

COUNCIL

10 September 2018

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE EMPLOYMENT AND APPEALS COMMITTEE

Report of the Chair of Employment and Appeals Committee

Strategic Aim:	Sound Financial and Workforce Planning	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Mr O Hemsley, Portfolio Holder for Growth, Trading Services and Resources (excluding Finance)	
Contact Officer(s):	Carol Snell, Head of Human Resources	01572 720969 csnell@rutland.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council notes the annual report of the Employment and Appeals Committee

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To set out the work of the Committee for 2017/18, in an annual report in line with best practice.

2 TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE

- 2.1 The Employment and Appeals Committee is a Committee of the Council, with powers delegated to it by the Council as set out in its Terms of Reference. The terms of reference were updated at Annual Council in May 2018 and for the municipal year 2018/19 are:

1. To establish panels to appoint Chief Officers, Officers that are part of the Strategic Management Team, or Officers that report directly to the Director for People. Such Panels to consist of three members plus the relevant Cabinet Member. Political balance applies to the panel.
2. To consider employee procedures, including dismissal procedures.
3. To hear, consider and determine appeals against dismissal by employees.
4. The constitution of any special human resources panels or working parties as may be required from time to time.
5. The discharge of such human resources functions that cannot be delegated under statute to the Cabinet or have not been delegated to officers, as may be delegated by the Council from time to time.

6. To consider and approve HR policies (this requires two thirds voting members present to approve a policy subject to its financial impact not exceeding the virement threshold of the Director for Resources). If this cannot be achieved the policy in question will be referred to Full Council for further consideration and determination.
7. Appeals panels
 - a) To hear, consider and determine any other appeals made under a statutory appeals process and/or where no other appeals body has been established for the specific purpose. This will include:-
 - i) Access to Personal Files
 - ii) Approved Marriage Premises
 - iii) Curriculum Complaints
 - iv) Home to School Transport
 - v) Housing Improvement Renovation or Repair Grants
 - vi) Discretionary Rate Relief (NNDR)
 - vii) Children's Social Services Complaints

The Panel will consist of three members drawn from the Committee. For this purpose, officers may draw upon members with training relevant to the subject matter of the appeal in order to ensure sufficient members are available to conduct the hearing, and to avoid involving any member who was involved in the original decision which is the subject of the appeal. Panel members should not be a representative of the Ward of the appellant. Panels should consist of three members of the Committee, with the exception of (vii) which should comprise two members of the committee and an independent chair. Political balance applies to the panel.

3 ACTIVITY DURING 2017/18

3.1 The Committee used its delegated powers to approve the following HR Policies during the year (Employment and Appeals Committee 18 July 2017). These were all part of our ongoing review programme and therefore replace policies that have been in place for some time or were previously approved:

- **RECRUITMENT POLICY** - the review of this policy focussed on ensuring that the Council's approach to recruitment and selection enable us to appoint high quality candidates able to deliver high quality services, in the most effective and efficient way. Also to ensure that the process is fair, open and transparent and promotes equality of opportunity to all groups throughout the community. There were no fundamental changes to 'policy', the key amendments being:
 - i) Reduction from 92 pages to 11 pages – reflecting a streamlined approach and style to our policies and also the removal of the detailed procedural elements.
 - ii) Provision to appoint an individual to a permanent post if the position moves from fixed term to permanent – subject to qualifying conditions.
- **JOB EVALUATION POLICY** - the general principle and policy remains unchanged, there were a number of improvements including:

- i) Analysis and evaluation is carried out by experienced role analysts within HR to enable consistency of assessment against a set of conventions
 - ii) More use of job matching/benchmarking enabling more speedy evaluations ie. comparisons between roles where the principles and demands of the role are similar
 - iii) Use of 'virtual' Steering Groups – ie. Directorate representatives who oversee the overall evaluation rather than co-ordinating meetings across a number of diaries.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY** - amendments to this policy included:
 - i) Further reference to potential impact on the Council or its representatives
 - ii) Inclusion of a statement that Managers will periodically remind staff of the policy and ensure that the risks of using social media for work related purposes have been fully assessed and managed
 - iii) Further clarity regarding the use of social media in the recruitment process.
 - **CODE OF CONDUCT** - the purpose is to ensure that the Council has firmly outlined its expectations of staff in delivering high standards of conduct and service to the public. The review was 'light touch' with the following additions/variations:
 - i) Reference to the Local Public Services Senior Managers Code of Ethics
 - ii) Updated paragraph – Registration of Interests to include some examples of financial and non-financial interests
 - iii) Additional paragraph to Gifts and Hospitality
 - iv) Inclusion of reference to the Driving and Riding for Work policy.

3.2 At the Employment and Appeals Committee in February 2018, the Chief Executive and Head of Human Resources presented two items:

- “Dying to Work Charter” – the Committee were pleased to support the Council taking part in this national campaign and signing of the Charter. The Committee considered this an important and positive message to staff on how RCC as an employer supports its employees during such sensitive situations. The signing ceremony took place on 17 April 2018.
- Staff Engagement Survey – the panel received a presentation from the Chief Executive setting out the key points arising from the Staff Engagement Survey in October 2017. This is the Council’s second survey and represented a 3% increase in satisfaction. The biggest changes were in response to questions regarding ‘communication’ with an increase of 37% improvement. Programmes of work will take place during the year to work with staff groups on areas to improve and develop; this will also lead to a refreshed Workforce Development Strategy.

3.3 No policies were referred to Full Council for consideration.

3.4 It was not necessary for the Committee to hear any dismissal appeals during the year.

3.5 There were no other appeal panels during the municipal year.

4 CONSULTATION

4.1 No formal consultation is required.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

5.1 The Committee can support the annual report or ask for amendments.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

7 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

7.1 The Employment and Appeals Committee is not formally required in the Constitution to produce an annual report, however it is good practice to do so.

7.2 In accordance with Procedure Rule 31, the Committee can report any matter to Council. As Employment and Appeals Committee acts under delegation of powers from Council, the committee considers it a matter of good practice to report back to Council on the work it undertakes.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been completed.

9 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no community safety implications.

10 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications.

11 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 To summarise the work of the Committee in an annual report in line with best practice.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 There are no additional background papers to the report.

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.