

## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

6.10 P.M.

22ND SEPTEMBER 2022

**PRESENT:-** Councillors Jason Wood (Vice-Chair in the Chair), Fabiha Askari and Caroline Jackson and Geoff Knight (substitute for Roger Dennison)

Apologies for Absence: -

Councillors Paul Anderton (Chair), Roger Dennison and Mel Guilding

Officers in attendance:-

Alex Kinch	Head of Human Resources
Clare Brown	Corporate Services Training and Project Delivery Lead
Stephen Metcalfe	Principal Democratic Support Officer

### 8 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022 were approved as a correct record.

### 9 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Wood declared his interest as an employee and member of UNISON and as a member of Unite the union, these interests being publicly declared on his notification by member of the city council of other interests which is publicly available. He also declared that his wife is a member of UNISON, Unite the union and GMB.

### 10 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

### 11 HR POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW - A NEW ARMED FORCES EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Clare Brown, Corporate Services Training and Project Delivery Lead, submitted a report to consider a new Armed Forces Employment Policy.

A new Armed Forces Employment Policy had been developed as part of a wider project to embed the commitments of the Armed Forces Covenant into our organisation. The policy is also part of a wider commitment to Fair Work and an example which demonstrates best practice for the proposed Fair Work Charter.

The policy had been submitted to the Joint Consultative Committee for consultation and recommendation. From comments by members of the Joint Consultative Committee it was recommended that the Policy be recommended for approval by Personnel Committee with amendment as follows:

- Inclusion of a statement regarding welcoming applicants who have been wounded sick or injured during the line of duty.
- Reference to feedback being given to all veteran applicants unsuccessful at

interview.

It was moved by Councillor Geoff Knight, seconded by Councillor Caroline Jackson: -

“That the new draft Armed Forces Employment Policy, appended to the report, and subject to amendment set out above, be approved and adopted.”

Upon being put to the vote the Vice-Chair declared the proposition to be unanimously carried.

***Resolved:***

That the new draft Armed Forces Employment Policy, appended to the report, and subject to amendment set out above, be approved and adopted.

**12 HR POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW - THE NEW EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING POLICY**

A report was submitted to consider a new Employee Volunteering Policy. It was noted that the Joint Consultative Committee had been consulted and no comments had been received.

The new Employee Volunteering Policy had been developed in conjunction with the Staff Wellbeing and Inclusion Working Group following research and feedback from employees confirming the benefits of volunteering to our local community and employees.

It was moved by Councillor Jason Wood, seconded by Councillor Geoff Knight: -

That the new Employee Volunteering Policy, appended to the report, and subject to amendment set out below, be approved and adopted.

Upon being put to the vote the Vice-Chair declared the proposition to be unanimously carried.

***Resolved:***

That the new Employee Volunteering Policy, appended to the report, and subject to amendment set out below, be approved and adopted.

- Section 4, paragraph 4.2 – Via the volunteers support webpage, provide clear guidance and details including examples such as schools and advising Managers to speak to their HRBP prior to approving requests for volunteering if necessary. To demonstrate a benefit to the local community and that the positivity of the policy be stressed.
- Paragraph 4.3 amended to:- We will not be able to support you to volunteer with organisations who make a profit, or if you are solely volunteering to support a friend or family member.
- To develop accompanying management guidance to be then taken to the next available quarterly trade union meeting and that a review be undertaken as

appropriate in 6 to 12 months' time.

- Application for Volunteering Leave (page 31) – remove the words “how you have”. Merge together fields two and four.

### 13 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY 2022

The Head of HR and OD submitted a report to recap on the National Employers pay offer for 2022/23, note the related motion from July 2022 Council and confirm the latest position on pay negotiations.

***Resolved: -***

That the Committee acknowledges the latest position, the additional financial pressure this may create and the on-going uncertainty for staff.

### 14 STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON THE MAKING AND DISCLOSURE OF SPECIAL SEVERANCE PAYMENTS BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ENGLAND

The Head of HR and OD submitted a report that explained the recent statutory guidance on the making and disclosure of Special Severance Payments by local authorities in England, and what this means for the City Council and associated policies.

Most public sector workers enjoyed statutory and contractual redundancy or severance terms that were significantly better than the minimum standard redundancy entitlement.

The government's view that paying additional, discretionary sums on top of these entitlements (special severance payments) do not usually provide good value for money or offer fairness to taxpayers, so should only be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Where the proposed payment is to the Head of Paid Service, to avoid a conflict of interest it is expected that the payment should be approved by a panel including at least two independent persons.

The report informed of the current delegations contained in the Council's Constitution under delegations from the Personnel Committee (to the Chief Executive) on pages 53 and 54 of the City Council's Constitution (v.1.6).

It was moved by Councillor Geoff Knight, seconded by Councillor Fabiha Askari:-

“That the recommendations set out in the report, subject to amendment of wording to be included in the Constitution, be approved.

Upon being put to the vote the Vice-Chair declared the proposition to be unanimously carried.

***Resolved:***

- (1) That the Committee approve an amendment to the Constitution as follows:

Under delegations from the Personnel Committee (to the Chief Executive) on

pages 53 and 54 of the Lancaster City Council Constitution (v.1.6):

Where the proposed payment is to the Head of Paid Service, to avoid a conflict of interest it is expected that the payment should be approved by a panel including at least two independent persons (to be added into constitution)

- *To approve the payment of acting up and honorarium payments (whilst in employment) and termination payments, including voluntary severance, early retirement and/or voluntary redundancy, within Council policy, up to £50,000*
- *To approve special severance payments below £20,000*
- *To approve special severance payments of £20,000 and above but below £100,000, with a clear record of the Leader's approval*
- *Special severance payments over £50,000 and below £100,000 should be reviewed by the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer who may refer a final decision to Full Council if felt necessary*
- *Special severance payments of £100,000 and above must be approved by a vote of full Council, as set out in the Localism Act 2011*

(2) That the Monitoring Officer makes the necessary changes to the Scheme of Delegation to reflect the decision-making process.

(3) That the Council continue to ensure that special severance payments are only used in exceptional circumstances and payments are not used to avoid management action, disciplinary processes, unwelcome publicity or avoidance of embarrassment.

## 15 APPOINTMENT TO THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Principal Democratic Support Officer reported orally regarding appointment to the Joint Consultative Committee on Health and Safety.

It was moved by Councillor Jason Wood, seconded by Councillor Geoff Knight and resolved unanimously as follows.

### ***Resolved:***

That Councillor Paul Anderton be appointed as the Personnel Committee's representative to the Joint Consultative Committee on Health and Safety and that Councillor Jason Wood be appointed as the substitute representative.

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Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.13 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact  
Stephen Metcalfe, Democratic Services - email [sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk)**

