

**Minutes of a Meeting of the
Employment Committee held on 13
October 2022**

+ Cllr Stuart Black (Chairman)
+ Cllr Cliff Betton (Vice Chairman)

+ Cllr Colin Dougan	+ Cllr Alan McClafferty
+ Cllr Sharon Galliford	+ Cllr Graham Tapper
+ Cllr Mark Gordon	+ Cllr Victoria Wheeler
+ Cllr Josephine Hawkins	
	+ Present

Members in Attendance virtually: Cllr Peter Barnett, Cllr Rodney Bates and Cllr Pat Tedder

Officers Present: Louise Livingston
Lucy Phillips
Damian Roberts
Julie Simmonds
Rachel Whillis
Staff Representatives

7/EC Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2022 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

8/EC Update on Pay Settlement

The Committee received an update on Pay Settlement. Members were asked to consider the pay award recommendation of 8 percent consolidated pay rise to be applied on all pay scale points from 1 October 2022.

The Section 151 Officer had been part of the consultation process of the pay award discussions. It was noted the longer term cost of recruitment and retention could outweigh the cost of the award, combined with the potential loss of skills, knowledge and experience across the Council if staff were to leave. The award was affordable and supported by reserves, which were sufficient to cover the cost of the award in the short term.

RECOMMENDED to Full Council to adopt a consolidated 8 percent pay increase on all pay scale points from the First of October 2022

NOTE1

It was noted for the record that the Chairman declared the following:
“Firstly I declare on behalf of all members of the Committee that we are affected by any decision on whether to agree a percentage increase to staff pay as this affects increases to Members’ Allowances.

I have been advised by the Head of Legal and Democratic Services that the percentage increase to staff pay – if agreed – may be applied to Members' allowances; this will be addressed in the report to Council at the end of the month. It is important that for the purposes of this meeting, Members must satisfy themselves that they can maintain an open mind and base any decision on the merits of the report.”

The Head of HR, Performance & Communications declared that all officers present also had an interest in the proposed pay settlement.

9/EC Agile Working Policy

The Committee considered a report setting out the Council's Agile Working Policy. Members were advised the report had been brought to Employment Committee three times.

Members noted continuity issues within the report with various applications being referred to interchangeably and asked for a single reference to any approved communication system within the Council would be all encompassing and negate the continuity issues. Members also noted small grammatical errors in paragraph 3.1 and 17.1.

RESOLVED that the amended Agile Working Policy, as set out as Annex A to the report, as amended, be agreed.

10/EC Social Networking Policy

The Committee received an updated report on the Social Networking Policy. The Policy had been further amended to include that social networking use may be applicable to FOI/EIR following a previous Committee meeting which requested further detail be added to the Policy.

Arising from discussions it was agreed a list of Council authorised applications and unauthorised applications be created which ensured the continuity of the Policy In regard to trends of social media and applications.

Members discussed the differences between Microsoft Teams and WhatsApp. It was noted that WhatsApp had the potential to be problematic as being aware of, recording or the retrieval of WhatsApp discussions and decisions would be difficult to govern. Therefore the Policy should be amended at 8.3 to make it clear that staff should not use WhatsApp for Council business.

RESOLVED that the revised Social Networking Policy, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, as amended be agreed.

11/EC Christmas Working Arrangements

The Committee considered a report setting out the Christmas working arrangements recommended by the Joint Staff Consultative Group held on 22 September 2022 which was that the current Christmas period arrangement of the closure of the Council Offices, to be facilitated by a combination of a contractual

day's leave and the award of a further additional day's leave, which had been matched by staff taking a day's leave from their annual leave entitlement, be continued and this arrangement be made contractual.

Members noted a list of services that would operate over the Christmas period. The Chief Executive would monitor as necessary. Emergency response teams would continue to act when needed over the Christmas closure.

It was noted that the list describing service status over Christmas would continue to be refined, to improve clarity on which services continued as usual and what the reduction in service would be for others, to support communication to residents as Christmas 2022 approaches.

RESOLVED that

- (i) From December 2023 the current established arrangements over the Christmas period be continued including the discretionary award of a day's leave matched by staff taking a day's leave from their annual leave entitlement, be continued; and**
- (ii) To avoid further uncertainty, the current established arrangements be made an ongoing contractual entitlement.**

12/EC Appointments Sub Committee Minutes

The minutes of the Appointments Sub Committee meeting held on 31 August 2022 were agreed and would be signed by the Chairman of the Sub Committee at the next available opportunity.

13/EC Work Programme

The Committee received a report setting out the Work Programme for the remainder of the 2022/23 year. It was noted amendments would be made as necessary in regard to pending decisions of Full Council.

RESOLVED that the work programme for the remainder of the 2022/23 municipal year, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, as amended, be agreed.

Chairman