

DISCLAIMER

The attached minutes are DRAFT minutes. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information, statements and decisions recorded in them, their status will remain that of a draft until such time as they are confirmed as a correct record at the subsequent meeting.

AGENDA ITEM NO 4

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 14TH NOVEMBER 2013 AT 2.00 p.m.**

P Councillor Eddy
P Councillor Hance
P Councillor Langley
P Councillor Morgan
A Councillor Payne
P Councillor Wollacott

Also in attendance: Cllr Geoff Gollop in his capacity as Assistant Mayor responsible for Finance and Corporate Services.

**HR
29.11/13 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS (agenda item 1)**

Apologies were received from Councillor Payne

**HR
30.11/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (agenda item 2)**

There were no declarations of interest.

**HR
31.11/13 MINUTES - HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 12 SEPTEMBER
2013 (agenda item 4)**

RESOLVED -

That the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 12 September 2013 (including the exempt section) be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**HR
32.11/13 PUBLIC FORUM (agenda item 5)**

Public forum items were received from the GMB in relation to agenda item no.7. Copies have been placed in the committee minute book. Responses to points made would be included within the discussion at that item.

HR

33.11/13 FOLLOW UP REPORT ON CHANGES TO HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES ARISING FROM THE FULL COUNCIL BUDGET MEETING IN FEBRUARY 2013 (agenda item 6)

The Committee considered a report of the Service Director, Human Resources which updated the Committee on the implementation, costs and impact of discontinuing voluntary overtime for all employees graded at BG11 and above and temporary additional increments above the grade. It was reported that the necessary changes to the Council's HR policies had been implemented but there had been some compliance issues. Employment budgets have been reduced to meet the requirements of the budget amendment approved by Full Council in February 2013.

During the ensuing discussion, the following main points were raised / noted:

- The 81 instances of non-compliance had been due to slow changes to the working practices following the policy change. Other examples of non-compliance were due to genuine service delivery issues.
- The People Panel was a vacancy management body that met on a weekly basis. No instances of non-compliance had taken place since the Panel began operation.
- People Partner (HR officers) worked with each directorate leadership team to ensure compliance with policy.
- It was highlighted that the policy change had been implemented following a budget amendment which had meant that there had not been assessment of the possible ramifications of the proposal, including the usual amount of debate or consideration of the consequences.
- Issues with non-compliance due to misunderstanding of the change in policy could have been avoided through a planned policy change.
- The decision had resulted in no flexibility to allow service specific exceptions for those examples where it became a balance between critical system fail and allowing the exception.

It was proposed that the following recommendation be referred to the Party Group Whips;

When forming budget amendments which affected HR policy, the HR Committee urge Party Group Whips to ensure the implications had been given full and proper consideration.

RESOLVED -

- 1. That the report be noted and a further update report be brought back to the February 2014 meeting.**
- 2. That the following resolution be forwarded to the Party Group Whips:**

When forming budget amendments which affected HR policy, the HR Committee urged Party Group Whips to ensure the implications had been given full and proper consideration.

**HR
34.11/13 BUDGET REDUCTIONS 2014/15 - SECTION 188 NOTICE** (agenda item 7)

The Committee considered a report of the Service Director, Human Resources which set out the planned workforce reductions of the Council.

A Section 188 notice had to be issued where employers envisage large scale redundancies. Bristol City Council envisaged redundancies as part of the upcoming three year budget cycle and the notice set out how the Council intended to deal with that challenge.

During the discussion the following points were highlighted:

- £27m savings were required which was the equivalent of approximately 800FTE or 970 people. The Committee were reminded that every year since 2011/12 in the region of 300 FTE posts had been removed from the organisation. The aim was to make the reductions as soon as possible in order to mitigate the year on year uncertainty and insecurity for staff with an identified direction of travel over a period of three years.
- Regular weekly meetings take place with Trade Unions. The unions had a role in ensuring that matters were dealt with fairly.
- The measures contained in the notice were a continuation of planned changes that had taken place across the organisation.

This included the building rationalisation programme, better use of digital platforms as well as changes to the customer services arrangements for the council. As the nature of service delivery and building use changes, so will the nature of the workforce.

- Members of the HR Committee urged officers to ensure that the principles as set out in the notice were applied consistently.
- Members also requested an update in January. Reassurance was sought that all the experienced employees would not be lost and that sufficient numbers of people would be left to implement changes. It was also a concern that colleagues that remained would be expected to carry increased workloads which could lead to stress and anxiety. As such, Members requested that they continue to receive regular updates on sickness rates.
- The process of business transformation and change had been initiated approximately seven years ago and roles and processes had continued to change and evolve over time. What was being proposed was a continued efficient and effective change programme.
- The voluntary severance process had started for senior roles and would be implemented on a staged basis for each level of the organisation.
- There were financial, business and critical need criteria that had to be satisfied. To make a role redundant meant that it would cease to exist.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted

HR

35.11/13 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC (agenda item 8)

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 of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended).

HR

36.11/13 PAY AND REWARD BRIEFING (agenda item 9)

The Committee received an exempt presentation of the Service Director Human Resources.

Note:

- a. This item was discussed in exempt session.
- b. The committee noted the presentation and update provided.
- c. The full minute of this discussion is an exempt minute, not for publication on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

The meeting ended at 3.30pm.

CHAIR

