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AT A MEETING of the Employment in Hampshire County Council Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held remotely via Microsoft Teams on
Thursday, 11th March, 2021

Chairman:

* Councillor Stephen Reid

* Councillor Christopher Carter
* Councillor Adrian Collett
* Councillor Judith Grajewski
* Councillor Keith House
* Councillor Roy Perry

* Councillor Stephen Philpott
* Councillor Roger Huxstep
Councillor Dominic Hiscock
Councillor David Simpson
Councillor Russell Oppenheimer

*Present

86. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chairman noted that Councillor Keith Evans had sadly passed away since the last meeting of the Committee. The Chairman gave thanks for his contribution to this committee as Vice Chairman. Councillor Roger Huxstep, as conservative substitute member, was in attendance in his place.

87. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to Part 3 Paragraph 1.5 of the County Council's Members' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with Paragraph 1.6 of the Code. Furthermore all Members with a Personal Interest in a matter being considered at the meeting should consider, having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 4 of the Code, whether such interest should be declared, and having regard to Part 5, Paragraph 5 of the Code, consider whether it is appropriate to leave the meeting while the matter is discussed, save for exercising any right to speak in accordance with the Code.

No declarations were made.

88. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were reviewed and agreed.

89. DEPUTATIONS

No deputations were received at this meeting.

90. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman highlighted that the Chief Executive would be retiring in the summer and thanked him for his support to the Committee.

91. **PAY, POLICY AND LEGISLATION UPDATE**

The Employment in Hampshire County Council (EHCC) Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources providing an update on internal realignment of functions, the National Pay Award and proposed employment-related legislative changes.

It was reported that senior care workers had been added to the shortage occupation list, which was welcomed as it was something the County Council had lobbied for.

RESOLVED:

That EHCC notes the internal realignment of functions, increases in the National Living and Minimum Wage and developments concerning the pay award and legislation.

92. **INTERIM WORKFORCE REPORT - APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2020**

The Employment in Hampshire County Council (EHCC) Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources providing an interim workforce report covering April to September 2020.

The content of the report was summarised. It was noted that the Council had furloughed around 900 staff in the January/February 2021 lockdown. In the period covered by the interim workforce report leavers and recruitment were down. Applications for posts were up although less were being received from women and those declaring a disability. The piece of work around 'lets talk race' had received good feedback. The tool developed to assist vulnerable staff to have conversations about covid risk at work had been well received.

An error was highlighted that on page 38 in the table at paragraph 3.8 it should state Full Time Equivalent not Full Time Employee.

The Chairman thanked the IT department for implementing Microsoft Teams which had been successful in enabling staff to work remotely, and for responding to the need to provide additional equipment to enable staff to work from home effectively.

RESOLVED:

The Employment in Hampshire County Council (EHCC) Committee:

- Note the content of the Interim Workforce Report at Annex One to the report
- Note the COVID-19 specific implications presented in the covering report
- Note the progress in relation to the actions and next steps contained in the 2019/20 Annual Workforce Report

93. **OPEN WORKPLACE POLICY**

The Employment in Hampshire County Council (EHCC) Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources regarding the proposal to implement a new Open Workplace Policy for Council members of staff.

It was reported that staff had responded excellently during the pandemic and continued to perform effectively and deliver services, in many cases working from home. It was proposed to maintain this flexibility going forwards, to achieve the benefits to both the organisation and staff as listed in the report. It was expected this would result in a permanent shift in the use of the councils office space. It was highlighted that this did not mean contractually requiring staff to work from home. Most staff would continue to be required to work from a designated premises at least part of the time, to carry out their role effectively.

It was noted that subject to EHCC agreement and consultation with trade unions it was planned to implement the policy from April 2021. Members asked questions for clarification and commented on the proposed approach.

RESOLVED:

That the Employment in Hampshire County Council Committee agree that:

- The Council implements an Open Workplace Policy as attached at appendix A to the report.
- Delegate to the Director of Corporate Resources the authority to make any final amendments to the Open Workplace Policy that are agreed following consultation with trade union representatives and any ongoing amendments that arise from the future application of this policy.

94. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED:

That in relation to the following item the press and public be excluded from the meeting, as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of proceedings, that if a member of the public were present during the item there would be disclosure to them of exempt information within Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and further that in all circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exempt information outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information, for the reasons set out in the report.

95. **FLEXIBLE WORKING (EXEMPT)**

The EHCC Committee considered an exempt report of the Director of Corporate Resources regarding flexible working and agreed the recommendations set out within it.

<Summary of an Exempt Minute>

Chairman,

By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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