

**BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE  
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
HELD ON 5<sup>th</sup> JANUARY AT 2.00 P.M.**

P Councillor Wollacott (in the Chair)  
P Councillor Beynon  
P Councillor Comer  
A Councillor Eddy  
A Councillor Emmett  
P Councillor Hance

**HR  
47.1/12 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

Apologies were received from Councillor Emmett. Councillor Morgan attended as his substitute.

**HR  
48.1/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**HR  
49.1/12 MINUTES - HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 10<sup>TH</sup>  
NOVEMBER 2012**

**RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

A public forum statement received with relation to items within the minutes was noted and the following points made;

Workforce Statistics

A report about the Health and Social Care Directorate, as requested at the last meeting would be carried forward to a future meeting to ensure that it contained full and accurate information available. The report continued to be of great interest to Members of the

Committee and when the appropriate meeting was identified, the Chair and lead members would be informed, along with the GMB.

#### Improved Redeployment Scheme

It was confirmed that an equalities assessment had been included within the report received by the Committee. Equality data with regards to redeployment was due to be published shortly on the website and would be shared with the unions.

In future the Workforce Statistics report would include information on redeployment, voluntary severance and redundancy.

#### Redundancy Cap/ Voluntary Severance

It was confirmed that savings to date were contained within reports to the Human Resources Committee.

**HR**

**50.1/11**

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

Public Forum business had been circulated to the Committee in advance of the meeting and a copy placed in the Minute Book.

The public forum items would be heard prior to the item to which they referred.

One item of public forum which did not relate to items on the agenda was submitted by the GMB regarding 'The Disciplinary Procedure'. In response, it was confirmed that cases of suspension were reported to the relevant Executive Member. Chief Officers reviewed cases every 3-6months as per policy. Any information presented to the HR Committee would most likely be exempt as individuals could be identifiable. Information regarding the numbers, reasons and outcomes should also be recorded, monitored and compared with earlier periods of time.

**HR**

**51.1/12**

### **PROPOSED CHANGES TO FLEXIBLE WORK OPTIONS AND NON-CONTRACTURAL ALLOWANCES**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director - Corporate Services (agenda item no. 5) which summarised the proposed changes to flexible work options and non-contractual allowances.

The proposals within the report were part of the budget proposals to be presented by Cabinet to full Council on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2012.

The Committee received an item of related Public Forum from the GMB.

- It was argued that for holiday purchase scheme there would be a divide based on affordability that would exclude low paid, part time employees. Those employees excluded would be predominantly women. In response however, officers argued that the percentage difference in benefit was due to the variant tax system rather than the proposed policy or pay system. It was also suggested that the effect on a small percentage of the workgroup should not necessarily prevent the majority from taking part.
- Further information had been given to union representatives as requested prior to the meeting that made specific references to scenarios and situations.
- The organisation intended to have one system for grievances rather than appeals systems attached to each separate policy, therefore there would not be a specific appeal process for the holiday purchase scheme.
- The current policy already included the facility for unpaid holiday. The proposals would result in more tax incentive and benefit to employees as the leave would be paid back over 12 months.
- Officers would clarify and report to the Committee with regards to the legal position with regards to lower paid employees, who may receive less than the minimum wage if they opted for the scheme.
- In response to query, officers clarified that the figures within appendix B equated to only some of the cost saving, and that the totals proposed £0.5million saving also corresponded to an estimated 3% take up (as found in cases such as Nottingham).
- In response to Members comment, officers confirmed that they would continue to liase with other core cities to gather intelligence and learn from how they have implemented their policies.
- Communications would be sent to staff if budget proposals were agreed by full Council. Managers would be encouraged to make use of the scheme; however, it was important to ensure that it was not seen as coercion. Requests for holiday purchase would be received via HR which would produce a clear view on what is agreed or rejected as there were concerns that some people could be stopped from taking part in the scheme.
- It was suggested that a financial implication of changes to terms of service could be the withdrawal of cars by employees.
- It was suggested that wider use of a pool car scheme could help lessen the requirement for use of personal cars for business.

- BCC wanted to continue with a cycle allowance, particularly as a 'Cycling City' however it had been proposed that the rate be brought in line with HMRC.
- It was confirmed that if an employee purchased under 30 days leave as proposed, pension contributions would still be applicable.
- It was suggested that the changes could be viewed in a context of 'chipping away' at the terms and conditions for employees and cause resentment. However, it could also be viewed as a 'tidying up exercise'.

**RESOLVED - that the report be noted.**

**HR**

**52.1/12**

## **REVIEW OF REVISIONS TO THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director – Corporate Services (agenda item no. 6) which gave an update on the introduction of the new Grievance Policy.

The Committee noted an item of related Public Forum from the GMB.

Officers considered the increase in the total number of grievances lodged as indicative of the changes to the policy not being a barrier to grievances being lodged. Employees also opted for informal resolution with a decrease in the number of formal appeals. The situation would continue to be monitored to ensure it was effective.

It was suggested that there should be an exit poll for those involved with the grievance process, perhaps involving the appellants Trade union representative, to provide meaningful feedback and information.

**RESOLVED - that the report be noted.**

(The meeting ended at 3.25pm)

CHAIR