

AT A MEETING of the Employment in Hampshire County Council Committee of
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL held at The Castle, Winchester on Friday 21
June 2024

Chairman:

* Councillor Russell Oppenheimer

* Councillor Stephen Parker
Councillor Adrian Collett
* Councillor Steve Forster
Councillor Keith House
* Councillor Zoe Huggins
* Councillor Stephen Philpott

* Councillor Malcolm Wallace

*Present

84. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Adrian Collett.

85. 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.

86. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting held on 19 March 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

87. DEPUTATIONS

No deputations were received on this occasion.

88. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Malcolm Wallace to his first meeting of this Committee following his appointment by Full Council on 24 May 2024.

89. **PAY, LEGISLATION AND APPOINTMENTS UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report of the Director for People and Organisation (Item 6 in the minute book), which provided updates on the national pay award for local government staff, union ballots, the Sickness Absence policy and upcoming legislation and Government consultations.

The Director informed Members about the national pay award, noting that depending on the outcome, it might be necessary to use contingency funds to cover the increase.

Members acknowledged that the consultation on the revised Managing Sickness Absence Policy, previously approved by this Committee, had concluded. The final policy had now been approved by the Director of People and Organisation and officers were developing the necessary guidance for its implementation.

Additionally, Members were briefed on recent legislative changes that have come into effect as well as significant future legislative changes that are planned.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

1. Note the current position in relation to the national pay award for local government staff, which will apply from 1 April 2024 once agreed.
2. Note that officers have concluded consultation with recognised trade unions and the final Managing Sickness Absence Policy has been agreed by the Director of People and Organisation.
3. Note the recent legislative changes that have come into force and note the future significant legislative changes that are planned.
4. Note the conclusion of the appointment process to replace the Director of Adults' Health and Social Care, who retires at the end of August 2024.

90. **HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - ANNUAL WORKFORCE REPORT 2023-24**

The Committee considered a report of the Director of People and Organisation regarding the County Council's Annual Workforce Report for 2023/24 (Item 7 in the Minute Book).

The Director summarised the report and Committee Members asked questions for clarification and provided comments. Key highlights included:

Financial Pressures and Adaptation: The organisation continues to face financial pressures from 2023 to 2024, similar to other councils.
Organisational Model: The 'Fit for the Future' model, introduced in 2023, is now well-established, resulting in strong, efficient, and skilled teams.

Cultural Development: A 'One Organisation' culture is being developed to enhance collaboration within and across directorates.

Workforce Planning: The Strategic Workforce Planning Programme supports directorates in balancing labour supply with service demand, ensuring excellent service delivery.

Recruitment and Retention: Challenges in recruitment and retention persist, and efforts to mitigate these impacts were outlined.

Members requested that future reports include graphs showing data over a 3-year period rather than the current 1-year span.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

1. Note the content of the Annual Workforce Report (Annex One)
2. Note the progress of the work undertaken across the County Council over the last 12 months.

91. **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 Council's joint venture agency, Hampshire & Kent Commercial Services LLP (trading as Connect2Hampshire).

The Director highlighted the salient points in the report and in doing so the Committee were made aware of ongoing national challenges in recruiting and retaining social care workers, especially in residential, nursing care, and qualified social work. The Department for Education recognised these issues and planned to introduce new national rules for using agency child and family social workers in local authority children's social care. This new statutory guidance was expected to be published in July 2024 and come into effect in August 2024.

Members noted that despite the continued challenges faced by Connect2Hampshire during 2023/24, C2H had effectively supported the County Council to meet its temporary workforce requirements throughout the year.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee notes the update for Connect2Hampshire in relation to 2023/24, including its performance during this period in relation to the provision of temporary agency workers to the County Council.

Chairman,
8 November 2024