



East
Northamptonshire
Council

Personnel Sub-Committee

Minutes of a meeting held on 29 November 2011 at 2.00 pm at East Northamptonshire House, Thrapston

Present:

Councillors

Roger Glithero (Chairman)
Wendy Brackenbury
Philip Hardcastle
Steven North
Jeremy Taylor

David Oliver
Sharn Matthews
Katy Everitt
Aime Armstrong

Chief Executive (DO)
Executive Director (SM)
Head of Resources and Organisational Development (KE)
Human Resources Manager (AA)

Keith Osborne

Democratic Services Manager (KO)

Action

1.0 MINUTES

- 1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2011 were approved and signed by the Chairman.

2.0 APOLOGIES

- 2.1 There were no apologies.

3.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST/QUESTIONS

- 3.1 David Oliver, Chief Executive and Sharn Matthews, Executive Director, declared personal and prejudicial interests in item 8 (Council Car Scheme) as they were recipients of the scheme. They left the meeting during the discussion and voting on this item. **KO**
- 3.2 Katy Everitt declared a personal interest in the same item but remained in the meeting for this item, presenting the report and being present for the discussion and voting thereon. She left the meeting after item 8 had been considered.

4.0. WORKFORCE STATISTICS

- 4.1 The Sub-Committee received details of –

- Staff sickness between 1 October 2010 and 30 September 2011 and also between January 2010 and September 2011
- Staff turnover between 1 October 2010 and 30 September 2011
- Establishment statistics between July 2009 and September 2011.

5.0 VACANT POSTS UPDATE

5.1 The sub-committee received a report on:-

- Vacant posts
- Posts temporarily vacant
- New posts
- Budget savings, and
- Empty posts/hours still on establishment but with no budget.

5.2 The Sub-Committee noted the reduction in the salary budget of some £100k in 2011/12 and in 2012/13 and additional savings of £32,139 and £49,904 in the two financial years. In response to a request from the Leader of the Council, the Chief Executive confirmed that the list of vacant posts would be reviewed with a view to removing some posts from the establishment, and the change would take effect from the date of the next scheduled meeting. **DO/
LAA**

6.0 XCHANGE

6.1 The minutes of the meeting of the Xchange Group, held on 29 September 2011 were received and noted. It was also acknowledged that Xchange meetings would now take place every quarter.

6.2 The minutes of the Xchange Group are appended.

7.0 COUNCIL CAR SCHEME

7.1 Members considered a report from KE asking them to decide whether the council's car scheme should continue in its present form or be reviewed, which might include the removal of the scheme.

7.2 The council currently had 59 members of staff whose job was designated as requiring essential car user status, and 17 had a car under the car scheme. If the scheme were to be removed, the 17 members of staff would become eligible to receive the annual lump sum payment and increased fuel allowance and there would be an increase in the revenue cost. Over an average 4 year period, the financial impact of removing the car scheme would reduce capital spending by £67k per annum and increase revenue spending by £39k per annum.

7.3 It was noted that an Equality Impact Assessment would need to be completed if the sub-committee decided to review the scheme. Members highlighted the need to avoid increases in revenue expenditure and recognised the risk of higher expenditure if more employees who were eligible joined the scheme. There would also be pressures on capital expenditure bearing in mind the considerations of the Finance Working Party.

7.4 In discussing this matter, all members of the sub-committee were in favour

of a review of the car scheme, and some possible options were identified. It was therefore

RESOLVED:

That the car scheme be reviewed; that councillors Wendy Brackenbury and Jeremy Taylor be appointed to work with the HR Manager to undertake the review and aim for implementation of the findings of the review in April 2012; and that a progress report be made to the meeting of the sub-committee on 31 January 2012.

AA

8.0 EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

8.1. RESOLVED:

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business because exempt information, as defined under paragraph 2 of part 1 of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, may be disclosed.

9.0. STAFF PROPOSAL SP9 - UPDATE

9.1. Further to minute 10.2 (27 September 2011) SM reported on the results of the consultation process on the review of the Economic Development function of Planning Services. The report also covered an aspect of the Development Control Service and permission was sought – in view of the number of major planning applications being handled by the Development Control Committee and the resignation of the second existing part-time Principal Development Control Officer – to continue the services of a consultant.

9.2 Final proposals were now submitted, and comprised the following adjustments to the original proposals –

- (i). Changes to the job description of the District and Community Project Co-ordinator
- (ii) The addition of an employment and economic development related studies budget of £30,000
- (iii) The deletion of the proposal for the partial secondment of the Tourist Development Officer.

9.3 The financial costs and savings of these proposals were noted. DO emphasised that they concentrated on the need to –

- focus on economic growth
- establish a “business friendly” approach and ensure that planning policies foster this
- encourage businesses to set up and develop in the District and give the council a reputation for promoting economic development
- set up projects to further these objectives, and particularly to provide support for local community infrastructure projects.

It was

9.4 **RESOLVED:**

- (1) That approval be given to the Executive Director to make the four posts in the Economic Development Team redundant by 31 March 2012 and that the request of the Economic Development Assistant to take voluntary redundancy be granted.
- (2) That approval be given for the Executive Director to agree redundancy payments to any officers made redundant under (1) above who are not redeployed within their notice period (in accordance with the council's stated policy). **SM**
- (3) That approval be given to the creation and filling (via redeployment if possible) of the new posts of Tourism Development Officer (in the Communications Team) and District and Community Project Co-ordinator (in the Community Partnerships Team). **SM**

It was further

SM

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:

- (1) That a dedicated budget of £30,000 be retained for employment and economic development specialist studies for the years 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- (2) That the Executive Director be authorised to secure the continuing services of the consultant providing the cost is contained within the original budget for the temporary Principal Development Control Officer **SM**

(Reason: to enable the implementation of the proposals outlined in paragraph 6.2 above and enable the refocus of activities on the delivery of a new corporate plan) **SM**

10.0 SECTION 151 OFFICER & FINANCE MANAGER VACANCY OPTIONS

10.1 Further to minute 6.0 of the last meeting, DO and SM presented a report on the range of options for the appointment of both the Section 151 Officer and Finance Manager posts on a long term basis. There were eight different options (6 for the s151 Officer and 2 for the Finance Manager) and the advantages and possible risks of each were set out, together with mitigation of these risks and other comments.

10.2 In considering the options, the sub-committee was mindful that –

- A major restructure at CMT level should be avoided
- No existing Heads of Service were qualified to take on the role of either s151 Officer or Finance Manager
- There was a need, in the current financial climate, with the council facing considerable challenges, for CMT to be strengthened with

both financial responsibility and some other responsibilities which would not be detrimental to existing postholders

- Existing skills and abilities “to effectively get the job done” should be fully recognised.

10.3 Members believed that the most realistic option was to merge the s151 role with that of the Finance Manager and create a new Head of Service post. It would need to be supported by another member of staff below the Head of Service. It was accordingly

RESOLVED:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| <p>(1) That the council create an additional full time Head of Service post to combine the functions of the s151 Officer and Finance Manager to join CMT.</p> | <p>DO</p> |
| <p>(2) That the Chief Executive draw up a job description and person specification for this post and report further on the process for filling the post, and that members of the sub-committee meet again during the day on 19 December 2011 (as members will be meeting candidates for the post of Democratic Services Manager/Elections Manager on that day) to consider those proposals.</p> | <p>DO/
AA</p> |

Chairman



Xchange Group

Minutes of the meeting held on 29 September 2011

Attendance:

David Oliver	Chief Executive	
DO		
Katy Everitt	Head of Resources and Organisational Development	KE
Tom Morrissey	Chair of Xchange	TM
Rachel Reeds	Resources and OD Representative	RR
Carolyn Aldridge	Resources and OD Representative	CA
Chris Wykes	Customer and Community Services Representative	CW
David Crawley	Planning Services Representative	DC
Charlotte Frost	ICT Representative	CF
Zena Ireland	Environmental Services Representative	ZI

Minutes: Alice Duggan

ACTION

1 Apologies

1.1 Apologies had been received from Symon Adamson, Palden Dorje and Brian Harrison.

2 Minutes from the previous meeting and matters arising

2.1 The minutes from the meeting on 16 August 2011 were approved. **AD**

3 Update on Policies

3.1 AA advised the group that the Maternity and Paternity Leave Policy, Home Working Policy and Work Experience and Interns Policy had been approved at the Personnel Sub Committee meeting on 27 September 2011. It was noted that no further policies would be out for consultation until December 2011.

4 Nomination for Xchange - update

4.1 The group discussed nominations for Xchange and AA agreed to publish information on Eunice. It was noted that TM intended to stand down as Chair of Xchange.

4.2 The group agreed that each service area could have up to 2 representatives at the Xchange meetings and that the new Xchange group would need to review the Terms of Reference at the next meeting.

4.3 The group discussed frequency of meetings and it was agreed to only meet every quarter when the shortlisting for the Employee of the Quarter was due to take place.

5 Employee of the quarter short listing

5.1 The group considered each nomination on its merits, and agreed to put all nominations forward for CMT to decide on a winner.

6 Agree communication

6.1 The group agreed items to feedback to their service areas and ZI agreed to write the blog.

ZI

7 AOB

7.1 DO advised that there were issues that might need to be communicated to staff including on going discussions with the Local Government Group on the pension scheme and negotiations regarding pay awards for staff.

7.2 It was noted that a survey of local authorities would take place regarding changes to employees terms and conditions. It was hoped that the results of this survey would be shared with staff.

7.3 CA asked if it would be possible to have a stand in representative from UNISON when PD was unable to attend meetings. DC to discuss with PD.

7.4 TM noted a request from BH regarding the quality of television set in the staff room. Amenities team would be investigating.

7.5 The group expressed their thanks to TM for his efforts and hard work as Chair of the meetings.

7.6 The next meeting was scheduled to take place on 20 December 2011.