

STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 22 April 2024. Minute of Meeting of the STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Copland, Convener; Councillor David Cameron, the Lord Provost; Councillor Steve Delaney; the Depute Provost; and Councillors Boulton, Clark, Macdonald, MacGregor (as substitute for Councillor Al-Samarai), McLeod and Thomson.

Trade Union Advisers:- Zemeta Chefeke and Carole Thorpe (EIS); David Wallis and Kevin Masson (GMB); Mark Musk (UNISON); and Mishelle Gray (UNITE).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be viewed [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

1. There were no declarations of interest nor transparency statements made at this juncture.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 22 JANUARY 2024

2. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 22 January 2024 for approval.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

3. The Committee had before it the planner of committee business, as prepared by the Interim Chief Officer – Governance.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that at this time there was no report due on the business planner in relation to the 35 hour week, however officers would bring forward reports as required if there were to be any changes to terms and conditions; and
- (ii) to otherwise note the business planner.

WORKFORCE DEEP DIVE – APPROACH TO WORKFORCE CAPACITY AND HARD TO FILL ROLES - CORS/24/107

4. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director – Corporate Services which set out the approach being taken by the Council in relation to workforce

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planning, in the context of challenges in building workforce capacity. The report also provided information in respect of the current job roles which were classed as 'hard to fill', and which proved a challenge in terms of recruitment, setting out the actions being undertaken to mitigate these challenges.

Members asked several questions on the report, particularly in relation to what was being done for those with disabilities; and how the Council was measuring success with apprenticeships, including whether the Council provided training; how apprentices moved through the organisation; gender balance; and whether there were any barriers.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the actions contained in the report being taken to address workforce capacity challenges, including in respect of 'hard to fill' roles.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would include information in relation to measures of success with apprenticeships and some detail about what was available for all ages across the workforce, in the annual update on Developing the Young Workforce / Apprenticeship / Internship Update which was due to Committee at the next meeting;
- (ii) to note that officers would circulate information to Members on the disability working group (which formed part of the Equalities Working Groups headed up by People and Citizen Services) and the work being undertaken with third sector partner organisations in relation to opportunities for disabled people;
- (iii) to note that officers would take on board the request that information be included in future reports on the work being undertaken in respect of disabled people having apprenticeship opportunities; and
- (iv) to otherwise note the report.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY - CORS/24/102

5. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director – Corporate Services which sought approval to implement the refreshed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, which would replace the existing Diversity and Equality Policy.

During discussion of the report, reference was made to an email from Unison which had been sent to Members. Councillor Thomson advised for reasons of transparency that she was a member of the health branch of Unison but did not consider this amounted to a declaration which would require her to not participate in the item.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) approve the implementation of the refreshed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;

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- (b) instruct the Interim Chief Officer - People and Citizen Services to ensure that the Policy document and all supporting process and guidance documents were easily accessible to all staff and managers and that managers were supported in the fair and consistent application of the policy and process through appropriate training;
- (c) instruct the Interim Chief Officer - People and Citizen Services to publish the revised Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy on the Council's external website; and
- (d) instruct the Interim Chief Officer - People and Citizen Services to update the mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training for employees to reflect the newly updated policy and guidance.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would ensure that future iterations of the policy and accompanying guidance were clear in terms of demonstrating employee voice in the documents;
- (ii) to note that officers had undertaken to review the Supporting Procedures and Documentation at section 4 of the Policy to ensure that all relevant links were included and up to date;
- (iii) to approve the recommendations contained in the report; and
- (iv) to agree that a service update be issued to all Members on the Policy for information.

ZERO TOLERANCE UPDATE AND ACTION PLAN - CORS/24/111

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director – Corporate Services which provided an update on progress and activities in relation to the development of a Zero Tolerance approach of violent, aggressive and/or abusive behaviour towards staff.

Members and Trade Union advisers asked a number of questions on the report, including the use of the approach and posters in other Council establishments.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the content of the report and the progress made to date, including staff development and the overall action plan developed;
- (b) note the discrete activity being progressed by the Education Service in collaboration with Trade Unions to formulate an Action Plan to be presented at Education and Children's Services Committee in April 2024;
- (c) instruct the Interim Chief Officer – People and Citizen Services to combine the three closely linked policies, procedures and approaches relating to Zero Tolerance, Violence and Aggression, and Unacceptable Actions into a single policy; with the exception of pupil behaviour in schools as this was governed by national policy and guidance; and report back to Committee for approval of the final policy; and

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- (d) approve the described approach in forming a pledge to encompass the spirit of mutual respect.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would consider the feedback provided at the meeting in respect of the use of the word 'customer' on the posters and whether that might need to be altered depending on the Council establishment; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

**EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE SERVICE ANNUAL PROGRESS UPDATE
OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND ABSENCE ANNUAL UPDATE JANUARY 2023 –
DECEMBER 2023 - CORS/24/114**

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director – Corporate Services which provided an update on the utilisation of the Employee Assistance Service (EAS) provided by VIVUP during the last 12 month period January 2023 – December 2023; and a 12 monthly update on the Occupational Health and Absence period 1 January 2023 – 31 December 2023.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) consider the contents of the report; and
- (b) note the progress made in relation to the Attendance Improvement Project; the continuing drive to raise awareness of frontline staff support initiatives; and reintroduction of the Workplace Therapist Service.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the recommendations contained in the report.

**CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY – OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2023 -
CORS/24/110**

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director – Corporate Services which provided a summary of statistical health and safety performance information for the 3-month reporting period October to December 2023 to provide Members with the opportunity to monitor compliance with health and safety legislation.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the report and provide comment on the health, safety policy, performance, trends, and improvements.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

- **COUNCILLOR NEIL COPLAND, Convener**

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