

PERSONNEL AND GENERAL PURPOSES SUB-COMMITTEE

17th July 2019

Present: Councillor Louis Stephen in the Chair

Councillors A. Amos, Barnes, Gregson (Vice-Chairman), Mrs L. Hodgson, Mitchell and J. Squires

Officers: David Blake, Managing Director
Mark Edwards, Head of People Services

1 Appointment of Substitutes

Councillor Alan Amos for Councillor Bayliss, Councillor Barnes for Councillor Berry.

2 Declarations of Interest

None.

3 Public Participation

None.

4 Minutes

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 27th February 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

5 Employee Benefits Platform

The Sub-Committee considered a proposal to purchase a web-based Employee Benefits Platform from Sodexo The Head of People Services explained the proposal and answered questions from Sub-Committee members.

In summary, Sodexo was recommended by Bromsgrove and Redditch Council, who had undertaken a comprehensive review of this market and opted for Sodexo via the ESPO Framework 319_19 agreement. Sodexo can offer a Free Employee Discounts Scheme, Childcare Scheme and Cycle to Work Scheme, as well as a free of charge and comprehensive Employee Assistance Programme with unlimited manager referrals and up to 6 sessions of Face-to-face Counselling per presenting issue for all employees.

A direct contract with Sodexo would require a two year contractual commitment of £7,086.60, with a one off set up fee of £450.00. This would be offset by a saving of at least £4,000, on transfer of our EAP and Counselling provision to Sodexo.

In the ensuing discussion, Sub-Committee members expressed support for the proposal. Reference was made to future add-ons, and the potential for the contract cost to rise as a consequence. Officers advised that the operation of the scheme will be monitored and reviewed if necessary.

It was noted that the changes had been supported by the Joint Consultative and Safety Committee.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee approves of the purchase of a Web-Based Employee Benefits Platform from SODEXO, including the transfer of certain existing benefits to SODEXO (namely our Employee Assistance Programme, Counselling, Cycle to Work Scheme and Child Care Voucher Scheme).

6 Employer Supported Volunteering Policy

The Sub-Committee considered a proposal to adopt a volunteering scheme for employees. The Head of People Services presented the report and explained the proposal. In summary, this would involve a simple request, approval and confirmation process that enables staff to take up to 2 days additional leave per financial year for volunteering activities.

It was noted that the changes had been supported by the Joint Consultative and Safety Committee.

Sub-Committee Members expressed support for the proposal, which would have benefits for both employees and the local community, and supported both the Council's People Strategy and City Plan themes.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee agrees to the introduction of an 'Employer Supported Volunteering (ESV) Policy.'

7 Review of Local Conditions

The Head of People Services reported that there had been some minor changes since the local conditions were last approved by the Sub-Committee in December 2018, including:

1. Amending the review period for paying 100% for Industrial Accidents from 2018 to at some point in the future.
2. Amending the call out rate which has not been updated since 2013 to link into the NJC National pay spine that can be updated annually.
3. Updating the revised spinal column point level on the new pay spine for those eligible for overtime.

The Sub-Committee noted that the changes had been supported by the Joint Consultative and Safety Committee.

With reference to paragraph 1.19, it was highlighted that time off for Service in Non-Regular Forces and for Trade Union Activities, etc. are separate issues. It was suggested that it may be possible to arrange a presentation for employees who might wish to consider joining the Reserve Forces.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee approve the proposed amendments to the Local Conditions.

8 Health and Attendance Performance - 2018/19

The Head of People Services presented a report for the year to 31 March 2019. In summary, over the last two years sickness performance had progressively improved from a low point of 12.63 days per full time equivalent employee (FTE) in 2016/17, to 11.4 days per FTE in 2017/18 and 9.9 days per FTE in 2018/19. This represents a 21% improvement over two years. The voluntary leavers rate in 2018/19 was 8.8%. This represents a 46% improvement over the last two years.

Data compiled for the West Midlands Councils in 2018/19 was now available and this showed that the Council performance was average for the region.

Officers responded to questions from Sub-Committee members on the report.

RESOLVED: That the Sub-Committee:

- 1. note the health and attendance performance for the year 2018/19 and actions being taken to reduce sickness absence; and**
- 2. note the voluntary leavers rate for the year 2018/19.**

9 Any Other Business

None.

Duration of the meeting: 7.00p.m. – 7.35p.m.

Chairman at the meeting on
25th September 2019