

Minutes of the meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES** Committee held at the Council Offices Whitfield on Thursday 28 January 2010 at 2.00 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor J C Record

Councillors: G Cowan
C J Smith
J M Smith

Officers: Head of Governance
HR Case Consultancy Manager
Democratic Support Officer

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B W Bano and P A Watkins.

395 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, it was noted that Councillor J M Smith had been appointed as substitute for Councillor B W Bano.

396 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

397 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 remainder of the business on the grounds that the item to be considered involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

398 EARLY RELEASE OF PENSION RIGHTS

For the benefit of the Committee, the Head of Governance explained the process behind the formation of the East Kent Human Resources Partnership (EKHRP). In accordance with TUPE regulations, HR employees of the four authorities had been transferred to Dover District Council which was the host authority for the EKHRP. The Head of Governance retained the role of leading for Dover District Council on HR matters, whilst the EKHRP was headed by Juli Oliver-Smith, supported by two HR managers. The agreements underpinning the Partnership provided for the equal sharing of redundancy and early retirement costs. It was considered unlikely that there would be a significant variation in the number of cases brought forward by each of the four authorities.

The HR Case Consultancy Manager described the new health and safety structure within the EKHRP, which comprised 3 health and safety officers, with one post to be filled by developing a member of the existing team. Recognising that health and safety was an important issue, it was believed that a complement of 3 health and safety officers was appropriate. The Officer who was the subject of the report was entitled to receive an index-linked pension from the age of 50. Redeployment had

been explored, but suitable alternative employment for the Officer had not been found.

As a result of this case, the EKHRP would be looking at staff contracts to ensure that terms and conditions across the shared services authorities were consistent and as flexible as possible. An awayday would also be held to review the many lessons learnt from the case, and plans adopted to incorporate these into the wider shared services process. It was predicted that £250,000 would be required for redundancy payments arising from the HR restructure. On wider shared services, it was hoped to achieve efficiency savings of £2 million over 5 years.

- RESOLVED: (a) That the compromise agreement for the Health and Safety Officer be approved.
- (b) That the early release of pension in accordance with the Council's Early Retirement Policy (Pensions, Redundancy and Efficiency) be approved.

The meeting ended at 2.28 pm.