

Minutes

Title: Departmental Whitley Council
 Date of Meeting: 10th March 2009
 Location: Conference Room B
 Attendees: Natalie Ceeney (NC), Robin Coles (RC), Guy Grannum (GG), Alison Archibald (AA), Anthony Smith (AS), Stephen O'Connor (SoC) Tim Padfield (TP), Esi Kpeglo (EK), Paula Bailey (PB), Caroline Ottaway-Searle (COS), Teresa Aquilina (Notes)

1 Apologies

Alan Pawsey

Action

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 19th December were approved. COS to sign on behalf of management as NC not in attendance at previous meeting

3 Matters Arising

GSI

NC said the system will be tested on Saturday with the aim to go live at the weekend.

PB said all staff had been trained apart from those currently on maternity leave, adoption leave and sick leave. Training for this group of staff would be picked up on their return to work.

Meeting Dates 2009

Carol Tullo was unable to attend the March meeting due to diary commitments.

Policies

EK has circulated the final draft of the Career Break Policy to TUS.

4 HR Policies

Career Break

RC expressed concern about the treatment of people returning after career break in relation to setting levels of pay.

It was agreed to go ahead and implement the policy but note that TU have a reservation about potential equal pay issues arising, and reserve their right to raise this in the future. Content with rest of policy.

Gifts and Hospitality

EK said Hywel Thomas has been looking at this together with HR as the policy is out of date.

The approach adopted is more in line with Central government departments and will be less rigid.

Once it is reviewed it will be sent to the Trade Union.

It is regarded as a Corporate management policy rather than HR.

H Thomas/
HR/AS

Alcohol at Work

Hywel Thomas and HR are revising this.

Esi will send out the revised policy when it is ready.

H Thomas/
HR/AS
EK

Equality and Diversity Strategy

COS is working on the draft which will be completed by the end of the month. An action plan will arise from this.

COS

Diversity Targets

RC queried:

BAME Targets

The new targets for the financial year have been set based on the potential catchment area for staff. The monitoring will be based on reported numbers rather than actual staff numbers. Alongside this will be a push on people completing the equality monitoring form.

RC said the TU want to be involved more.

In addition COS is working with Parveen Betab on providing more comprehensive data on eg:

- BAME representation by grade/salary
- L & D figures, ie who is attending what training
- COS emphasised that she is looking for sustainable improvements in terms of E&D and this will of course require effective monitoring to inform our actions.

COS/
P Betab

Temporary Promotion

GG said there was a concern that interims are being used more frequently in roles. NC said interims are only used in the absence of suitable internal candidates. She said that she wanted to encourage more internal candidates to apply for roles.

NC said that programmes such as "In Your Shoes" and Shadowing as well as The Leadership Management Development Programme were designed to encourage talent within.

GG said more internal people should be encouraged to apply.

COS said Managers should discuss career aspirations plans as part of performance management.

AS said there should be a strategy for people to act independently.

5 Departmental Issues

HR

Cos said the first phase of the restructure of HR ie the management level was underway, with the consultation period due to end on 23 March.

COS said NC came to the HR Team Meeting last week to support the direction of the restructure and explain how important HR is to the Organisation.

NAS

AS said this going according to the timetable.

EK said 2 meetings have been set up for Job Evaluation of roles

IMP

This restructure is now well underway.

Following external advert, the role of Head of Resource Discovery did not get recruited to. Instead the role has been reviewed and Louise Craven will be reporting directly to David Thomas.

This has yet to be announced.

PB said all significantly changed jobs in the restructure have been evaluated.. There is still some uncertainty about the plans for the shape of Stuart Abraham's team as this is affected by the recommendations of the Document Services review. A meeting has been set up next week with Tom Gregan, Adam Blackie and Stuart Abraham.

DSD and Business Development

EK to pick up actions

PB agreed to meet with RC to discuss the changes caused by the move from DSD to Business Development.

Statutory Publications Office

This generally seems to have gone well.

Trips have been arranged for them (they are based in London) to visit Kew.

Admiralty Arch

NC said we should have moved but Cabinet Office have not resolved the GSI issues yet.

6 Pay

Letters will be sent out this week. Pay surgeries will be set up to discuss any queries

All staff in post will receive 60% of back pay by Thursday from 1st April 08. Final adjustments will be received by end of month.

PB said staff will receive a payslip at the end of March with all adjustments

PB

TG, AB, SA

EK

PB

CO

7 **Any Other Business**

COS said it was not possible get retired Civil Service personnel into museums and institutes free as a company pass is needed to gain entry.

100 Best Companies

NC said no public sector company came in the top 100. It was ranked by question rather than overall score.

NC said some Directorates were happier than others.

Technology being the happiest.

Ruth Roberts is collating data by Directorate. It will then be distributed to Directors. Teams will be invited to presentations to consider the results.

COS said we will look at other organisations and see what we can learn.

Car Parking

NC said an application has been submitted to the council to increase the spaces in the current car park.

Paul Davies is looking at options.

- Still having use of HMRC car park
- Looking at long term rules for car parking
- Not being advertised as a recruitment feature

NC said now that the barrier has been installed in the car park we can obtain statistics.

The ticket machines needs looking into as it keeps breaking down

Estates

Finance

NC said nothing had been announced about financial savings though it was anticipated these could be in the realms of 15 – 25% cuts across the board for 2010-2011. It is also known that there will be no growth in public sector spending over the next 10 years and so potential savings will need to be considered, NC responded to a question to say that before any conversations with individuals could take place about potential early retirement, Treasury needs to have given approval, this can take time.

Job Evaluation System

COS said that she wanted to review the job evaluation system as a number of issues were arising that suggested the current system may not be entirely fit for purpose.

8 **Date of Next Meeting**

19th June 2009