

Minutes of the meeting of the **GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE** held at the Council Offices, Whitfield on Thursday, 10 March 2016 at 2.30 pm.

Present:

Chairman: Councillor S M Le Chevalier

Councillors: M R Eddy
M J Ovenden (as substitute for Councillor D P Murphy)

Officers: Director of Governance
HR Advisor
Team Leader – Democratic Support

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M D Conolly and D P Murphy.

2 APPOINTMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that, in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4, Councillor M J Ovenden was appointed as substitute member for Councillor D P Murphy.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

4 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 March 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL SMOKING POLICY

The Director of Governance presented the revised Dover District Council Smoking Policy.

The Policy had previously been approved in 2007 and had been reviewed in light of changes to the corporate structure and the rise of the use of e-cigarettes. The revised Policy sought to avoid any potential long term health risks to staff and the normalisation of smoking in the workplace by treating e-cigarettes the same way as smoking.

Members were advised that the draft Policy had been discussed with Corporate Management Team and at regular meetings held with the Trade Unions.

RESOLVED: That the updated Dover District Council Smoking Policy be approved.

6 APPRENTICESHIP POLICY UPDATE

The Director of Governance presented the Apprenticeship Policy Update.

Members were advised that Dover District Council had a proud record when it came to apprenticeships and work experience placements and that the updated

Apprenticeship Policy continued to build upon that work by expanding the number of apprentice placements from 4 to 6. Each apprenticeship would be for a two year period and linked to an NVQ qualification. While EK College was the Council's preferred apprenticeship partner the policy did allow for the Council to work with other partners if it was felt appropriate.

In respect of the trial work experience placements in conjunction with Dover Job Centre Plus, the concerns raised at the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee meeting over the participants being financially disadvantaged by participating in the scheme had been noted and the Head of Community and Engagement would be monitoring the placements. An evaluation report would be produced at the end of the trial.

Members welcomed the updated policy and the contribution it made in tackling the Districts low levels of educational attainment.

RESOLVED: (a) That the number of apprenticeship places available directly from the Council be increased to 6 apprenticeships per annum.

(b) That due to the nature of the training programmes and qualifications, the length of the apprenticeship programmes be extended to up to 2 years.

(c) That each apprentice under the age of 18 years be paid 1.5 times x the National Minimum Wage for apprentices for up to 2 years.

(d) That each apprentice over the age of 18 years be paid the National Minimum Wage for their age for up to 2 years.

(e) That the Head of Paid Service or Director of Governance be authorised to approve any contracts or agreements that may be necessary to give effect to the revised arrangement.

7 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

It was moved by Councillor M R Eddy, duly seconded and

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 items to be considered involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 4 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

8 PAY AWARD 2016

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Paid Service which outlined proposals the pay award for all members of staff.

In accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), the Head of Paid Service had sought independent advice on market positioning regarding pay from Total Rewards Projects LTD (TRP) which had recommended a pay award of 1.25%. Following negotiations between management and the recognised Trade Unions (Unison and GMB (MPO)) the Unions accepted the offer.

RESOLVED: That the pay award of 1.25% on the salary of all staff from 1 April 2016 be approved.

The meeting ended at 3.02 pm.