

Minutes of the meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES** Committee held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Tuesday 17 April 2007 at 9.30 am.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor P A Watkins

Councillors: S C Manion
C J Smith

Officers: Human Resources Manager
Democratic Support Officer

480 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 March 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

481 HOME WORKING POLICY

The Human Resources Manager informed the Committee that the remote working pilot scheme had been successful, and currently benefits staffs were working as far away as Liverpool and Wales. It was not intended that remote working be seen as a replacement for childcare although it did allow for flexibility in working hours.

The scheme had proven to be cost effective with output monitored through a workflow system. This meant that there would be no requirement for a post to be created to oversee remote workers and employees working remotely were still expected to attend regular meetings at the Council's Offices in Whitfield.

Councillor P A Watkins emphasised the need for a consistent Home Working Policy among the East Kent Cluster authorities and for the Human Resources Manager to ensure that the cluster members were consulted in future on Human Resources issues to ensure consistency.

- RESOLVED: (a) That, subject to consultation being undertaken with the East Kent Cluster authorities, the Home Working Policy be adopted.
- (b) That the Chief Executive be authorised to amend the Management and Staff Guidance which provides the operational framework to the policy.
- (c) That in future, consultation be undertaken with the East Kent Cluster authorities on Human Resources issues as a matter of course.

482 MATERNITY AND ADOPTION POLICIES

The Human Resources Manager informed the Committee that the introduction of the Work and Families Act 2006 required the authority make alterations to the existing policies to ensure compliance with legislative requirements.

There had been consultation through the Kent Personnel Officers Group on the alterations required following the Work and Families Act 2006 and the reports proposals were consistent with those of the other East Kent Cluster authorities.

In respect of adoption leave, it was acknowledged that there was no entitlement to leave prior to the arrival of the child as there was with maternity leave. In respect of the new 'Keeping in Touch' days which came into effect from 1 April 2007, there had not been any used to date and any requests for them would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis in consultation with line managers.

RESOLVED: That the revised Maternity and Adoption Policies be approved.

The meeting ended at 9.45 am.