

**PEOPLE AND
ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

6.00 P.M.

6TH MARCH 2025

PRESENT:- Councillors Prof Chris Harris (Chair), Jason Wood (Vice-Chair), Mandy Bannon (substitute for Caroline Jackson), Paul Hart, Sally Maddocks and Paul Stubbins

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Caroline Jackson and Margaret Pattison

Officers in attendance:

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Alex Kinch | Chief Officer - People and Policy |
| Louise Anson | Senior HR Business Partner |
| Catherine Joyce | Senior HR Business Partner |
| Dawn Bradley | OD Manager |
| Chelsie Gladstone | Senior Corporate Health and Safety Manager |
| Stephen Metcalfe | Principal Democratic Support Officer |

23 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. He also declared that his wife is a member of UNISON, Unite the Union and GMB.

24 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th November 2024 were approved as a correct record.

25 ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS AUTHORISED BY THE CHAIR

There were no items of urgent business.

26 HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

The Senior Corporate Health and Safety Manager submitted a report that enabled the Committee to consider and approve a range of amendments and additions to existing policies and procedures. These were:

- LCC HS Policy Statement 2025
- LCC HS Policy - Roles and Responsibilities 2025
- LCC HS Policy - Systems and Arrangements 2025
- LCC Health Safety Strategy 2024 – 2026
- LCC Audit Policy
- LCC DSE Policy
- SG40 LCC Conflict at Work Policy

Comments and amendments following the meeting of JCC on 13th February 2025 were set out in the report.

With regard to the Audit Policy it was reported orally at the meeting that since the agenda had been published it had been raised internally by officers that the Policy would only apply to Health and Safety audits and that, to be clear, this would be added to the introduction section of the Policy in a clear and bold statement.

Following a question raised at the meeting with regard to the DSE Policy it was noted that the Senior Corporate Health and Safety Manager will liaise with the Monitoring and Deputy Monitoring Officers on training and development of Councillors on DSE issues.

Also raised at the meeting with regard to the Conflict at Work Policy was linking this with the Complaints Policy that had been produced by the Chief Officer – Housing and Property.

It was moved by Councillor Chris Harris, seconded by Councillor Paul Stubbins and unanimously agreed.

Resolved: -

That LCC HS Policy Statement 2025, LCC HS Policy - Roles and Responsibilities 2025, LCC HS Policy - Systems and Arrangements 2025, LCC Health Safety Strategy 2024 – 2026, LCC Audit Policy as amended, LCC DSE Policy and SG40 LCC Conflict at Work Policy, appended to the report, be approved.

27 PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Chief Officer - People and Policy presented the proposed Pay Policy Statement for noting before its referral to Full Council. The Committee was informed that it is a requirement under section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 that local authorities publish a Pay Policy Statement by the 31st of March each year and that there were no notable changes to the policy aside from reflecting the most recent staff pay award.

The Committee discussed the Willis Towers Watson Global Grading Scheme referred to in paragraph 14.2 of the Policy Statement. It was requested for future years' that reference be made in the Statement that Trade Unions are involved in the process. Also, regarding paragraph 14.3 of the Policy Statement to consider wording to ensure that for whatever reason if SCP3 is not equal to the Living Wage the Council will make arrangements to make this equal. Paragraph 14.5 to consider having a specific pay ratio policy. These issues to be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Professor Chris Harris, seconded by Councillor Sally Maddocks and resolved as follows:

Resolved: -

That the Pay Policy Statement 2025-2026 be referred and recommended for approval at Full Council on 12th March 2025.

28 GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING

The Chief Officer - People and Policy presented a report that enabled the Committee to consider the Gender Pay Gap report, and the comparison between figures for 2023 and 2024.

Members were informed that the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 required that organisations with 250 employees or more publish specific figures about their gender pay gap on a snapshot date of 31st March each year.

The report provided the 2024 Gender Pay Gap figures and analysis.

In conclusion it was reported that the Council continues to pay its staff in accordance with internal policy and procedure and complied with employment legislation in ensuring pay rates follow the principle of 'equal pay for work of equal value'. The Council was also a Real Living Wage Employer.

The Council's lower quartile roles were attracting female applicants due to external circumstances and due to historically roles being female dominated in these areas.

The gender pay gap was favourable when compared to national averages. However, the Council had continued to develop and promote a range of workforce strategies, that contributed towards addressing the gender pay gap by enabling the Council to recruit and retain talent, which had seen the gender pay gap reduce since 2023.

The Committee considered the information contained in the report and after discussion it was agreed that the Chair and Vice-Chair would meet with the Chief Officer – People and Policy to provide further views on this issue with a report being submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

Resolved: -

That People and OD Committee notes the gender pay gap report and the figures provided for 2024.

29 PEOPLE PLAN - UPDATE REPORT

The Organisational Development Manager submitted a report that updated the Committee on the progress of the People Plan. The report set out a summary of the progress made. The People Plan was the Council's strategic plan to enable employees to work at their best to support the delivery of the Council Plan. The report provided background information and Year Two progress.

In conclusion it was reported that an extensive amount of work continues to be delivered in line with the People Plan and it was intended that the People Plan will be updated in light of the Staff Survey.

The Committee considered the information contained in the report and after discussion it was agreed that a workforce data report be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee, which along with the workforce data presented at Committee in 2024, would

focus on sickness absence providing a comparison with previous years and that the report also includes consideration of benchmarking.

Resolved: -

That the Committee acknowledges the progress made on the People Plan to date.

30 STAFF SURVEY - UPDATE REPORT

The Organisational Development Manager submitted a report that updated the Committee on the Staff Survey.

The report sets out a summary of the Staff Survey work completed to date and the plan for further action.

The Staff Survey in this format was a newly launched initiative to improve employee engagement and support employees to work at their best to ensure delivery of the Council Plan.

The report provided background information, information about the Staff Survey, overview of the results of the survey and the next steps.

In conclusion it was reported that the Staff Survey participation rates were higher than normal and the summary results are very positive. The next phase to involve the co-creation of action plans to address the issues highlighted.

Resolved: -

That the Committee acknowledges the work on the Staff Survey to date.

31 HR TEAM - UPDATE

The Senior HR Business Partners submitted a report that provided the Committee with information on initiatives and work that takes place as a result of case work.

It was reported that HR deals with a wide variety of case work including sickness absence, grievance, disciplinary, flexible working requests, restructures and flexible retirement.

The operational HR team consists of 1.75 FTE Senior Business Partners, 1 FTE Business Partner and 2 FTE HR Advisors.

A summary of the support provided was contained within the report.

In conclusion it was reported that the HR operational team continue to be proactive, review casework learnings, update policies and guidance and recommendations that can support managers and employees going forward. HR continue to develop managers knowledge on resources available to them and their employees, and support delivery of the People Plan.

Resolved: -

That Committee notes the initiatives that have been put in place.

Chair

(The meeting ended at 7.59 p.m.)

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
Stephen Metcalfe, Democratic Support - email sjmetcalfe@lancaster.gov.uk**