

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

11 SEPTEMBER 2017

PRESENT

Councillor B. Rigby (in the Chair).

Councillors M. Cawdrey (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. P. Dixon, J. Bennett, M. Hyman, C. Hynes and D. Jarman.

In attendance

Deborah Lucas	Acting Director of Human Resources
Dominique Adcock	Principal Solicitor (Corporate and Commercial) and Deputy Monitoring Officer.
Debbie Quinn	HR Business Partner
Alexander Murray	Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

13. MINUTES

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14. AGENCY SPEND Q1

The Acting Director of Human Resources (ADHR) presented a report to the Committee. It was highlighted to Members that the overall level of agency spend had reduced by £77,741 when compared to quarter one of 2016/17. The ADHR believed that the reduction was the result of strategies taking effect. The Committee were told that two senior positions were being filled by agency staff who added a large amount of specialist knowledge and expertise. The Council had attempted to appoint staff to these positions previously without success. The Committee were informed that the Health and Safety Manager was conducting a focused piece of work which would look at the agency spend and sickness within the Children, Families and Wellbeing (CFW) directorate.

Committee Members were then given the opportunity to ask questions. The Committee requested that a manager from CFW attend the next meeting of the Committee in order to add context to the information provided. The Committee also requested that future reports contain the ratio of agency to council workers where possible. One Member of the Committee asked whether any further work was being done at a Greater Manchester level. The ADHR informed the Board that there was a piece of work being conducted around the social worker workforce.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the report be noted,
- 2) That a manager from CFW attend the next meeting of the Committee.
- 3) That agency spend reports include agency to council staff ratios where possible.

15. WORKFORCE UPDATE

The ADHR presented a report setting out key workforce data. Specifically, she highlighted to the Committee that data had been released showing the levels of sickness within the workforces in the 10 GM local authorities. Trafford was ranked fifth out of the 10 local authorities, with sickness levels in line with the GM average of 10.5 days per employee per annum. The ADHR told the Committee that Trafford were conducting a piece of work to look at the levels of sickness and that the report of the findings would come to the Committee once completed. The ADHR committed to provide the Committee with regular Workforce Updates.

RESOLVED: That the Committee receives regular workforce updates on key data, including the level of sickness within the Council.

16. UPDATE ON GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING

The ADHR presented a report detailing the results of the work on the Gender Pay Gap within Trafford Council. The work had been done in line with the Equality Act Regulations 2017 which required relevant public sector organisations to report gender pay gap figures. As of the meeting only Poole and Doncaster Local Authorities had published their figures. Poole had shown women were paid 1.1% lower (mean) and 3.2% higher (median) than men. Doncaster had reported women were paid 15.7% lower (mean) and 21.1% lower (median) than men per hour.

Trafford figures showed that women were paid 11.1% lower (Mean) and 14.5% lower (Median) than men. The report provided further analysis of the pay gap within the workforce broken down into quartiles. When broken down in this way the gap was greatly reduced or negative. The report surmised that the overall pay gap was significantly affected by the composition of the workforce which was 76% female and 26% male. The report concluded with proposals on how the gender pay gap figures were to be reported. The ADHR added that there was an AGMA working group looking at the gender pay gap across Greater Manchester; this group was working together to ensure that the calculations behind the figures were consistent across GM.

The Committee were given the opportunity to ask questions. No queries were raised, however all Committee Members welcomed the work that was being done on the gender pay gap.

RESOLVED: That the report and plans for publishing the gender pay gap figures be noted.

17. UPDATE ON MANDATORY UNPAID LEAVE

The ADHR went through the report which had been distributed with the agenda for the meeting. The Committee were told that following the applications received for voluntary unpaid leave the number of days taken by staff were roughly the same

Employment Committee
11 September 2017

as the previous year. This left a gap in savings and the report detailed the different options that had been considered to bridge the gap.

In response to the options offered Committee Members stated that options which mitigated the impact of the mandatory unpaid leave on the lower pay bands would be preferable. One Member of the Committee asked whether there had been any trends identified amongst those who had opted to take voluntary unpaid leave. The ADHR answered that those who were on higher pay band were more likely to take more voluntary leave.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Committee support the approach towards voluntary and mandatory leave.
- 2) That the Committee note the options being considered for mandatory leave.

18. QUARTERLY REPORT ON EXEMPTIONS TO THE SICKNESS POLICY

The ADHR informed the Committee that there had been no new exemptions to the policy within the last quarter.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and finished at 11.00 am