

STAFFING COMMITTEE
Tuesday, 13th December, 2016

Present:- Councillor Alam (in the Chair); Councillors Beck, Cowles, Lelliott and Read. Commissioner Ney was also present.

Apologies for absence:- Councillor Watson

3. TO CONSIDER WHETHER THE PRESS AND PUBLIC SHOULD BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF ANY PART OF THE AGENDA.

The Chair reported that he would propose the exclusion of the press and public from the meeting during consideration of items 5 (Terms and Conditions and Section 188 Notice) and 6 (Legal Services Market Supplement).

4. TO DETERMINE ANY ITEM WHICH THE CHAIRMAN IS OF THE OPINION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AS A MATTER OF URGENCY.

The Chair reported that there were no items requiring urgent consideration by the committee.

5. REDUNDANCY CONSULTATION & HR1 NOTIFICATION

Consideration was given to a report which provided an overview of the consultation requirements associated with making employees redundant. The report detailed the scale of the financial challenge that the Council faced up to 2020 and referred to the inevitable requirement to meet a significant proportion of that challenge from employee costs, which in some cases would be as result of redundancies.

It was noted that the Workforce Strategy had identified a reduction of at least 1,000 full time equivalent posts by 2020/21. It was reported that where an employer envisaged changes that might result in redundancies they are required to notify the Redundancy Payments Service using Form HR1. The same rules required employers to copy the notification to recognised trade unions at the same, which in effect would initiate a period of consultation on the proposals.

It was further reported that an employer is required to seek to mitigate the impact of its proposals on the workforce, which could include such measures as reducing the use of agency staff or deleting vacant posts.

The committee was advised of two options in respect of the consultation it could undertake:

- consult on the overall position for the next three years, or
- initiate a consultation on the 2017/18 financial year only (given the level of uncertainty relating to proposals for future years).

Members noted that a consultation for 2017/18 proposals would last for 45 days, but there would need to be further periods of consultation. If the consultation related to the three year period, and more than 100 employees, the period of consultation would still be 45 days.

The committee was broadly in agreement that consultation should cover the three-year period until 2020 in order to give both staff and trade unions as much information as possible to understand the Council's direction of travel in the context of the financial challenges that lay ahead.

Resolved:-

1. That the consultation requirements be noted.
2. That consultation cover the three year period to 2020 and the HR1 form be completed accordingly.

6. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

Resolved:- That under Section 100(A) 4 of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12(A) of such Act indicated, as now amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006 (information which is likely to reveal the identity of an individual).

7. TERMS & CONDITIONS AND SECTION 188 NOTICE

A verbal update was provided in respect of ongoing discussions with trade unions regarding proposed changes to Terms and Conditions. It was noted that further information had been requested to inform any future decision to amend terms and conditions. Specific reference was made to the implications associated with all of the options that were subject to discussion.

Resolved:-

That the update be noted.

8. LEGAL SERVICES MARKET SUPPLEMENT

Consideration was given to a report which sought approval to establish a market supplement for various posts within Legal Services following a peer review which had found that the Legal Services Social Care Team was understaffed.

Having considered the report, the committee supported the recommended approach to conduct a robust recruitment process to target potential staff with varying levels of knowledge, skills and experience to create an appropriate balance in the team and to enable good staff development.

Resolved:-

That, with effect from 1 December 2016, a market supplement of 10% of the salary be paid to the childcare solicitors and team and service managers in the Legal Services Social Care Team.