

## CENTRAL BEDFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

At a meeting of the **CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** held at Room 15 Priory House, Monks Walk, Shefford SG17 5TQ on Monday, 5 October 2009

### PRESENT

Cllr J G Jamieson (Chairman)  
Cllr J A E Clarke (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs R W Johnstone  
D Jones

Cllrs Mrs J G Lawrence  
J Street

Apologies for Absence: Cllrs I Dalgarno  
P A Duckett  
D J Hopkin

Substitutes: Cllrs D Bowater

Members in Attendance: Cllrs D J Lawrence

#### CR/09/040 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ian Dalgarno, Paul Duckett and David Hopkins.

#### CR/09/041 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

#### CR/09/042 **Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### CR/09/043 **Chairman's Announcements and Communications**

The Chairman advised the Committee of changes to the Committee membership as follows:-

- Councillors Angela Barker and Christina Turner were no longer members of the Committee
- Councillors Ian Dalgarno and John Street were newly appointed members of the Committee.

CR/09/044 **Petitions**

There were no petitions.

CR/09/045 **Public Questions, Statements and Deputations**

There were no public questions, statements or deputations.

CR/09/046 **Disclosure of Exempt Information**

No matters containing exempt information were anticipated.

CR/09/047 **Call-In**

There had been no matters of call-in.

CR/09/048 **Requested Items**

There were no requested items.

CR/09/049 **Directorate Overview: Human Resources & Organisational Development**

The Committee received two presentations by the Acting Assistant Director, Human Resources and Organisational Development. The first was an overview of the HR/OD service covering the structure of the function, and the key issues and challenges facing HR/OD. The second addressed the harmonisation project in relation to bringing employees from the legacy authorities under one set of terms and conditions of employment. The slides are attached to these minutes at **Appendix A** and **Appendix B**.

The Committee considered the first presentation and asked a number of questions. It was noted that there had been an expectation that Human Resources would be able to deliver from Day 1 after the creation of Central Bedfordshire Council. In relation to developing the service, there were now clear objectives for improvement, with a long term goal of achieving excellence.

In relation to the recent Employee Survey, Members were aware that this was being run by an external organisation - Ipsos Mori - and that this guaranteed anonymity of individual responses. It was noted that the output of the consultation would enable benchmarking with other local authorities and also the identification of issues which needed to be addressed, in some instances through employee focus groups.

A discussion ensued on the role of Human Resources within the organisation. It was noted that delivering the complex services required of a local authority to a high level of performance required significant Human Resources support.

The Committee noted that Human Resources made use of external resources such as agency staff and recruitment. Suggestions were made that as time progressed further opportunities for sharing resources, for example with other local authorities in the region, should be explored. It was noted that regional networks were already being used and there would be opportunities to draw upon new partnerships.

Questions were asked as to the specific numbers of Human Resources staff and numbers of employees including those in schools. It was noted that during the transition to Central Bedfordshire Council, 105 posts across the broader Corporate Resources functions were deleted. As time went on it was anticipated that there would be further scope for rationalisation.

In response to questions it was noted that when managers were recruiting, they must do so through clear recruitment processes, with inbuilt controls. There were also clear controls in place relating to proposals for new posts to be added to the Council's establishment. There were also controls in place relating to the provision and use of agency staff, whether they were covering vacant established posts or brought in for specific projects. A piece of work was ongoing to reconcile information regarding all agency and interim use across the Authority.

A request was made that information be provided at a future meeting on how many Human Resources staff dealt with quantified school and non-school employees.

A discussion ensued regarding the provision of Human Resources services for schools in the area together with HR services that were shared with Bedford Borough Council.

It was noted that sickness absence was higher in certain services and this represented a major cost to the organisation. Human Resources was working proactively with Headteachers through an Attendance Manager role funded by the Schools Forum to address absence in schools.

In response to a request, it was noted that information on the average number of days of employee absence would be brought to a future meeting, broken down into schools based and non-schools based employee figures, together with national benchmark figures.

Clarification was provided on the level of local negotiation available in the context of terms and conditions of service, including pay and pensions.

Further to a discussion it was noted that a reduction in the number of agency staff was a challenge for all managers. Within Corporate Resources, agency staff were used in highest numbers in the areas of Property and IT. In response to a request that the number of agency staff working for the Council be brought to a future meeting it was noted that the information would not be available for the next meeting but would be brought as soon as possible when the data cleanse exercise was complete for this area.

The Committee considered the second presentation in relation to the harmonisation project, addressing issues arising from the bringing together of employees from three legacy authorities into a single council.

In response to a question as to the net cost of harmonisation it was noted that this would not be clear until the evaluation of posts had been carried out and the implications assessed.

A brief discussion arose regarding the implications of TUPE and a specific request was made that information be provided to the Chairman on whether any liability arose under TUPE from extending a contract.

In response to a question it was noted that organisation charts showing the structure of Directorates, tiers of responsibility and the number of employees at each level were available on the Council's intranet. The Committee was advised that the numbers of people employed at Director level, Assistant Director level and other tiers of management would be included as part of the budget discussion papers.

**RESOLVED:-**

1. to thank Gordon McFarlane, Assistant Director Human Resources and Organisational Development, for his presentations;
2. that information be provided at a future meeting on how many Human Resources staff provided support to specified numbers of school and non-school employees;
3. that information be provided at a future meeting on the average number of days of employee absence, broken down into schools based and non-schools based employee figures, together with national benchmark figures;
4. that the figure for the number of agency staff working for the Council be brought to a future meeting as soon as possible once the relevant data cleanse exercise had been carried out;
5. that information would be provided to the Chairman on whether any liability arose under TUPE from extending a contract.

**CR/09/050 Budget Management Report**

The Committee received and considered a report setting out the budget position as at 31 July 2009. The Director of Corporate Resources reported that the August figures would be submitted to the Executive at its forthcoming meeting (13 October) and the September figures were reaching completion.

In response to a question the Director advised that following some areas of concern having been addressed the budget was back on track. It was noted that employee costs represented a significant call on the Council's budget but that it would not be possible to reduce outgoings in this area significantly this year due to the need for consultation to be undertaken before making redundancies, and also due to the costs of making posts redundant.

In response to a request the Director indicated that figures relating to spend on conferences and training would be brought to a future meeting.

The Committee noted that a recommendation set out in the report referred to paragraphs which were not in the report (recommendation 3 of the submitted report referring to paragraphs 4.2 – 4.10c). The Director indicated that these paragraphs referred to management actions and undertook to bring the consolidated action plans to the next meeting which would clarify the matter.

An explanatory comment was made by the Chairman that each Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be looking at their individual budget and this Committee would also take a wider view, including scrutinising the accuracy of accounting for example ensuring that matters were appropriately placed.

In response to a question the Director explained the current position regarding the allocation of the County Farms which had not yet been resolved.

**RESOLVED:-**

1. to note the contents of the report;
2. to note the latest budget projections for the year and the associated service implications;
3. to note the budget virements since the last report;
4. that the figures for spending in relation to training and conferences be brought to the next meeting;
5. that the consolidated action plans referred to by the Director be brought to the next meeting to enable the Committee to consider any proposed management actions and to determine whether any other changes to service provision needed to be made in the light of these;
6. that figures relating to spend on conferences and training would be brought to a future meeting.

**CR/09/051 Review of the Capital Programme**

The Director of Corporate Resources provided an oral update in relation to the Capital Programme. He detailed the circumstances impacting on the Capital Programme, pointing out that the legacy authorities had pulled back on making commitments to capital projects in view of Local Government Reorganisation and that this was to be welcomed, as the Council had not inherited major commitments in this area.

Members welcomed a suggestion that the Chairman discuss with the Director an appropriate time to bring the Capital Programme as an item for discussion at a future meeting.

In response to a question regarding the availability of Section 106 monies the Director indicated that he would bring a report to a future meeting on the Section 106 funding available. He confirmed that Council policy prevented Council funds being "loaned" in advance of the Section 106 money becoming available for spending on a scheme.

**RESOLVED:-**

1. to note the Director's oral report regarding the Capital Programme;
2. that the Chairman discuss with the Director and determine an appropriate time to bring the Capital Programme as an item for discussion at a future meeting;
3. that a report be brought to a future meeting on Section 106 funding, its availability and use.

**CR/09/052 Work Programme**

The Committee considered details of its revised Work Programme for 2009/2010.

The Chairman commented that he expected a report on the Capital Programme to be brought to the November or December meeting, depending on the outcome of his discussions with the Director of Corporate Resources (see minute 51 above).

A suggestion was made that the Property Acquisitions and Disposals Quarterly Report scheduled for the December meeting might appropriately be brought to the November meeting. It was agreed that the Director would discuss this with the Assistant Director Property and Asset Management and advise the Chairman accordingly.

**RESOLVED:-**

to consider and approve the Work Programme as submitted, subject to possible amendments to be agreed by the Chairman after the meeting with regard to the timing of reports in relation to the Capital Programme and the Property Acquisitions and Disposals Quarterly Report.

CR/09/053 **Date of Next Meeting**

**RESOLVED:-**

1. to note that the next meeting would be held on 2 November 2009 in Committee Room 15 at Priory House, Shefford starting at 10.00am;
2. to note that the 30 November meeting had been changed at the Committee's request and would be held on Thursday 10 December 2009 in the Council Chamber at Priory House, Shefford starting at 10.00am.

Chairman .....

Date .....

(Note: The meeting commenced at 10.00 a.m. and concluded at 12.25 p.m.)

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## Human Resources and Organisational Development

### Harmonisation Project

Briefing for Corporate Resources OSC

5/10/09



## Creating the New Unitary Council

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- Staff protected by TUPE – transferring from legacy authorities
- Staff on wide range of conditions of service
- Legacy pay structures



# Legal Framework

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- TUPE v Equal Pay
- Equality of entitlement to future pay / benefits
- No defined period of TUPE protection
- Duty to address potential inequalities



# Job Evaluation

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- Grading structure adopted by shadow authority – NJC and HAY – ex BCC job evaluation schemes
- CB jobs must be appropriately and fairly graded, reflect relative worth and be free from gender bias
- Provides defence for any future equal pay challenge at employment tribunal
- Around 330 ex-district posts (covering 700+ staff) to analyse and evaluate against CB job evaluation scheme(s)



# Terms and Conditions

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- Differences in Terms and Conditions need to be examined
- Key differences in Terms and Conditions
  - Annual Leave
  - Car Allowances
- Other differences – ‘fringe’ conditions e.g. long service awards, professional subscriptions, subsistence payments, life assurance cover



# Job Evaluation – Process

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- Job analysts working with managers and staff to analyse roles
- HR led evaluation panels, including TU reps
- Evaluation results held until full implementation



# Terms and Conditions - Process

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- Core terms and conditions agreed and adopted
- Need to identify all differences requiring harmonisation
- Harmonisation proposals provided (and costed)
- Collective agreement to be negotiated with TU's.
- Final agreement – CBMT, then Members



# Consultation / Communication / Timescales

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- Communications Plan / Framework agreed by CBMT
- Implementation date: 01.04.10
  - increase in pay / grade
  - decrease in pay / grade
  - change / buy out re Terms and Conditions
- 3 year pay protection policy – from 01.04.10
- Pensions – ‘protected’ element remains pensionable






# Business as Usual Principles

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- Recognise circumstances where action needed now
  - Vacancies (ex district posts)
  - Significant change to a role
  - Organisational change

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**Human Resources  
and Organisational  
Development**

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**Structure** 

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- Gordon McFarlane – Acting AD
- Rachel Hobbs – Head of Resourcing
- Catherine Jones – Head of Strategy and Policy
- Vikki Oakes – Head of HR Business Operations
- Sue Cooper – Head of Organisational Capability

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**Resourcing – Issues and Challenges** 

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- Create a clear employer brand
- Safe recruitment agenda including ISA implementation
- Handling volume, but also ensuring quality
- Exploiting commercial opportunities –
  - Agency contract
  - Heart supply agency
- Workforce planning

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**Strategy and Policy – Issues and Challenges** 

- Fit for purpose, modern policies and procedures
- Timely, accurate and relevant management information
- Quality of trade union relationships
- Harmonisation project

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**HR Business Operations – Issues and Challenges** 

- High quality and efficient transactional processes
- Quality and cost of our offering to schools – commercial opportunity?
- Business Partner model – support / coaching
- Flexible resources and support – high volume of organisational change and transformation

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**Organisational Capability – Issues and Challenges** 

- Core learning and development programmes – linked to statutory workforce strategies
- Organisational Development strategy – create and shape culture
- Importance / consistency of staff engagement
- Help to create 'one Council' with clear, visible leadership
- Achieve LiP and other reputational awards

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**Summary** 

- Challenging organisational agenda
- HR improvement journey
- Importance of partnership working within Corporate Resources
  - People
  - Budgets
  - Contracts
  - Technology
  - Property
- Exploit opportunities for partnership / shared services

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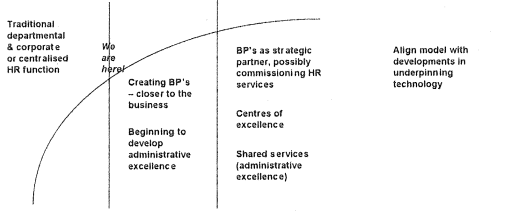
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**HR improvement journey** 

Change curve for delivery model



Traditional departmental & corporate or centralised HR function

We are here

Creating BP's - closer to the business

Beginning to develop administrative excellence

BP's as strategic partner, possibly commissioning HR services

Centres of excellence

Shared services (administrative excellence)

Align model with developments in underpinning technology

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