It was noted that the Council's overall sickness absence rate of 8.93 days per employee (not including schools) compared favourably with the national average of 10.3 days per employee. Whilst it was recognised that further improvement was necessary, it was noted that the present rate also represented a significant improvement in the context of the Council's historic sickness absence rate.
2. In relation to the summary performance chart set out at paragraph 3, it was noted that the increase in average number of working days / shifts lost within the Neighbourhoods directorate was attributable to an overall increase in headcount, arising from re-organisation (in effect, like was not being compared with like).
3. Also in relation to the summary performance chart, it was agreed that (whilst it was important to maintain a high-level overview of sickness absence rates), it would be helpful, in terms of future reports, to provide some further contextual information / breakdown of detail, e.g. to differentiate between absence due to industrial injury, and between long / short term absence.
4. In discussion, the role of effectively managed return to work interviews was acknowledged as a key factor in helping to improve sickness absence management. It would be important to ensure that managers / supervisors continued to receive appropriate training in this regard; it was noted that the key objective was to ensure that action was focussed cumulatively on continuing to improve the health and well-being of the workforce. It was noted in particular (para. 3.4 of the report) that action had been taken within Health and Social Care to strengthen managerial compliance with absence management policy.

RESOLVED -

- 1. That the Council sickness absence rate of 8.93 days per employee, as at 31 March 2011 (excluding schools) be noted.**
- 2. That the local government sickness absence rate of 10.3 days per employee in 2010 be noted.**
- 3. That a further report summarising performance be submitted to the committee on 10 November 2011.**
- 4. That it be noted that absence management continues to remain a key priority for the Council, and that targeted action continues to be taken to improve the health and well-being of the workforce.**

HR

26.7/11

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended).

HR

27.7/11

EARLY RETIREMENT ON THE GROUNDS OF REDUNDANCY

The committee considered an exempt report of the Strategic Director - Corporate Services (agenda item no. 8) setting out details regarding the early retirement on the grounds of redundancy of an employee.

RESOLVED -

- 1. That the early retirement and redundancy costs of the Service Director (HR Special Projects) be approved, in accordance with the details set out in appendix A, with effect from 31 October 2011.**
- 2. That additional pension benefits or augmented service not be granted in this case, as to do so would be**

contrary to the Council's normal practice regarding enhanced pensions.

(The meeting ended at 2.55 p.m.)

CHAIR