

Cherwell District Council

Personnel Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held at Bodicote House, Bodicote, Banbury, OX15 4AA, on 9 July 2024 at 6.30 pm

Present:

Councillor Amanda Watkins (Chairman)
Councillor Gemma Coton (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Rebecca Biegel
Councillor Chris Brant
Councillor Phil Chapman
Councillor David Hingley
Councillor Harry Knight
Councillor Nicholas Mawer
Councillor Lynne Parsons
Councillor Chris Pruden
Councillor Barry Wood

Apologies for absence:

Councillor Fiona Mawson

Officers:

Claire Cox, Assistant Director Human Resources
Susan Blunsden, HR Manager
Natasha Clark, Governance and Elections Manager

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interests.

4 Petitions and Requests to Address the Meeting

There were no petitions or requests to address the meeting.

5 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.

6 Minutes

Subject to a correction to the 22 May 2024 minutes, resolution to Minute 1 to read "That Councillor Amanada Watkins be appointed Chairman of the Personnel Committee for the municipal year 2024/2025, the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 7 February 2024 and 22 May 2024 were agreed as correct records and signed by the Chairman. .

7 **Chairman's Announcements**

There were no Chairman's announcements.

8 **Policy Review Updates**

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to seek approval from the Personnel Committee on proposed changes to four existing HR policies: Flexible Working Request Policy; Domestic Abuse Policy; Flexi scheme Policy; and, Employers LGPS Discretions Policy.

In response to Members' questions regarding the refusal of flexible working requests, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that the policy sets out the acceptable grounds and that line manager should liaise with their HR Business Partner.

In response to Members' questions in relation to raising staff awareness of the Domestic Abuse Policy and support available, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that she would be advising staff of the Policy at the monthly staff briefing as well as raising awareness of all updated policies via the weekly staff communications. New employees were made aware of all HR policies as part of their induction. Staff (and Members) had access to free support through the council's employee assistance programme.

In considering the Flexi Scheme Policy, Members raised questions about the permitted flexi banking amount and professional training for staff commenting the council should be proactive rather than reactive, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that the hours related to three standard full time-working days (7 hours 24 minutes) and was pro-rata to hours worked for part time employees (60% of weekly contractual hours). With regards professional training, the Assistant Director Human Resources advised that training in skill sets the council was short of was encouraged and highlighted the pathways to planning.

Resolved

(1) That, having given due consideration, the following policies be approved for implementation:

- Flexible Working Request Policy
- Domestic Abuse Policy
- Flexi scheme Policy
- Employers LGPS Discretions Policy

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Workforce Profile Statistics - Quarter 4 2023-24

The Assistant Director Human Resources submitted a report to provide the Personnel Committee with an update on CDC's workforce including measuring staff well-being and to highlight the actions officers are taking to address any issues.

In response to Members' questions regarding the use of temporary agency staff, the Assistant Director Human Resources explained that some services were unable to recruit permanent staff. Agency staff were also used in some services, such as Environmental Services, to cover sickness or peaks in leave.

Resolved

- (1) That the workforce data for quarter 4 of 2023/24 (financial year dates) be noted.

The meeting ended at 7.05 pm

Chairman:

Date: