

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EMPLOYMENT AND APPEALS COMMITTEE
HELD AT HWB 1 - COUNTY HALL ON THURSDAY, 21 SEPTEMBER 2017**

PRESENT

County Councillor M Barnes (Chair)

County Councillors G Breeze, F H Jump, DW Meredith, N Morrison, G W Ratcliffe,
L Roberts and K S Silk

1.	APOLOGIES
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Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors DR Jones and A Williams who were on other Council business and from County Councillors A Jenner and K Roberts-Jones.

2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
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There were no declarations of interest reported.

3.	MINUTES
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The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the meetings held on 16th March and 18th May 2017 as correct records.

Matters Arising

It had been confirmed that not all Councillors were required to have DBS checks unless they had a specific role such as school governor. It was suggested that Business Services be asked to make a presentation on DBS checks to the next meeting of the Committee.

Psychometric tests had been carried out and feedback would be provided to those members who had undertaken them.

4.	SHORTLISTING SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES
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The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the Shortlisting Sub-Committee held on 30th June 2017 as a correct record.

5.	EXEMPT ITEMS
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RESOLVED to exclude the public for the following item of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under category 1 of The Local Authorities (Access to Information) (Variation) (Wales) Order 2007).

6. WORKFORCE DATA

The Joint Director Workforce and Organisation Development explained that workforce data was presented monthly to the Chief Executive's Management Team. She would arrange for it to be forwarded monthly to the members of the Employment and Appeals Committee. The committee asked for comparative data from previous years to be included so trends could be tracked.

The Committee was advised that recording of Individual Performance Reviews (IPRs) was now mandatory as Management Team sought to improve the current level of compliance from 62% to 85-90%.

The Committee was also advised that staff turnover was quite high at 13.29%. This was caused in part by the number of staff being transferred to arms-length companies but also was an indicator of an aging workforce. The number of FTE staff had reduced by 117 between the end of June and July 2017 with 59 of these TUPE leavers. The Committee noted that exit interviews were not routinely being carried out and wanted to see this being improved.

The Committee noted that the number of contractors and agency staff being employed was increasing and asked whether any were former Council staff. It was explained that this information was not available because these positions were procured rather than employed but further information would be sought from the Procurement section. A policy on agency staff was being drafted. It was confirmed that there was a prohibition on re-employing former employees for 12 months after they left the Council.

7. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS DATA

The Committee was advised that the number of working days lost to sickness in 2015/16 was 8.35 per employee. This compared to 8.5 in the public sector and 10.18 for Welsh local authorities as a whole. There was a reduction in long term sickness which may correlate to the reduction in the workforce. The Council had a number of mitigation measures in place including occupational health, counselling and managing stress workshops.

The Committee asked for further information on skeletal injuries and accidents which may result in claims against the Council. The Committee also asked about the Council's policy on flu jabs for staff who came into contact with members of the public at risk.

The Joint Director Workforce and Organisation Development confirmed that she had been asked to look into support for staff in Children's Services following the CSSIW inspection. She also agreed to look into the recent transfer of staff from Housing which some members felt may have contributed to stress amongst staff.

The Committee was advised that there were 33 employee relations cases – grievance, disciplinary etc – currently open. This was a reduction on previous years as service managers gained experience and expertise in handling cases informally. The Committee asked for comparative data from previous years and

for details of the time taken to resolve cases. Members also asked for clarification whether staff who were suspended could take sick leave.

Four whistleblowing cases had been investigated following promotion of the Council's whistleblowing policy.

8.	COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
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There was discussion on the role of the Committee which was governed by the Council's Constitution. It was agreed to put this on the agenda for the next meeting.

County Councillor M Barnes (Chair)