

ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE

14th January 2008 at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Stewart (Chair); Councillors Ashraf, Chapman, Pedersen, Simmons and Singh.

1 APOLOGY FOR ABSENCE (REF: 1)

An apology for absence from the meeting was received from Councillor R. Davies.

2 MINUTES (REF: 2.1)

Resolved: That the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 7th and 22nd November 2007 be taken as read, approved as correct records and signed by the Chair.

3 URGENT ITEM – TRANSITION OF CONNEXIONS TO THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF AN INTEGRATED YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICE (REF: 6.1)

The Committee received a report from the Director of Children and Learning (Head of Access), which sought approval to a proposed staffing structure for an integrated Youth Support Service.

The transfer of Connexions back to the Local Authority and changes in the organisational arrangements to provide a new integrated service had been considered by the Executive on 7th January 2008. As it was proposed to implement the changes from 1st April 2008 and the next meeting of this Committee was not until March 2008, the matter had been submitted for approval as a matter of urgency.

The Head of Access outlined the background to the matter and referred to the proposed staffing structure at appendix A. The proposals brought together Connexions with the youth service in a leaner structure and overall there would be 2 less management posts than previously. Those two posts could be at risk and every effort would be made to mitigate redundancy.

The proposals aimed to make a visible difference to young people in a structured and co-ordinated way.

Resolved: That the staffing structure for the Integrated Youth Service as set out at Appendix A to the Director of Children & Learning's report (Ref: 6.1) be approved.

(Note: The above item was considered by the Committee in pursuance of Sections 100B(4) and 100E(1) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chair having considered that the item should be dealt with as a matter of urgency in order to enable the proposals to be implemented with effect from 1st April 2008)

4 SCALE OF CHARGES (REF: 8)

The Head of Corporate Finance sought the approval of the Committee to the revised Scale of Charges applying to Administration Committee.

Only one non-statutory fee was proposed to be changed in relation to charges for a letter confirming an entry on the Register of Electors, which was being increased from £21.00 to £22.00. The remainder of the charges were set by statute and could not be altered by the Committee. They remained largely unchanged.

Resolved: That the proposed Scale of Charges to apply from 1st February 2008 as set out at Appendix A to the Head of Corporate Finance's report (Ref:8), be approved.

5 ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND REDEPLOYMENT POLICY (REF: 9)

The Head of Human Resources referred to his report on proposed changes to the Organisational Change and Redeployment Policies, and apologised for the late circulation of the papers, which had been the subject of much discussion between officers and trades unions.

The Committee was advised that presently there was one policy for managing redundancy and redeployment. The main change had been to separate the two policies into a redeployment policy and an organisational change policy, as organisational change was not the only process which could lead to redeployment. Employees had been concerned at being directed to a policy that linked redeployment to redundancy when there were other reasons for their redeployment.

The Organisational Change policy contained a number of changes to the former Redundancy Policy. A significant change was to state that compulsory redundancy would be a last resort as a result of organisational change and that the aim would be to find employment or redeployment opportunities within the Council so that skilled, loyal and motivated staff could be retained.

There was however a cost benefit analysis as part of the implementation plan, which would inform the reasonable timetable to achieve redeployment

before other options were considered. This could include redundancy if to retain an employee on a supernumerary basis was not cost effective.

The Head of Human Resources advised that the policy changes would need to be made known to all Managers. All Council employees would be issued with a hard copy of the policies which would need to be signed for as received and understood.

The Committee was advised that some additional legal comments had been received in relation to the 'Job Matching' section of the Organisational Change policy and the 'Redeployment to Posts of a Higher Grade' section of that Policy, as follows:

Organisational Change Policy – Page 19 of 32 – Job matching

The addition of the following words to the end of the first paragraph:

“The main terms and conditions should also be similar, unless the employee and management agreed a variation.”

The addition of the following words to the end of the first sentence of paragraph 2:

“to meet relevant professional standards.”

The amendment of the second sentence of paragraph 2 as follows:

“That timescale will be dependent upon the nature of the post and the qualification and skills training involved. ~~to meet the relevant professional standards and comply with~~ Redeployees must satisfy the same statutory checks as new employees must when first appointed to work for Luton Borough to the Council, in accordance with the Council’s recruitment policy and procedure. Where a Corporate Director has concerns regarding a redeployment those concerns will be reported to the redeployment panel via the Departmental HR representative.

The insertion of an additional sentence at the end of paragraph 3, as follows:

“An explanation will be given to the individual employee and the trade unions (where appropriate) about the outcome of the decision affecting them.

The deletion of the remainder of paragraph 3 as follows:

~~“In any case where a Corporate Director has concerns regarding a redeployment those concerns will be reported to the Chief Executive (head of Paid Service). The Chief Executive will make a final decision in any such case. Those cases will be exceptional and the Chief Executive will include details within the report to Administration Committee. Further an explanation will be given to the individual employee and the trade unions (when appropriate) about the outcome of that decision affecting them.”~~

The deletion of paragraph 4 as follows:

~~The main terms and conditions should also be similar, unless the employee and management agree a variation.~~

Organisational Change Policy – Page 24 of 19 – Redeployment to Posts of a Higher Grade - Paragraph 10.12

The deletion of paragraph 10.12 entirely as follows:

~~“10.2 Where a sickness absence or procedure has commenced, or where employees have been subject to a disciplinary sanction, such employees will not be permitted to apply for higher graded jobs”.~~

The Committee agreed the changes set out above.

The Head of Human Resources referred to the Consultation Implications of the report and drew the Committees attention to the position of the trades unions in that Unison did not agree with the section on TUPE as referred to in the Organisational Change Policy. Consultation with the trades unions was continuing to find a resolution to this issue and the Committee was advised to approve both policies with a view to an update on the outcome of those discussions being reported back to the next meeting of the Committee.

The Chair commented that she would wish to know the legal position on this matter for the next meeting.

Resolved: (i) That, subject to the following amendments, the Organisational Change Policy attached at Appendix A to the Head of Human Resources report (Ref: 9), be approved:

- (a) the amendment of the paragraph headed “Job Matching” in Appendix A (page 19 of 31), so it reads as follows:

“2. Job Matching

Where the new job includes 70% of the duties of the old job (based on an assessment of the substantive and new Job Descriptions) and is of the same grade, then this is a job match. A suitably qualified and experienced person/team will carry out the process for job matching.

For major reorganisation, the Council's redeployment panel will be reconvened and chaired by the Head of HR and representatives from each department. Affected employees who meet the critical criteria of the person specification will be matched to vacant posts. The main terms and conditions should also be similar, unless the employee and management agree to a variation.

All Corporate Directors have a duty to advise the Council about the delivery of services and to ensure that staff delivering services meet statutory and other professional standards. In that regard, departmental HR representatives on the redeployment panel are accountable to their Corporate Director and will ensure during the matching process that redeployees meet or can be trained, within a realistic time scale to meet relevant professional standards. That timescale will be dependent upon the nature of the post and the qualification and skills training involved. Redeployees must satisfy the same statutory checks as new employees to the Council, in accordance with the Council's recruitment policy and procedure. Where a Corporate Director has concerns regarding a redeployment those concerns will be reported to the redeployment panel via the departmental HR representative.

The decisions taken by the redeployment panel in recommending redeployment and training for affected employees will be recorded and available to Corporate Directors and the Administration Committee will receive a six monthly report to monitor the operation of this policy. An explanation will be given to the individual employee and the trade unions (where appropriate) about the outcome of the decision affecting them.”

(b) the deletion of paragraph 10.12 in its entirety shown in Appendix A within the Section “Redeployment to a Higher Graded Post”.

(ii) That the Head of Human Resources report back to the Committee on 5th March 2008 on the outcome of discussions with Unison on their objections to the section on TUPE within the Organisational Change policy.

(iii) That the Head of Legal Services be requested to provide legal advice on the matter referred to at (ii) above to the meeting on 5th March 2008.

(iv) That the revised Redeployment Policy attached at Appendix B to the Head of Human Resources report (Ref:9) be approved.

7 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.

8 STOCKWOOD DISCOVERY CENTRE – STAFFING PROPOSALS (REF: 11)

The Head of Leisure and Community reported on proposals for the restructuring of staffing arrangements at Luton Museum Service Stockwood site, to ensure the successful launch and operation of the new Discovery Centre.

Resolved: That the staffing proposals set out at paragraph 11 of the Head of Leisure and Community's report (Ref: 11) comprising 1 x Retail Manager, 1x Facilities Manager, 2x Deputy Facilities Managers and 5 x Visitor Service Assistants, be approved to meet the operating needs of the Stockwood Discovery Centre prior to its public opening in Summer 2008.

9 LIBRARY SECURITY TEAM REVIEW (REF: 12)

The Head of Leisure and Community submitted proposals for the restructuring of the Library Security Team, following a review to better meet the needs of the service.

A Member questioned the number of Evening Security Assistant posts shown in Options 1 to 3 appended to the report as these appeared to differ from the description within the body of the report.

The Libraries Manager clarified that this should read 1 post only in each case and not 2.

Resolved: That staffing option 3 set out at Appendix B to the Head of Leisure & Community's report (Ref:12) comprising 1x Building Support Officer (revised role) , 1 x Senior Supervisor Customer Assistance (revised role), 3 x Customer Assistants/Security and 1 x Evening Security Assistant, and the resultant changes to the structure referred to in the report to better meet the needs of the service within existing budgetary provision, be approved.

(Note: The meeting ended at 6.45 pm)