

AT A MEETING of the Employment in Hampshire County Council Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at the castle, Winchester on Friday, 30th
June, 2023

Chairman:

* Councillor Kirsty North

* Councillor Stephen Parker

* Councillor Stephen Philpott

* Councillor Adrian Collett

* Councillor Steve Forster

* Councillor Keith House

* Councillor Zoe Huggins

* Councillor Arun Mummalaneni

*Present

57. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

All Members were present at the meeting, but apologies were received from Jac Broughton, Director of People and Organisation.

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter considered at the meeting they must declare that interest at the time of the relevant debate and, having regard to the circumstances described in Part 3, Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore Members were mindful that where they believed they had a Personal interest in a matter being considered at the meeting they considered whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, considered whether it was appropriate to leave the meeting whilst the matter was discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

59. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

60. DEPUTATIONS

There were no deputations for the meeting.

61. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman thanked Assistant Director Andy Bailey for a Member briefing following the last meeting and also sent best wishes to Jac.

62. **PAY AND LEGISLATION UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report from the Director for People and Organisation (item 6 in the minute book), which updated Members on the national pay award for local government staff in April 2023, associated union ballots for industrial action and ballots in relation to pay and conditions for teachers.

The presenting officer summarised the report, highlighting that the UNISON ballot was due to close in early July. It was confirmed that the changes would not benefit HCC directly, but they were welcomed as they would benefit smaller employers.

RESOLVED:

- a) EHCC noted that the national Unite and UNISON Trade Unions were currently balloting their members for industrial action, in relation to the National Employer's offer for the pay award for 1 April 2023. GMB's ballot was expected to open in September.
- b) EHCC noted that ballots for industrial action were also being conducted of Teaching staff in relation to pay, school funding and working conditions.
- c) EHCC noted the update following the local consultative ballot undertaken by UNISON in relation to annual leave and amendments to the Council's salary policy.
- d) EHCC noted the new potential legislation introducing a future entitlement to neonatal leave and pay and a new consultation covering working time, holiday entitlement and pay, and TUPE regulations.

63. **HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - ANNUAL WORKFORCE REPORT 2022-23**

The Committee received a report from the Director of People and Organisation (item 7 in the minute book) on the Annual Workforce Report for 2022/23, which provided a high-level overview of key workforce data (excluding schools) and the relevant trends to inform the Council's workforce strategies and priorities.

The officer summarised the report, highlighting that the overall headcount in workforce had increased, but recruitment and retention remained a challenge.

During questions on the report, Members learned the following:

Attract

- Ethnicity new employment data was still being looked at and more details would return to Committee once this had been analysed.
- Regarding positive discrimination, it was important to have the right candidate in the right role and Members were pleased to learn that the attraction and recruitment process followed the correct standards at all levels across the organisation.

- Statistics around the applicant rate would be looked at further and provided to Committee

Resource

- There were strict rules around overseas recruitment and the policy had changed within the past six months to better reflect national guidance.
- Further details would be looked at regarding where overseas workers were from, including those from Ukraine and Eastern Europe

Onboarding

- Further work would be conducted around employees that leave within the first three months and a benchmarking exercise undertaken against other neighbouring authorities.
- More investigation would be done to learn the types of roles people had moved to internally within the organisation to see whether there were any patterns.

Develop

- The Firefly was oversubscribed and very popular and apprenticeships continued to be developed. Further investigation would be done regarding the approach to neurodiversity within the Firefly programme.

Reward and Recognise

- There had been an 11% decrease in Special Recognition Award (SRA) payments, yet over 99% of the workforce were felt to be working at a high level. Further work would be done around SRA's as only 10% were received by those in a grade A-D role.
- The percentages around high performance would be broken down further

Progress and Perform

- Following government advice, proof was no longer required to confirm a case of Covid, which had shifted the balance of sickness related to Covid compared to ENT (ear, nose and throat).
- A sicknote was always requested after five working days, and trigger points on the IBC enabled sickness discussions to be had with employees.
- Neonatal/compassionate leave was tracked, but not through sickness absence. Other reasons for leave would be broken down according to the nature of the leave and provided to Committee

Retain and Exit

- Average time in post at HCC was 9 years, but only 18% of leavers had completed questionnaires providing an insight into their reasons for leaving. Managers were continuing to encourage people to complete the form as it was useful to know whether there were areas that needed further work to improve retention. There was no indication in the questionnaires received that there was bad health within HCC or that it was not a good employer.

RESOLVED

The Employment in Hampshire County Council (EHCC):

- a) Reviewed the content of the Annual Workforce Report (Annex One)
- b) Noted the progress of the actions so far and next steps.

64. **CONNECT2HAMPSHIRE - UPDATE ON HAMPSHIRE'S TEMPORARY STAFFING AGENCY**

The Committee received a report from the Director of People and Organisation (item 8 in the minute book), which provided an update on the County Councils joint venture agency, Hampshire & Kent Commercial Services LLP (trading as Connect2Hampshire).

After summarising the report, the presenting officer confirmed that it was the 4th year of the agency, which offered staff pension and sickness cover as well as training that was available to full time staff without the commitment of a long-term position.

Members were happy with the report.

RESOLVED

The EHCC noted the update for Connect2Hampshire in relation to 2022/23, including its performance during this period in relation to the provision of temporary agency workers to the County Council.

Chairman,