

## Staffing and Appeals Committee: Minutes

Date: 25th February 2021

Time: 2.00 p.m. to 3.06 p.m.

Present: Councillors Ambrose-Smith, Ashwood, Harrison, Hudson, Hunt, Jones, McGuire, and Schumann (Chairman)

### 94. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

There were no apologies for absence or declarations of interest received.

### 95. Minutes – 4th February 2021

The minutes of the meeting held on 4th February 2021 were confirmed as a correct record and would be signed by the Chairman when the Council returned to its offices.

### 96. Senior Manager Pay Data and Pay Policy Statement 2021-2022

The Committee received a report reviewing the data due to be published on senior employee remuneration to ensure compliance with The Local Government Transparency Code 2015, and Chapter 8 of the Localism Act 2011.

Attention was drawn to the four posts that exceeded the £150,000 salary range. It was noted that these posts were only partly funded by Cambridgeshire County Council; three of them were shared with Peterborough City Council and one post was hosted on the behalf of the Greater Cambridge Partnership. Attention was also drawn to the increased number of posts within Tier 1-3, which was partially caused by the repatriation of some LGSS posts and posts reporting into vacant Heads of Service roles.

An additional increase was highlighted in relation to the number of officers with total earnings exceeding £50,000. It was noted that a number of these posts were shared with Peterborough City Council. It was acknowledged that the Council would expect to see a year on year increase due to the cost of living, however it was identified that the number of post eligible to claim overtime had been extended during the Covid- 19 pandemic.

Attention was drawn to the median and mean salary of the organisation which had seen a decrease compared to last year's data. In relation to mean salary, this was due to the increase of Grade 3 and Grade 6 posts within the organisation, which were below the median value. In conclusion, Members were informed that the Council's current salary ratio was 1 to 6.

In discussing the report individual Members raised the following:

- queried the funding arrangement for the Chief Executive of GCP. It was noted that the County Council was the host authority for the GCP therefore the post was included on the Council's payroll. The funding arrangement would be circulated to the Committee, highlighting whether the role was funded completely by Government and whether if any contributions were made by the County Council. **Action Required.**
- queried how the shared roles were funded between Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council given the different sizes of each authority. The Chairman suggested that the principle agreement document with Peterborough City Council should be shared with the Committee. **Action Required.** It was noted that the leadership posts were funded on a 50-50 arrangement, however the rest of the shared positions would depend on the nature and demands of the role. It was noted that the salary as well as the exact funding percentage would be determined by the Shared Service Governance Board, which fully considered each post on its own merit.

It was resolved unanimously to:

approve the Chief Officer Pay Policy Statement 2021/2022 (Appendix 2) for consideration by full Council on 16th March 2021.

## 97. Cambridgeshire County Council People Strategy

The Committee received a report detailing an overview of the progress in implementing Cambridgeshire County Council People Strategy, and a summary of the additional people related work carried out as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Attention was drawn to the fact that some of the planned works had been put on hold due to Covid pressures, however the pandemic had also provided some opportunities. It was noted that there had been a positive effect on other aspects of work, such as the changed way of communication and enhanced staff engagement.

Members received a detailed update on the five strategy themes relating to Resourcing, Employee Engagement, Wellbeing, Skills Development and Behaviours, and Reward and Recognition set out in the People Strategy.

Attention was drawn to the newly formed Working Ambition Board which was established to provide a platform for HR, Property, and IT departments to discuss the learning outcomes of the Covid- 19 pandemic.

One Member queried the funding and placement arrangement within the Kickstart Scheme as well as publicity. Members were advised that the scheme was part of the Chancellor's Coronavirus Recovery Plan and its aim was to provide employment for 18-year olds in receipt of Universal Credit. The scheme provided the employer with 25 hours of funding a week as well as a contribution towards the oncosts that would involve an employment. It was designed to find employment for young people who would normally struggle to find employment particularly during the pandemic.

There was a previous requirement that the employer must accommodate 30 placements, but with an option for organisations to partner up to do so. Cambridgeshire County Council and Peterborough City Council had joined together to create a Gateway Organisation, with Cambridgeshire County Council functioning as the Gateway Provider or host. The Gateway provider would then arrange the placements throughout the Gateway Organisation and would receive the funding after the placements were started. There had been a good response from partners looking to place young people. The County Council received funding once the placements were arranged to facilitate the arrangements, but the young people were then employed by the partner organisations.

There were four placements within Cambridgeshire County Council for a period of 12 months and more placements were to be expected in the near future. The Committee was advised that the County Council had worked together with the Job Centres to actively encourage care leavers and young individuals to apply to the scheme.

The Chairman highlighted the importance of communicating the success of this scheme to the press to promote this positive programme. It was noted that some communication had taken place, but it was planned to use the four confirmed placements as case studies to bring further external attention to the scheme. Another Member highlighted the need to involve District and City Council partners in the scheme.

Attention was drawn to the redeployment of staff during the pandemic. It was acknowledged that staff had been moved swiftly and there was flexibility. However, one Member highlighted the need for a people agile organisation to consider the learning outcomes from this experience in order to avoid staff resistance and resentment. It was agreed that a more in-depth report would be presented to Committee in July which would cover the impact of Covid-19 across the authority and its learning outcomes. Action Required. The Assistant Director HR Services reported that before staff had been redeployed, they had been asked to complete a questionnaire in order to identify skills first.

Members discussed the success of the Council's Apprenticeship Scheme. It was noted that the recently appointed Section 151 Officer had been a Graduate Trainee. The Council's Graduate Trainee Scheme had proved to be very successful with a high retention rate.

Attention was drawn to the data on page 32 of the agenda relating to LGBTQ+ data.

One Member queried whether it was expected that such a high percentage of staff would not wish to disclose their sexual orientation. The Assistant Director HR Services acknowledged that it was a challenge.

Officers were working closely with the Equality and Diversity Action Group to try and improve response rates. Before the completion of the Ethnicity Pay Gap report all staff members were prompted to update their personal details on the ERP Gold System which once completed could provide an accurate picture of the composition of workforce, such as ethnicity. There had been 81% response rate which was similar compared to other organisations. It was noted that it took time to build the trust which would encourage people to share personal information and it was confirmed that there were plans in place to achieve this. It was acknowledged that this information was personal, and it would be expected that some people would not be comfortable to share

these details. One member expressed the view that no person should feel pressured to share this information if they did not feel comfortable to do so.

It was resolved unanimously to:

note the information contained in the report.

## 98. Pay Gap Reporting

The Committee received a report reviewing the data due to be published on the Gender Pay Gap to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Members were reminded that data used for the calculations was as at 31 March 2020. Although publishing the Gender Pay Gap report was a statutory requirement, the Council went further by producing an action plan on how to reduce the pay gap. Attention was drawn to Section 2 of the report which showed a one percent decrease in the mean gender pay gap to 7%. The median gender pay gap was currently at 9% which remained unchanged when compared to last year's data. Members were advised that the reporting of the Ethnicity Pay Gap was not a statutory requirement, however the Council reported on it voluntarily. The mean Ethnicity Pay Gap was noted at 2.5% and the Medium was noted at -2.9% value. It was also added that the main focus would be to increase the available data to work with in order to give a more accurate picture for future reports.

In discussing the report Members asked officers to provide the data in a year on year format which would allow the Committee to measure the progress more comprehensively. **Action required**

One Member reminded the Committee that she had raised previously the need for a report detailing the impact on promotion, development and career opportunities for women returning from maternity, or a career break for caring responsibilities. It was noted that work had started on the report but had been put on hold due to Covid-19 pressures, it was noted that this work would be given priority over the next year. **Action required.**

It was resolved unanimously to:

approve the Pay Gap Report 2021 (Appendix 1) for consideration by full Council on 16th March 2021.

Chairman