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19 January 2010

S U M M O N S

MEETING: Personnel Sub Board
DATE: 27 January 2010
TIME: 6.00pm
PLACE: Committee Room 1, Town Hall, Gosport
Democratic Services contact: Lisa Reade

LINDA EDWARDS
BOROUGH SOLICITOR

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD

Councillor Carter (Chairman)
Councillor Hook (Vice Chairman)

Councillor Burgess
Councillor Forder

Councillor Gill
Councillor Wright

The Mayor (Councillor Mrs Searle) (ex officio)

FIRE PRECAUTIONS

(To be read from the Chair if members of the public are present)

In the event of the fire alarm (continuous ringing sound) sounding, please leave the room immediately.

Proceed downstairs by way of the main stairs or as directed by GBC staff, following any of the emergency exit signs. People with disability or mobility issues please identify yourself to GBC staff who will assist in your evacuation of the building.

IMPORTANT NOTICE:

- If you are in a wheelchair or have difficulty in walking and require access to the Committee Room on the First Floor of the Town Hall for this meeting, assistance can be provided by Town Hall staff on request

If you require any of the services detailed above please ring the Direct Line for the Democratic Services Officer listed on the Summons (first page).

NOTE:

- i. Councillors are requested to note that, if any Councillor who is not a member of the Sub Board wishes to speak at the Sub Board meeting, then the Borough Solicitor is required to receive not less than 24 hours prior notice in writing or electronically and such notice shall indicate the agenda item or items on which the member wishes to speak.
- ii. Please note that mobile phones should be switched off for the duration of the meeting.

AGENDA

PART A ITEMS

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter, any personal or personal and prejudicial interest in any item(s) being considered at this meeting.

3. MINUTES

To confirm the Minutes of the Sub Board meeting held on 2 September 2009 (copy attached)

4. DEPUTATIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.5

(NOTE: The Sub Board is required to receive a deputation(s) on a matter which is before the meeting of the Sub Board provided that notice of the intended deputation and its object shall have been received by the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Monday, 25 January 2010. The total time for deputations in favour and against a proposal shall not exceed 10 minutes).

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS – STANDING ORDER 3.6

(NOTE: The Sub Board is required to allow a total of 15 minutes for questions from Members of the public on matters within the terms of reference of the Sub Board provided that notice of such Question(s) shall have been submitted to the Borough Solicitor by 12 noon on Monday, 25 January 2010).

6. EXTENSION OF REMOVAL AND DISTURBANCE SCHEME

To seek the Sub-Board's approval for the extension of the provisions of the Council's Removal and Disturbance Scheme for the Director of Economic Development, Tourism and The Arts.

PART II
Contact Officer:
Kathy Inch
Ext 5224

Continued

Personnel Sub Board
27 January 2010

7. LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

To seek the Sub-Board's approval for the updated Learning and Development Policy.

PART II
Contact Officer:
Kathy Inch
Ext 5224

8. RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION

To advise the Sub-Board of the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

PART II
Contact Officer:
Ian Lycett
Ext 5200

9. ANY OTHER ITEMS

-which the Chairman determines should be considered, by reason of special circumstances, as a matter of urgency.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 06

Board/Committee:	Personnel Sub-Board
Date of Meeting:	27 th January 2010
Title:	Extension of Removal and Disturbance Scheme
Author:	Head of Personnel
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

To seek the Sub-Board's approval for the extension of the provisions of the Council's Removal and Disturbance Scheme for the Director of Economic Development, Tourism and The Arts.

Recommendation

That the Sub-Board approve the extension of the provisions of the Council's Removal and Disturbance Scheme until 31st December 2010 for the new Director, to allow further time for the officer's property to be sold. This is an extension of time only, the overall limit on expenditure remaining the same.

1 Background

- 1.1 The Council's Removal and Disturbance Scheme (attached as an Appendix) provides for payments to be made for a period of twelve months from the commencement of employment.
- 1.2 The Director joined the Council on 26th January 2009 from Scotland, and has been trying to sell the property there since then. In the meantime, rented accommodation was used, and the Director has recently taken up permanent residence in the locality.

2 Report

- 2.1 The housing market is, as Members will be aware, very slow currently, and remains particularly so north of the border. The house has been on the market since December 2008; arrangements were made for enhanced marketing, and there has been a subsequent increase in the marketing in an effort to move the property. Estate agents advise that the house will sell easily once the market picks up, but potential buyers are not currently able to sell their own properties.
- 2.2 Entitlement to claim under the Scheme for this officer expires on 25th January 2010, unless an extension is agreed by the Sub-Board.
- 2.3 Members will recall that the Scheme was recently reviewed, and approval was given for its general application for a period of twelve

months. However, circumstances currently are exceptional, resulting in moves tending to take even longer than twelve months.

- 2.4 Without an extension of the scheme in this case, the Director would not be able to claim towards the cost of selling the property, and moving remaining belongings to the area.
- 2.5 The overall maximum which may be claimed for removal and disturbance expenses (£8,000) remains the same.

3 Legal Implications

- 3.1 The Removal and Disturbance Scheme is one of the Council's local agreements, which applies to all staff who meet the eligibility criteria. The Sub-Board can approve an extension of the twelve month period.

4 Risk Assessment

- 4.1 The use of the Scheme assists the Council in recruiting and retaining staff who live outside the local area.
- 4.2 The ability to extend the Scheme aids retention, whilst retaining a financial limit on the overall sum payable for removal and disturbance purposes.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Payments under the Scheme are subject to an overall maximum of £8,000, regardless of the length of time for which the Scheme applies.
- 5.2 The remaining part of the scheme (mortgage subsidy) does not apply in this case.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The housing market is such that the Director has not yet been able to sell the property owned, and complete the move to this area.
- 6.2 The extension of the provisions of the Removal and Disturbance Scheme is sought until the end of 2010 to give further time for appropriate arrangements to be made.

Financial Services comments:	Section 5 refers
Legal Services comments:	None
Service Improvement Plan implications:	
Corporate Plan:	Invest in staff using best recruitment and retention practices
Risk Assessment:	Paragraph 4
Background papers:	
Appendices/Enclosures:	Removal and Disturbance Scheme
Report author/Lead Officer:	Kathy Inch

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7

Board/Committee:	Personnel Sub-Board
Date of Meeting:	27 th January 2010
Title:	Learning and Development Policy
Author:	Head of Personnel
Status:	FOR DECISION

Purpose

To seek the Sub-Board's approval for the updated Learning and Development Policy.

Recommendation

That the Sub-Board approve the updated Learning and Development Policy (attached as an appendix) for adoption forthwith.

1 Background

- 1.1 The Council's Training Policy has been reviewed, to ensure that it is up to date and appropriately reflects current needs and developments.

2 Report

- 2.1 It is several years since the Council's Training Policy was reviewed. It has now been revised, taking into account best practice and developments in the training field, as well as training developments within the Council.
- 2.2 Comments made by the IIP Assessor recently have been taken into account in reviewing the Policy.
- 2.3 The policy has been considered by the Learning and Development Group, and by UNISON, who have recommended it for adoption.

3 Legal Implications

- 3.1 A learning and development/training policy is not a legal requirement, but it does assist in identifying the Council's approach to training.

4 Risk Assessment

- 4.1 The learning and development policy identifies the Council's approach to this important area, ensuring that staff are adequately equipped for their roles both now and for the future.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 Training budgets are agreed annually as part of the Council's overall budget process.
- 5.2 The policy makes clear that learning and development activities will include the sharing of information, thus reducing the amount of training which needs to be purchased.

6 Conclusion

- 6.1 The Council's updated Learning and Development Policy is attached as an appendix.
- 6.2 The Policy has been approved by the Learning and Development Group, and by UNISON, and is brought to the Sub-Board for approval.

Financial Services comments:	Section 5 refers
Legal Services comments:	None
Service Improvement Plan implications:	
Corporate Plan:	Invest in staff using best development practices
Risk Assessment:	Paragraph 4
Background papers:	
Appendices/Enclosures:	Learning and Development Policy
Report author/Lead Officer:	Kathy Inch

GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL**LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY**

The Council values its staff and is committed to investing in and developing them, recognising the value of continuous learning, training and development in order to develop potential in achieving its objectives.

The ability of all employees to grow is recognised, and the Council will base decisions on learning and development opportunities, and appropriate investment, on the organisation's requirements both current and for the longer term future, maintaining a fair and equitable approach.

1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF POLICY

- 1.1 The Council will keep the level of skills under review, address any skills shortages and build upon existing skills and abilities by developing the potential of staff through all forms of learning opportunities. This will embrace qualification based-training, short courses, e-learning, open/distance learning, planned work experience, secondments, special assignments, sharing of knowledge and the systematic development of individuals through assessment, coaching and mentoring.
- 1.2 Each member of staff will have a personal training and development plan, which will be formally reviewed twice yearly. The first priority is to allocate resources to immediate requirements necessary for the individual in order to satisfy the Council's objectives in terms of its services, quality and how the service is to be delivered.
- 1.3 The Council recognises that individuals need to learn continuously to be in a position to respond positively to changing demands and pressures.
- 1.4 The Council will ensure that a balance is struck between the needs of the organisation and an individual's personal development.
- 1.5 The Council believes that all employees have the potential to grow, and will endeavour to provide opportunities for development wherever possible, and in the most appropriate way, having regard to all the circumstances.

2. STRATEGY

- 2.1 The responsibility for implementing the learning and development policy rests with Service Unit Managers, and Line Managers, as part of their objective to effectively manage and develop their staff. Managers should actively demonstrate their commitment to learning and development and encourage their management teams and line managers to stimulate, promote, provide and review learning opportunities.

- 2.2 Comprehensive training plans will be produced annually to meet the training requirements identified both for the Unit and corporately, and resources will be allocated accordingly. Sufficient flexibility will be allowed within the plans to meet urgent changing circumstances, and the most appropriate means of meeting needs will be determined having regard to all the circumstances, including the individual's preferred learning style.
- 2.3 Managers are responsible for the identification of training needs in conjunction with their staff. This will involve the regular assessment of staff, both formally via the personal review process and informally, with the assistance and advice of Personnel Services. Individual members of staff are also empowered by reviewing their own development and job related training needs and agreeing personal training plans with their manager.
- 2.4 The Council encourages staff to share skills and knowledge within their teams and sections, and also cross-departmentally, so that all staff benefit from the learning experience.
- 2.5 The Council will demonstrate the important contribution that a clear policy of learning and development will make to the enhancement of performance and productivity by ensuring that:
- Managers are able to identify training needs and assess the most appropriate means of achieving them, and subsequently evaluate the effectiveness of the learning provided, both in the short and longer term.
 - A systematic approach is adopted, to develop an authority-wide training plan.
 - Training resources are provided and allocated in accordance with the needs and priorities identified in the training plans.
 - Staff are made aware of training initiatives and opportunities.
 - In-house courses, including e-learning provision, are provided wherever possible and appropriate, with due regard to preferred learning styles.
- 2.6 The importance of evaluating the effectiveness of learning activities, both in the short and longer term, is recognised, and is carried out by managers using evaluation sheets, general management observation and through the personal review process. In addition, the Corporate Training Group evaluate the effectiveness of corporate training initiatives and provide feedback on training course contents and providers.
- 2.7 The resources invested in learning and development and the outcomes achieved are monitored, with continued investment planned as part of the continuous business planning process.
- 2.8 The Corporate Training Group monitor the implementation of this policy, and review Unit and Corporate Training Plans, and the overall effectiveness of training courses and activities.

3. TRAINING FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 Professional, technical and specialist training is provided where necessary to meet the Council's planned requirements and the related needs of individuals. Succession and workforce development planning is used to assist in the identification of current and future needs. Employees are encouraged to pursue continuous professional development and, where appropriate, to gain further professional/technical/specialist qualifications.
- 3.2 The Council supports the recruitment and training of trainees, in general administration and in technical and specialist areas, across the organisation where possible, for which purpose a programme of work experience and training is provided, and competencies have been developed.
- 3.3 All new staff participate in induction training to enable them to understand the Council's ethos in relation to customer service and management styles, to introduce them effectively to the organisation and its policies and procedures, and help them to identify with the Council as a good employer and provider of services to the public.
- 3.4 Specialist training is provided where necessary to ensure that staff are fully informed and can perform effectively in their posts now and in the future. This includes training, at the appropriate level, in safeguarding children, young persons and vulnerable adults, in equality and diversity, and in health and safety.
- 3.5 Management competencies have been developed to ensure that leadership, management and supervisory training needs are identified and met in the most appropriate way, thus ensuring a high calibre of skilled and competent managers. Management development and leadership programmes may be used where they are the most effective means of meeting identified needs. All managers are trained in carrying out review interviews before they embark on the process, so that they are adequately equipped to undertake the task, and to both identify training needs and evaluate the effectiveness of training provided.
- 3.6 Recruitment and selection training is provided to ensure all those staff involved in the recruitment process have the skills and knowledge necessary to recruit the most suitable candidates without discrimination.
- 3.7 An internal mentoring scheme, with training provided for staff who wish to volunteer to mentor others, is in existence, and the Council also participates in an external mentoring scheme. Coaching is also recognised as a valuable means of providing learning and development in appropriate circumstances.
- 3.8 The most appropriate means of providing learning and development is kept under regular review, having regard to individual needs and preferences, and the organisation's aims and objectives.

4. REVIEW

- 4.1 This policy will be reviewed regularly by the Head of Personnel in liaison with the Corporate Training Group. The trade union will form part of the consultation and review process.

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8

Board/Committee:	Personnel Sub-Board
Date of Meeting:	27 January 2010
Title:	Recruitment and Succession
Author:	Chief Executive
Status:	For noting

Purpose

To advise the Sub-Board of the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendation

That the Sub-Board note the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that:

- A. The Borough Council's policies and practice are appropriate to the current circumstances although these should be revisited when the current review of the workforce development plan is complete.
- B. Overview and Scrutiny Committee was impressed with what it learned about the flexible and imaginative strategies currently being advocated and pursued. Bearing in mind the relatively large proportion of senior officers who are expected to retire in the next few years, and the frequent difficulty of recruiting direct replacements, such flexibility will be needed and is to be welcomed.
- C. The success of the trainee scheme was noted and fitted well with the strategies that will be needed particularly in the next few years.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on 23 July 2009, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided to establish a Working Group to identify Officer recruitment and succession issues for whole Committee scrutiny.
- 1.2 The Working Group met on 27 October 2009 and forwarded its recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration on 26 November 2009.
- 1.3 The recommendations are shown in Appendix A of this report.

2.0 Risk Assessment

2.1 Both recruitment and succession processes need to be undertaken fairly without discrimination, ensuring that the right people are in place with the appropriate skills and abilities to meet the Council's objectives. Policies and procedures are kept under review to ensure that developing needs and legislation are taken into account in recruiting, retaining and developing staff.

3.0 Financial Implications

Whilst there are currently no direct financial implications, in the longer term substantial savings may be achieved without the need for compulsory redundancies if appropriate opportunities are identified early and managed proactively.

4.0 Conclusions

That the Recruitment and Succession Working Group has met and forwarded its recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These are now presented to the Sub-Board for noting.

Financial Services comments:	Paragraph 3.1
Legal Services comments:	None
Service Improvement Plan implications:	
Corporate Plan:	
Risk Assessment:	Paragraph 2.1
Background papers:	
Appendices/Enclosures:	A. Minute extract from Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 November 2009 B. Briefing note to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 26 November 2009 C. Notes by the Head of Personnel D. Notes of the meeting of the Recruitment and Succession Working Group 27 October 2009
Report author/Lead Officer:	Ian Lycett

**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 NOVEMBER 2009**

(ii) REPORT OF THE RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION WORKING
GROUP

Consideration was given to a briefing note of the Borough Solicitor which sought approval of the Working Group's recommendations to Personnel Sub-Board.

The Chairman advised that the Working Group found the Council's policies and practices to be sensible and appropriate but it was acknowledged that the Workforce Development Plan may result in some changes.

The Council was in a situation where it would be losing some Senior Officers due to retirement during a period of transition and financial constraint. It would be difficult to replace these Officers on a one to one basis and there would be a need for flexibility and an element of training up of other staff. It was also acknowledged that the trainee scheme had been successful.

With regard to the sharing of senior posts with neighbouring authorities, Members were advised that currently Gosport Borough Council had partnership arrangements with:

- Fareham Borough Council (Building Control)
- Eastleigh Borough Council (Internal Audit)
- Havant Borough Council and Portsmouth City Council (Coastal Defence)

Other Councils were looking at the benefits of sharing services. There was an arrangement in existence in Hampshire for sharing legal services and Havant and East Hampshire District Councils currently shared a Chief Executive. There were examples where this arrangement had worked well and also examples where it had not worked well. Such opportunities would be considered as and when they arose.

The Chairman advised that the type of work being undertaken by graduates at the moment was changing and that there was considerable talent available. There was a great deal of potential in trainee schemes. Officers advised that there were currently different types of trainee in Gosport Borough Council.

APPENDIX A

- Office Trainee – 16/17 years old on a fixed term two year contract. It was noted that some trainees had progressed and it was possible to make a career path for them.
- Trainee Local Government Solicitors - two trainees within the Council had now qualified.
- Democratic Services - there had been problems recruiting experienced Democratic Services Officers and advertisements had been successfully placed for trainees. This was felt to be an advantage in that younger people were being recruited by the Council and they had been found to be adept with new technology.

RESOLVED: That the following recommendations be made to Personnel Sub-Board:-

- A. The Borough Council's policies and practice are appropriate to the current circumstances although these should be revisited when the current review of the workforce development plan is complete;
- B. Overview and Scrutiny Committee was impressed with what it learned about the flexible and imaginative strategies currently being advocated and pursued. Bearing in mind the relatively large proportion of senior officers who are expected to retire in the next few years, and the frequent difficulty of recruiting direct replacements, such flexibility will be needed and is to be welcomed; and
- C. The success of the trainee scheme was noted and fitted well with the strategies that will be needed particularly in the next few years.

GOSPORT BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

26 NOVEMBER 2009

ITEM FOR DISCUSSION

**TITLE: REPORT OF THE RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION
WORKING GROUP**

AUTHOR: BOROUGH SOLICITOR

BACKGROUND:

The Working Group held one meeting on 27 October 2009 when it received a report from the Head of Personnel.

REPORT:

Report of the Recruitment and Succession Working Group

Following discussion of the report and questioning of the Chief Executive and Head of Personnel, the following points were agreed:

1. The Borough Council's policies and practice are appropriate to the current circumstances although these should be revisited when the current review of the workforce development plan is complete.
2. The Working Group was impressed with what it learned about the flexible and imaginative strategies currently being advocated and pursued. Bearing in mind the relatively large proportion of senior officers who are expected to retire in the next few years, and the frequent difficulty of recruiting direct replacements, such flexibility will be needed and is to be welcomed.
3. The success of the trainee scheme was noted and fitted well with the strategies that will be needed.

CONCLUSIONS:

The Working Group recommends that Overview and Scrutiny Committee make the following recommendations to Personnel Sub-Board:-

- A. The Borough Council's policies and practice are appropriate to the current circumstances although these should be revisited when the current review of the workforce development plan is complete.
- B. Overview and Scrutiny Committee was impressed with what it learned about the flexible and imaginative strategies currently being advocated and pursued. Bearing in mind the relatively large proportion of senior officers who are expected to retire in the next few years, and the frequent difficulty of recruiting direct replacements, such flexibility will be needed and is to be welcomed.
- C. The success of the trainee scheme was noted and fitted well with the strategies that will be needed particularly in the next few years.

RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION

1. Recruitment

The recruitment process within Gosport Borough Council is conducted in accordance with best practice and equality guidelines. The process is kept under review so that changes are made where this is needed. A recruitment and selection code of practice lays down the procedure used, and all officers involved in interviews are provided with relevant training.

The process consists of job analysis, preparation of job description and person specification, seeking permission to fill the post, preparation of advertisement, advertising, shortlisting, interviewing (and testing where appropriate) and appointment.

The first part of any recruitment process is **Job Analysis** – that is, when a vacancy arises (or a new post is envisaged), analysing what is required to be done, how it should be done, how many hours of work are needed, whether the duties (or some of them) could be carried out by other staff, what knowledge/experience/qualities are needed for the duties/responsibilities, and which of those are essential and which desirable. When that process has been completed, a job description and person specification are drawn up, and for **job evaluation** purposes (if the post is a new one, or there has been a significant change in a former post) a full Job Description Questionnaire to enable the post to be evaluated and the correct grade applied.

Permission to fill the post is then sought – this is done initially through Organisation Sub-Group (which comprises the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, one Service Unit Manager, the Head of Personnel and Branch Secretary, UNISON), then Council Management Team, and with reference being made to the appropriate Chairperson.

If permission is given, the documentation with an **advertisement** is forwarded to the Personnel Section, who review the documents and arrange for advertising. All posts are now advertised on a Recruitment Portal – www.hampshirejobs.org.uk – which is shared between 12 authorities in the area. We also use the Job Centre, and advertise every post internally on notice boards around the Town Hall and at the Council's remote working locations. Professional journals and/or the News are used where appropriate.

Application forms are collected by the Personnel Section and are in two parts – the front page containing personal information is detached from the forms before they are provided to the employing department for **shortlisting**. The employing department carry out a shortlisting process using the person specification and they are then provided with the personal information for those to be interviewed, so that they can make the necessary arrangements.

Interviews are usually conducted by a panel of officers, with a personnel representative where there are internal candidates involved, or by invitation by the department. The selection process varies depending on the post, and can comprise tests, presentation, psychometric instruments, as well as an interview. Interviews are structured, with questions which relate to the person specification, and assessment sheets also based on that document.

Before an appointment is made, employment checks are carried out, i.e. references, medical questionnaire, Criminal Records Bureau (where appropriate, and shortly to

change with the introduction of the new Independent Safeguarding Authority), and eligibility to work in U.K.

2. Succession

Succession planning involves planning ahead, identifying what is needed for the future, and ensuring the right people are in the right places doing what is needed. It involves recognising the potential of staff and developing that potential, considering key posts and how they would be covered, and identifying the skills most valued for key roles.

This is done within the Council by identifying strategic and corporate priorities and objectives, considering what skills, abilities and experience will be needed to meet them, reviewing what is available currently and what gaps there are, and filling those gaps. The personal review process (involving a one to one interview twice a year) is the major formal system through which the review and discussion is facilitated.

Gaps are filled through a variety of learning and development activities, e.g. professional and technical training, work shadowing, temporary secondments, introduction to new duties, one to one discussions, mentoring, group work.

The process is a constant one because of changing needs and staff turnover. (The average U.K. resignation rate is 13.5%, compared with 6.7% in the Council, although our overall turnover is 13.6%.)

We do not use exclusive internal advertising other than in exceptional circumstances (e.g. redundancy, ill-health) since this contravenes equality codes of practice as it maintains the status quo in terms of ethnicity of the workforce without providing the opportunity for others to be considered. We use learning and development to equip staff with the necessary skills and abilities, and they then have the opportunity to apply for posts at a higher level, and compete with external candidates in that process.

It is also the case that duties and responsibilities change over time, and often there are significant increases. The job evaluation process enables re-evaluation of posts to be undertaken, so that we can ensure that the correct grade applies taking into account those changes. This does enable staff to progress naturally, where their level of duty and responsibility has significantly increased, for example where a post has fallen vacant and not been replaced, or been replaced in part with some duties having been added to another post.

3. Workforce Planning and Strategy

The Council has a workforce development plan, which is reviewed every three years, and is being reviewed currently. It identifies strategic priorities, major factors and influences, the current workforce and the actions needed for the future, and is accompanied by an action plan which is regularly updated.

We also have a People Management Strategy, which again is currently under review, which identifies workforce statistics, and sets out the way staff are managed including recruitment and selection, learning and development, and equality and diversity.

RECRUITMENT AND SUCCESSION WORKING GROUP
NOTES OF MEETING HELD 27 OCTOBER 2009

Councillors Mrs Forder (P) Forder (P) and West.

Officers in attendance: Ian Lycett, Kathy Inch and Lisa Reade.

1.0 PRELIMINARY ITEMS

- 1.1 On 23 July 2009 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolved the following:
- a) a Working Group be established to identify Officer recruitment and succession issues for whole Committee scrutiny; and
 - b) Councillors Ms Ballard, Forder and Ms West be nominated to sit on the Working Group.
- 1.2 Subsequently Councillor Ms Ballard was replaced on the working group by Councillor Mrs Forder as she was no longer a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.3 Members of the working group had received a briefing note detailing the recruitment process within Gosport Borough Council.

2.0 NOTES OF THE MEETING

- 2.1 Clarification was sought as to the composition of the Council Management Team (CMT); Ian Lycett advised that it comprised Chief Officers and met most Tuesdays. In addition, meetings of the CMT would occasionally be held on Thursdays to discuss policy issues.
- 2.2 Councillors were only involved in the process of appointing Chief Officers; national regulations dictated that they were not permitted to be involved in the recruitment process of less senior positions.
- 2.3 When it is necessary to appoint a Chief Officer an Appointments Panel consisting of up to 6 cross-party members of the Personnel Sub-Board meet to agree the job description, method of advertising the position, the shortlist of applicants. The panel undertakes the interviews.
- 2.4 The Chief Executive and the Head of Personnel are present throughout the process and can offer guidance if required. The Chairman of the Appointments panel decides whether they are permitted to vote on any decisions made.
- 2.5 The interview process for a Chief Officer position can take place over two days to ensure that the applicants receive the opportunity to meet

the Chief Executive, tour the Borough and meet the Appointments Panel.

- 2.6 Councillor Forder acknowledged that there were often difficulties in attracting candidates to positions in Gosport and that the town was not always seen as an attractive option. It was queried as to whether the Council could consider a fast-track system to make positions more attractive to younger people.
- 2.7 Kathy Inch advised of the strict legislation in employment law that meant that positions could not be specifically advertised to attract younger people.
- 2.8 She advised that the front page of the application form that included the applicant's personal details was removed to ensure that those responsible for examining applications and short listing candidates were unaware of this personal content when making their decisions.
- 2.9 Kathy Inch advised that the job specification document needed to contain the criteria for the position, as it would be the applicant's ability to meet the set criteria that would determine the candidate's suitability and create the shortlist of applicants for the position.
- 2.10 It was crucial that the recruitment process was undertaken correctly and that copies of the application form and any notes made at interviews were retained.
- 2.11 It was these records that would be re-examined and used as evidence in the event that there was an appeal against a decision made.
- 2.12 The Council were currently exploring and introducing a number of schemes that involved appointing trainees to positions within the organisation.
- 2.13 There were a number of areas where the Council had particular difficulty in recruiting quality candidates. One of these areas was environmental health.
- 2.14 As a result the Council had entered into a partnership with neighbouring local authorities that recruited trainees who were then rotated across the partnership. The rotation provided comprehensive training and a variety of experience to allow the trainee to develop.
- 2.15 Additionally the Council had recruited a number of Trainee Benefit Assessors as it was proving difficult to attract candidates with the required level of experience for Benefit Assessors posts.
- 2.16 Trainee positions had also been created in other sections and included both office and professional trainees.

- 2.17 Kathy Inch advised that a Workforce Development Plan was in place which considered employment issues within the Council. It examined the current position of the Council with regard to employment and whether any provisions needed to be made for future employment needs.
- 2.18 The scheme to appoint trainees was included in the Workforce Development Plan.
- 2.19 The Workforce Development Plan was reviewed to ensure that it remained relevant to the staffing needs of the Council. A 3 year action plan was created based on the information gathered.
- 2.20 The Workforce Development Plan currently acknowledged that four members of the Council Management Team had indicated that they may shortly be retiring.
- 2.21 The resignation rate within the Council was relatively low and a number of staff were now choosing to take flexible retirement. This allowed the Council to bring in new members off staff and for them to benefit from the experience of those existing members of staff.
- 2.22 Councillor Forder acknowledged that the Council needed to be flexible in its attitude to officer recruitment and succession and recognised the important role of the trainee scheme within the Council's approach.
- 2.23 Kathy Inch agreed to forward copies of the Workforce Development Plan to Councillors Forder and Mrs Forder.
- 2.24 Councillor Forder agreed to draft a report to present to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting ended at 6.51 p.m.