

PERFORMANCE PORTFOLIO DECISION RECORD

16 November 2007

The meeting commenced at 3pm in the Avondale Centre, Dyke House,
Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor Pamela Hargreaves (Performance Portfolio Holder)

Officers: Andrew Atkin, Assistant Chief Executive
Joanne Machers, Chief Personnel Services Officer
Paul Hamilton, Insurance Officer / Risk Manager
Jo Wilson, Democratic Services Officer

27. Corporate Employee Development and Performance Appraisal Policy and Appraisal Scheme (*Chief Personnel Officer*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To seek Portfolio Holder endorsement to amend the Council's corporate employee development and performance appraisal policy and appraisal scheme.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The current corporate employee development and performance appraisal policy and appraisal scheme have been in place since October 2003. The Workforce and Development Strategy 2007-2012 set out an objective to revise and update the scheme on a competency basis. A copy of the proposed scheme was attached to the report as an appendix.

If approved the revised scheme would be introduced from February 2008. A training programme for managers had been developed and briefings for employees were planned for the new year. The Hartlepool Joint Trade Union Committee has endorsed the proposals and a diversity impact assessment had been completed. Any financial costs would be funded through the existing corporate training budget.

The Portfolio Holder raised the following queries:

What was the difference between the existing scheme and the proposed scheme? The Chief Personnel Services Officer advised that the primary difference was the inclusion of a ratings scheme which would act as a focus for the discussion

Was this in line with other local authority practices? The Chief Personnel Services Officer indicated that it was.

Were the Trade Unions happy? The scheme had been piloted in the Neighbourhood Services department where there was a broad mix of manual and office based workers. The Trade Union, management and employees had all contributed to the development of the scheme and it was felt to be suitable for everyone.

Would employees be trained in the new scheme? Would there be monitoring procedures in place? The Chief Personnel Services Officer confirmed this, saying employees would be able to alert management if they had not had an appraisal and also if they felt their appraisal had been of little value.

The Portfolio Holder indicated that she was happy to endorse the new scheme.

Decision

That the proposed corporate employee development and performance appraisal policy and appraisal scheme be endorsed.

28. Corporate Complaints – July to September 2007 (Assistant Chief Executive)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To report to the Portfolio Holder on corporate complaints performance for the second quarter of 2007/8.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report covered performance information on numbers of complaints, timescales for investigation and outcomes of investigations for formal complaints dealt with in the second quarter of 2007/08.

The Portfolio Holder noted that while fewer complaints had been recorded than in the previous quarter, more had been upheld. The Assistant Chief

Executive advised that these figures tended to vary a lot depending on the nature of the complaints and there was usually no pattern to them. Certain departments would get more complaints because they had more contact with the public than others. Complaints were monitored and any clear patterns acted upon.

Decision

That the corporate complaints performance for the second quarter of 2007/8 be noted.

29. Employee Attendance 2007/8 – 2nd Quarter (*Chief Personnel Officer*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To update the Portfolio Holder on performance up to the second quarter of 2007/8 and actions taken in relation to employee sickness absence.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report provided details of employee absence for the second quarter of 2007/8 and actions taken across the Council.

The Portfolio Holder felt the implementation of Single Status might have an impact on employee attendance and asked if employees were being kept fully informed. The Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Personnel Services Officer indicated that updates were provided through Corporate Management Team meetings and Newline which was included as an addition to employee payslips.

Decision

That performance up to the second quarter of 2007/8 and actions taken in relation to employee sickness absence be noted.

30. Half Yearly Diversity Report (*Chief Personnel Officer*)

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To report progress made in respect of planned actions for achieving Level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government (BVPI 2a) by March 2008 and other achievements in the first six months of 2007/8

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

On 21st May 2007 the Portfolio Holder endorsed the 2006/7 Annual Race and Diversity Report. It was also reported that the Council had achieved Level 2 of the Equality Standard for Local Government and had set itself a target of achieving Level 3 by 31st March 2008. Details were given of the Council's progress in respect of the actions planned to achieve Level 3 along with departmental achievements and planned diversity actions in the next six months.

The Chief Personnel Services Officer drew attention to the expectations that 28 of the targets would not be achieved. However she qualified this by explaining that these targets had been set when officers had little experience of what was involved and they were now recognised as being particularly ambitious. The Portfolio Holder requested that the 6-monthly report in 2008 include more detailed information as to which targets had been met in order that she be aware of any urgent issues ahead of the final report.

Decision

That progress made in respect of planned actions for achieving level 3 of the Equality Standard for Local Government by March 2008 and other achievements in the first 6 months of 2007/8 be noted.

31. Review of Strategic Risk Register *(Assistant Chief Executive)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the current position with regard to the Council's Strategic Risk Register

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The Risk Management Strategy identifies specific accountabilities and responsibilities for the management of risk at Hartlepool Borough Council. The Corporate Risk Management Group considered the Strategic Risk Register in September 2007 and it was subsequently agreed by Corporate Management Team in October 2007.

The Council undertook the initial review of its strategic risks with risk adviser Gallagher Bassett. The outcome was reported to Cabinet in June 2006 and regular reviews were being conducted. Following the most recent review 41 strategic risks were identified across the authority. Of these 8 risks had been identified as 'red/red' risks as their impact has not been sufficiently mitigated

by the control measures in place to date. Detailed information was given on these along with 6 new risks which had been added to the Register and other amendments.

The Portfolio Holder commented that it would be good to have a process which would monitor diversity in a similar way to the Risk Register. The Chief Personnel Services Officer indicated that consideration was being given to the inclusion of diversity targets on performance management.

Decision

That the review and amendments to the Council's Strategic Risk Register and the actions being taken be noted.

32. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information)(Variation) Order 2006

Minute 33 – (Para 4) – This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, namely, information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority

33. Amendment to Recruitment and Retention Increment Scheme *(Chief Personnel Officer)*

Type of decision

Non-key

Purpose of report

To request the approval of a change to the agreed process for the application of an Increment Scheme initially approved by the Social and Health Care Portfolio Holder on 15th March 2004.

Issue(s) considered by the Portfolio Holder

The report set out the background to the case and recommended a resolution.

Decision

That the amendment to the original report be approved.

J A BROWN

CHIEF SOLICITOR

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