

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Employment Committee
held at the Town Hall, Peterborough on 23 June 2010**

Members Present: Councillors Holdich, Seaton, Walsh, Swift and Sandford

Officers present: Mike Kealey, Acting Head of HR
Karen Craig, Senior HR Consultant – Job Evaluation
Alana Hair, Governance Officer

Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED: to appoint Councillor Holdich as Chairman to the Committee.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cereste (Chairman), Lamb (Vice Chair) and Fitzgerald.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest with respect to any of the items listed on the agenda, however, Councillor Seaton requested that it be kept on record as a 'standing declaration' that he was a member of the UNITE union and Councillor Sandford requested that it be kept on record as a 'standing declaration' that he was a member of the GMB union.

3. To Approve the Minutes of the Meetings held on:

- 3.1 18 March 2010
- 3.2 22 March 2010
- 3.3 29 March 2010
- 3.4 16 April 2010

The minutes of the meetings were approved as true and accurate records.

4. Vetting and Barring Scheme Policies

The Committee received a report from the Acting Head of Human Resources which was submitted to the Committee following a referral from the trade unions at the Joint Consultative Forum on 13th May 2010 and Corporate Management Team on 18th May 2010.

The report sought the agreement of the Committee to implement the four policies relating to vetting and barring as attached to the report.

In presenting the report, the Acting Head of Human Resources explained that the implementation of the vetting and barring scheme had been suspended by the coalition as the new government wanted to look at a simplification of the process. Three aspects of the scheme were currently out for consultation, being:

- a) the need for CRB rechecking;
- b) the definition of "controlled activity" with a view to withdrawing it from the scheme or reducing its scope; and
- c) the simplification of some safeguarding issues around education and schools

The Acting Head of Human Resources informed the Committee that despite the suspension of the scheme's implementation, with the adoption of the policies presented to the Committee, the Council would be prepared to act when the scheme becomes active in the future.

During consideration, questions were raised and responses were given as follows:

- Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) registration will provide complete, life-long cover and will move with you, as apposed to CRB checks that provide information at a moment in time. Even with the ISA registration, it is acknowledged that many schools may still wish to undertake their own CRB checks.
- The cost of ISA registration is expected to be £64 which will include a CRB check.
- The ISA database will be updated every 24 hours.
- A register of CRB renewals is maintained by the Council, however due to HR arrangements this does not include schools.
- Suppliers are required by contract to CRB check their staff, however this is not currently audited by the Council.
- The work done to date had highlighted the need to review processes including auditing and dealing with 'positive traces'.
- Managers currently received guidance to supplement the policies which enabled managers to identify whether their roles fall in to the categories of regulated or controlled activity.
- The policies presented today related only to staff; a separate set of documents would be prepared to cover Councillors. A blanket approach to Councillors was not going to be taken.
- ISA registration and CRB checks would complement each other as a CRB may pick up on other offences, for example a drink driving conviction, that ISA registration may not.
- ISA registration is likely to capture more Councillors in to the scheme.

The Acting Head of Human Resources informed the Committee that the policy documents had already been shared with the trade unions and the Corporate Management Team and that both supported the proposals.

A 'duty of disclosure' clause was now included in all new employee contracts.

RESOLVED:

That the four Vetting and Barring Scheme Policies be approved for implementation when required by government, subject to any substantial revisions following the current government consultation being resubmitted to the Employment Committee for approval.

5. Conclusion of Business – Formal Record of Time

Business was concluded at 3.21pm.

Chairman
3.00pm to 3.21pm