

APPOINTMENTS, REMUNERATION AND CHIEF OFFICER CONDUCT COMMITTEE

20 January 2021

Present:-

Councillors J Hart (Chair), A Connett, R Hannaford, J McInnes and
B Parsons

* **80** **Minutes**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 25 November 2020 be signed as a correct record.

* **81** **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

There was no item raised as a matter of urgency.

82 **Pay Policy Statement 2021/2022**

The Committee considered the Joint Report of the County Solicitor (Chief Officer for Legal, Human Resources and Communications) and Head of Human Resources outlining the proposed and revised Pay Policy Statement for 2021/2022 and consequential amendments to the Chief Officer Employment Procedure Rules and Disciplinary Policy, for ratification by the County Council.

The Committee were reminded that the Localism Act 2011 required Councils to prepare and approve, annually, a Pay Policy Statement setting out its policy for each financial year relating to remuneration of Chief Officers and other employees and the relationship between the pay of Chief Officers and the lowest paid employee. It also specified that salaries for those on leadership grades were fixed for the duration of the Policy.

The draft Pay Policy Statement was attached at Appendix 1 to the Report and reflected the Government's legislation and proposals to restrict exit payments for public sector workers.

The Governments proposals included:

- a £95,000 Exit Payments Cap, covering all types of exit payment;
- a duty to keep records and publication requirements in respect of relaxation of the £95k payment cap restriction;
- further reforms to the Public Sector Exit payments, which proposed to limit the amount of compensation an employee received where the exit was for redundancy. In addition, it proposed to limit the amount of employer funded top-ups for early retirement; and

- that pay policy statements should be used by Local Authorities to explain their policies on the reward of chief officers who had been previously employed by the authority and ex-employees later engaged as Chief Officers.

The draft Pay Policy Statement continued to reflect a potential future review of terms and conditions including a current review of the NJC Annual Leave entitlement and the Authority's wider reward strategy, bearing in mind the pay and grading implications of the National Living Wage, and other issues such as recruitment and retention and the changing nature of work and roles within the Authority.

The Trade Unions had submitted a pay claim for 2021/22 to the national employers and further development was awaited.

Appendix 2 of the Report outline the current senior management roles and salary levels and no changes were proposed.

Members discussed and asked questions on the pay award and whether an updated position was known, staff awareness of the budgetary position of the authority, staff surveys to better understand morale and health and wellbeing issues, the current pressures on some staff including those home educating or those working remotely sometimes without suitable conditions, the importance of conditions and allowances supporting retention in those difficult to recruit areas and the potential to review some staff allowances to ensure they were still fit for purpose.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and

RESOLVED

(a) that the proposed amendments to the Pay Policy Statement be approved and the revised Statement for 2021/22 commended to the Council;

(b) that the legislation of the Restriction of Public Services Exit Payments regulations which became law on 4th November 2020 be noted; and

(c) that the change to leadership roles and salary rates, which may be impacted by any national pay award, also be noted.

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Leadership Changes

The Committee considered the Report of the Chief Executive which outlined a number of interim measures for leadership arrangements within Children's Services and also the Communities portfolio following the retirement of the former Chief Officer for Communities, Public Health, Environment and Prosperity.

Whilst these arrangements could be made under the responsibilities delegated to the Chief Executive in line with the Chief Officer Employment Procedures, the Committee was asked to support the proposals.

Following the retirement of Dr Virginia Pearson, the role had been changed from a Chief Officer role with responsibility for a wider portfolio of services to a role dedicated to Public Health. The new Director of Public Health formally took up the role on the 1st January 2021.

Line management arrangements for the Head of Planning, Transportation and Environment, the Head of Economy, Enterprise and Skills, and the Head of Communities had temporarily been moved to report to the Chief Executive.

In relation to Children's Services, the new Chief Officer, Melissa Caslake, was due to start employment with the Council on the 1st February 2021. In the intervening period, Vivien Lines was acting in the statutory role of Director of Children's Services with responsibility for safeguarding reporting direct to the Chief Executive as was Dawn Stabb, the Head of Education and Learning.

The Report then outlined the line management arrangements for the acting Head of Children's Social Care, Head of Commissioning, Public Health Nursing and Early Help.

The Committee noted that the recruitment process for a permanent appointment to the Head of Children's Social Care would commence shortly with the selection process anticipated to take place in late February 2021.

Members discussed the merits of undertaking a Leadership review after the quadrennial Elections and asked questions on any cost implications of the temporary measures. It was confirmed there were no increased costs.

It was **MOVED** by Councillor Hart, **SECONDED** by Councillor McInnes, and

RESOLVED

(a) that the temporary arrangements made for services which sit within the 'Communities' portfolio following the changes made to the Director of Public Health role be endorsed, also noting that these will remain in place until the Council Elections (currently scheduled for May 2021); and

(b) that furthermore, the temporary arrangements put in place for Children's Services between 1st January 2021 and the 1st February 2021 (when the newly appointed Chief Officer for Children's Services joins the Council) also be endorsed.

The Meeting started at 2.15 pm and finished at 2.44 pm.

