

Meeting	Staffing Matters & Urgency Committee
Date	18 March 2019
Present	Councillors Gillies (Chair), Aspden (Vice-Chair) and Looker

66. Declarations of Interest

At this point in the meeting, Members were asked to declare if they had any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or disclosable pecuniary interests that they might have had in the business on the agenda.

Cllr Aspden declared a personal interest in agenda item 7 (Appointment of Independent Assessor) and indicated that he would withdraw from the meeting for this item.

67. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved: That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of:

- Annexes A – C to agenda items 5 (Pension or Exit Discretion) and 6 (Redundancy) on the grounds that they contained information relating to individuals, information which was likely to reveal the identity of individuals and information relating to the financial or business affairs of particular persons (including the authority holding that information).
- Annex 1 to agenda item 7 (Appointment of Independent Assessor) on the grounds that it contained information relating to individuals and information which was likely to reveal the identity of individuals.

This information was classed as exempt under paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Schedule 12A to Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as revised by The Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

68. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee held on 26 February 2019 be approved and then signed by the Chair as a correct record.

69. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been one registration to speak at the meeting under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

Gwen Swinburn spoke on Agenda Item 7 (Appointment of Independent Assessor). She expressed her concerns over a previous standards case that she felt was mishandled and hoped that lessons would be learnt. She went on to state that the report highlighted almost no process information and did not include a timetable or draft terms of reference. There was also no indication as to whether this was an LGA matter, or would be allocated to a preferred consultant. Finally, she asked the Chair to recommend that a Chief Officer Investigation and Disciplinary Committee be established, so that Members other than the three Group Leaders could deal with situations such as this one.

70. Pension or Exit Discretion

Members considered a report which detailed expenditure associated with pension or exit discretions in accordance with Council policy.

Members considered the background and detail surrounding the proposals, which were contained in the business cases attached as confidential annexes to the report.

Resolved: That the expenditure associated with the proposed pension or exit discretions, as detailed in Annexes A, B and C of the report, be considered and approved.

Reason: In order to provide an overview of expenditure and to consider whether the Council should exercise its discretionary powers to make enhancements.

71. Redundancy

Members considered a report which detailed the expenditure associated with the proposed dismissal of three employees on the grounds of redundancy.

The background and detailed cases surrounding the proposals were contained in the individual business cases, attached as confidential annexes to the report.

Resolved: That the expenditure associated with the proposed dismissal of three employees on the grounds of redundancy, as detailed in Annexes A, B and C of the report, be noted.

Reason: In order to provide Members with an overview of the expenditure.

72. Appointment of Independent Assessor

Members considered a report that sought the appointment of an independent assessor in relation to a complaint received by the Council which contained a number of allegations about a senior member of staff and a number of complaints about policy and process.

Members noted the complaint raised which was contained in the confidential annex to the report and received advice from the Head of HR and Head of Civic and Democratic Services, in relation to appointing an independent assessor to determine which elements of the complaint related to staff performance and which to policy or process.

Resolved:

- (i) That the complaint received be reviewed, and that an independent person, through the LGA, be engaged by the Head of HR to assess the full complaint and identify the direct staff related issues that Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee should consider, and also to recommend where the other aspects of the complaint should be considered within the Council structure.

- (ii) That the initial assessment be completed and reported back to Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee, if possible, by 30 April 2019.

Reason: To ensure that a proper assessment is carried out of the complaint to identify the appropriate process to follow enabling Staffing Matters and Urgency Committee to consider information relevant to the remit of their committee.

Cllr Gillies, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.00 pm and finished at 5.25 pm].