

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

7th July 2008 at 7.16 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors Stewart (Chair), Ashraf, Chapman, R. Davies, Pedersen, Saleem and Simmons.

35 MINUTES (REF: 2.1 and 2.2)

Resolved: (i) That the Minutes of the meetings held on the 7th March and 22nd May 2007 be approved as correct records and the Chair be authorised to sign them.

36 APPROVAL OF NEW POSTS (REF: 8)

The Director of Children and Learning sought agreement on the creation of ten new grant and teaching Primary Care Trust (tPCT) funded posts within Children and Learning Department.

The following posts within the Children & Learning Department would be grant funded:

- Children's Workforce Integration Manager
- Play Strategy Manager
- Play Monitoring Officer
- Parent Support Commissioning Manager (x2)
- Parenting Support Delivery Manager Under 5s (PEIP)
- Parenting Support Delivery Manager Under 5s (On Track)
- Parenting Service Under 5s development Manager
- Parenting Service Under 5s development Manager (On Track)

The following post would be funded by the teaching Primary Care Trust:

- Performance Officer

Resolved: (i) That the Report (Ref: 8) be noted.

(ii) That the creation of the following nine new Grant Funded posts, within the Children & Learning Department be approved:

- Children's Workforce Integration Manager
- Play Strategy Manager
- Play Monitoring Officer
- Parent Support Commissioning Manager (x2)
- Parenting Support Delivery Manager Under 5s (PEIP)
- Parenting Support Delivery Manager Under 5s (On Track)
- Parenting Service Under 5s development Manager
- Parenting Service Under 5s development Manager (On Track)

(iii) That the teaching Primary Care Trust funded Performance Officer post be approved.

37 THE PENSION FUND & COSTS OF EARLY RETIREMENT (REF: 9)

The Exchequer Services Manager advised the Committee on the costs borne by the pension fund for the early release of employees since April 2007, on the grounds of early retirement due to redundancy, efficiency of service and ill health. She informed Members that since the start of the 2007/08 financial year, there had been six early retirements from the pension scheme on the grounds of ill health, which was the same as the previous year. However, there had been nine early retirements on the grounds of redundancy or efficiency of the service, which was a reduction of six from the previous year.

She went on to say that the total estimated cost of the pension fund was £424,322.40, which was a 15% increase on the previous year. This was made up of £275,377.79 due to the redundancy cases and £212,350.28 due to six ill health cases.

Resolved: That the Report (Ref: 9) be Noted.

38 INTRODUCTION OF NEW POSTS IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE: MENTAL CAPACITY ACT CO-ORDINATOR (REF: 11)

The Head of Adult Social Care reported in regard to the proposed introduction of the 'Mental Capacity Act Co-ordinator' post within Adult Social Care.

The Committee were informed certain parts of the Act came into force in 2007, and provided a statutory framework to empower and protect vulnerable people who might not have the capacity to make their own decisions. However, the second part of the Act regarding Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards would come into force from April 2009, and would place a major requirement on Local Authorities to administer the new system of safeguards.

He went on to say that the Mental Capacity Act Co-ordinator post would be jointly funded by Luton Borough Council in partnership with the Luton teaching Primary Care Trust (in both cases covered by specific Government Grants for that purpose for at least two years) and would co-ordinate and facilitate work with key agencies in order to promote the Act. Also, the post would help achieve key objectives identified in the Act implementation plan. The post would serve to provide advice, training and guidance to staff within the health and social care sector, to enable staff to apply the principles of the Act and make the required changes to policies, procedures and working practices.

A Member of the Committee raised concern that the tPCT could withdraw their funding mid way through the contract.

The Commissioning Manager replied that the tPCT had given their assurance that funding for the post would continue for the duration of the contract. He added that once the contract had ended, the post would in all probability be mainstreamed.

Resolved: (i) That the Report (Ref: 11) be noted.

(ii) That the Mental Capacity Act Co-ordinator post be included in the Human Resources Plan, with a view of making an appointment this financial year.

39 STANDBY ALLOWANCE (REF: 13)

The Head of Human Resources requested that the rate of the Standby Allowance be increased in line with the April 2007 pay award and to obtain approval to adjust the rates on an annual basis.

Resolved: (i) That the Report (Ref: 13) be noted.

(ii) That the Committee approve the increase of the current rates relating to Standby Allowance in line with the April 2007 pay award.

(iii) That the Head of Human Resources be authorised to adjust the rates relating to Standby Allowance on an annual basis from April 2008 in line with any future pay awards and to delegate power to him to this effect.

(iv) That the Head of Legal Services be instructed to amend Part 7 of the Constitution (Scheme of Delegation to Officers (Non Executive Functions)) accordingly.

40 REVISED UNFAIR DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT & BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURE (REF: 14)

The Head of Human Resources sought approval of the revised Policy and Procedure on Unfair Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying. The Committee were informed of a number of changes to the policy listed in the report including the re-launch of the Support Worker Scheme and Mentoring Scheme. He added that the revised policy had the support of the recognised trade unions, Challenge Champions, CLMT and Scrutiny Committees.

Resolved: (i) That the Report (Ref: 14) be noted.

(ii) That the revised Unfair Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy and Procedure be approved.

(iii) That the Administration Committee supports the re-launch of the Support Worker and Mentoring Schemes.

41 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, PART VA (REF: 10)

Resolved: That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting as it is likely that if members of the public were present during consideration of the items remaining there would be disclosure to them of exempt information falling within Paragraph 2 Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended.

42 HONORARIUM (REF: 16)

The Head of Human Resources submitted a report in regards to the awarding of honorariums to the Head of Resources and Performance Review and the Head of Local Democracy.

Resolved: (i) That the an honorarium to the sum of £4,709 for the Head of Resources and Performance Review in recognition of the role he undertook in leading on the Corporate Assessment of the Council be approved.

(ii) That the an honorarium to the sum of £2,741 for the Head of Local Democracy in recognition of the role he undertook in leading on Luton's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership be approved.

43 ESTATE SERVICE REVIEW (REF: 17)

The Head of Housing Landlord Services reported on the proposals and recommendations for the future staffing arrangements within Housing Landlord Services relating to the Estate Service Review proposals approved by the Executive on 2nd June 2008.

The Committee were informed that the current Block Management structure of 12 staff operated across the high-rise blocks and a number of low rise blocks. The proposal would see a reduction in posts in the Block Management Service to 7 in the Estate Service Officer Service, 1 other officer would be redeployed into the Tenancy Enforcement Team. This had been surmised through analysis of the blocks that would be visited, the frequency of visit that was required and an estimated length of time for a block visit.

A Member of the Committee enquired how the proposed changes would affect residential Block Managers in tower blocks.

The Head of Housing Landlord Services replied that not all Block Managers were residents of the tower block that they served. Those that were, would be offered a secured tenancy and pay retention if redeployed.

Resolved: (i) That the Report (Ref: 17) be noted.

(ii) That the Staffing proposals as outlined as proposed in the Report be approved in order to allow the implementation of the Estate Service Review proposals and deliver the service improvements as identified in the Report.

44 STAFF RELOCATION (REF: 18)

The Head of Adult Social Care submitted a report in regards to the deletion of a cleaning post due to the relocation of office-based staff. She informed the Committee that the relocation of 7 School Lane was unavoidable due to the site being no longer suitable for care services. Also, the property had been sold for development to fund the re-provision of the services formerly provided at 'The Oaks'. She added that originally, it had been proposed that all staff would be office based and that it would be possible that the cleaner could be relocated with one of the teams, which they supported.

The Head of Adult Social Care went on to say that once the combination of existing Council offices and mobile working had been agreed, it became apparent that the cleaner post could not be relocated as the identified premises already had cleaning contracts with external providers. She added that Human Resources and Management would make every attempt to redeploy the post holder concerned.

Resolved: (i) That the Report (Ref: 18) be noted.

(ii) That the post of Cleaner at 7 School Lane be deleted from the Human Resource Plan of the Supported Living Service.

(Note: (i) That Agenda Items 10 & 12 were withdrawn from the Agenda.

(ii) The meeting ended at 7.00 p.m.)