

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEMBER AND EMPLOYMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 JULY 2014

Present: Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Burton, Butler, Chittenden, Cox, Mrs Joy, McKay, Munford, Round, Sargeant and Mrs Wilson

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that apologies had been received from Councillors Daley and McLoughlin.

2. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was noted that Councillor Butler was substituting for Councillor McLoughlin and Councillor Chittenden was substituting for Councillor Daley.

3. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

There were no Visiting Members.

4. **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED: That Councillor McLoughlin be elected as Chairman of the Member and Employment and Development Panel for the 2014-2015 Municipal year.

5. **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED: That Councillor Cox be elected as Vice Chairman of the Member and Employment and Development Panel for the 2014-2015 Municipal year.

6. **MEETING CHAIRMAN**

In the absence of the Chairman the Vice Chairman took the chair.

7. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

8. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

9. TO CONSIDER WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION.

RESOLVED: That the items on the Agenda be taken in public as proposed.

10. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2014

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21 January 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed.

11. APPOINTMENT OF POLITICAL GROUP SPOKESPERSONS

RESOLVED:

That the following be appointed as the political group spokespersons for the Panel for the remainder of the municipal year:-

- Conservative – Councillor McLoughlin
- Liberal Democrat – Councillor Cox
- Labour – Councillor McKay
- Independent – Councillor Munford
- UKIP – Councillor Sargeant

12. MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned from 4:45pm to 5:15pm to allow for a Member briefing from the Head of HR Shared Service.

13. PENSION DISCRETIONS POLICY

The Panel considered the report of the Head of HR Shared Service regarding the Pension Discretions Policy.

During questioning the Head of HR Shared Service confirmed:

- The policy was based on the new pension regulations and did not increase costs to the Council;
- Increased staff contributions did not mean increased costs to the Council;
- At induction staff were informed of auto enrolment and given a pensions booklet and referred to the Kent County Council website for further information;
- Very few staff opted out of the scheme – as of November 2013, 25 staff had opted out of the previous scheme – when notified of auto enrolment only a few opted out of the new scheme;
- Staff were able to transfer pensions from other local authority and private employer schemes – this was covered by regulation 100.

RESOLVED:

That the amended policy on Employer Discretions as set out in draft at Appendix A to the report of the Head of HR Shared Service e agreed.

14. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT BUDGET/PLAN 2014-2015

The Panel considered the report of the Learning and Development Manager regarding the Members' Development Budget.

RESOLVED:

That the budget allocation, as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Learning and Development Manager be agreed, subject to the following:-

- a) The LGA Leadership Academy be open to aspiring leaders, and;
- b) Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) Briefing – interested Councillors to visit Maidstone CAB to find out more about their partnership approach to resident assistance.

15. PROPOSED CHANGES TO STAFF TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Head of HR Shared Service presented her report outlining the main points and responded to questions raised by Members on point 1.2.2 (reduction annual leave entitlements for new employees in line with the levels negotiated with the trade unions of the report).

After some discussion and consideration the Panel:

RESOLVED:

- a) That the link to National Joint Council (NJC) terms and conditions be removed from all contracts of employment;
- b) That the consideration of reducing annual leave entitlements for new employees in line with the levels negotiated with the trade unions (point 1.2.2 of the report) and the removal of unsocial hour's allowances (point 1.2.3 of the report) be deferred pending a full Equality Impact Assessment, and;
- c) That reference be made in the staff policies to the flexibility of compassionate leave entitlement.

16. DURATION OF MEETING

4:30pm – 6:12pm