

Minutes of a meeting of the **POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL** held in the Meeting Room 1, Council Offices, Priory Road, Spalding, on Tuesday, 20 December 2016 at 6.30 pm.

PRESENT

A R Woolf (Chairman)  
J D McLean (Vice-Chairman)

D Ashby  
M D Booth  
R Clark  
G K Dark

H Drury  
A Harrison  
C N Johnson  
J L King

M J Pullen  
J L Reynolds  
J Tyrrell

In Attendance: Executive Manager - People and Public Protection, HR Manager and Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence were received from or on behalf of Councillors J R Astill and L J Eldridge

**22. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Policy Development Panel held on 1 November 2016 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record

**AGREED:**

That the minutes of the Policy Development Panel meeting held on 1 November 2016 be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**23. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS.**

There were none.

**24. QUESTIONS ASKED UNDER STANDING ORDER 6**

There were none.

**25. TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

There were none.

**26. ITEMS REFERRED FROM THE PERFORMANCE MONITORING PANEL**

There were none.

Action By

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**27. KEY DECISION PLAN**

Consideration was given to the Key Decision Plan, published on 29 November 2016.

**AGREED:**

That the Key Decision Plan be noted.

**28. HR POLICY HANDBOOK**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Manager People and Public Protection which presented the newly drafted Human Resources (HR) Policy Handbook. It compiled the key HR policies required as best practice. Its aim was to mitigate risk, particularly in a shared management arrangement and application of policy across two Councils, and to reduce review periods and updates following changes to employment legislation.

In order to make some simple alignments across both Councils and reduce risk within the management of the shared management arrangement, approval was sought on the following areas:

- Should any amendment to policy be required as a result of legislative or constitutional change, of which the organisation had no jurisdiction, that this be delegated to the Head of Paid Service in order to ensure a prompt response to such changes and mitigate risk of application of said policy in line with employment law;
- Permission to increase relocation allowance to the HMRC maximum allowance of £8,000; to provide further flexibility to recruitment processes where required along with the caveat that the full allowance may only be granted by the approval of a Chief Officer;
- Permission to specify up to 5 days leave for Fertility Treatment: the 'National' Conditions of Service state a 'reasonable amount of time off'.

The Panel considered the information within the report, and the proposals, and agreed that it was useful to have a document which brought together all of the key HR policies.

**AGREED:**

That the report be noted and presented to the Council for formal agreement.

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**29. POLICY REGISTER UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director Strategy and Governance which provided the Panel with an update on the current position of the Policy Register.

The last update had been presented to the Panel in April 2016, and this had highlighted that there was a significant amount of work required to update a number of the Council's policies, and a further update had therefore been requested in Quarter 3 2016/17 showing progress to date.

A copy of the current Policy Register was attached to the report. There were currently 37 policies on the register, the current position of the register was rated as 'Fair', with the majority of policies being reviewed and only one policy overdue. Of the 20 policies being reviewed and showing at amber, a number were HR policies which had been discussed at the previous agenda item. Many of the other policies being reviewed were finance policies which were being reviewed as part of the budget, and were due for adoption in February 2017 as part of the budget approval process.

The Panel considered the information and the following issues were raised:

- Were there policies relating to littering and fly tipping?
  - These were no longer specific policies and were now included within a broader policy. Members would be advised under which policy littering and fly tipping were included.
- The Panel commented that although the progress of policy reviews was colour coded, completion dates for reviews should be provided so that progress could be seen more easily. Members requested that information be provided to the next meeting detailing completion dates for each of the reviews. The Panel could then consider whether colour coding was the best way to reflect progress. It was also requested that the Policy register would be reviewed annually, however in the short term, an update report on policy reviews be considered quarterly by the Panel.

**AGREED:**

- a) That the report be noted;

GP, TR,  
CM

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| b) That members be advised under which policy littering and fly tipping was situated;  | GP, TR,<br>CM |
| c) That a report be presented to the next meeting detailing completion dates for all current policy reviews, in order that the Panel could consider whether colour coding was the most effective way of representing progress; and | GP, TR,<br>CM |
| d) That a report on the Policy Register, providing details of progress with policy reviews, be presented quarterly to the Policy Development Panel and once completed and up to date to be presented annually.                     |               |

**30. APPRENTICESHIP UPDATE**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Director, Strategy and Governance, which updated the Panel on the current position regarding development of the Council's Apprenticeship Scheme.

The Council did not currently employ any apprentices directly however, 14 apprentices were employed through Compass Point Business Services. This scheme had been very successful, with a number of apprentices retained and employed by Compass Point Business Services, and one now employed by South Holland District Council.

The South Holland apprenticeship scheme was being created as a joint piece of work with Breckland Council, and this would be completed to draft stage in April 2017. It would take into account the good practices of the Compass Point Business Services' scheme, and would be set up to be implemented following exact requirements of the apprenticeship levy being published by the Government.

The Panel considered the report and the following points were raised:

- Why was South Holland District Council not employing apprentices, when the success of the Compass Point Business Services scheme was apparent?
  - Apprenticeship boards did not support some professional bodies appropriate to certain roles within the Council, for example within Environmental Health and Planning. However, the Authority should look at apprenticeships and career progression of some of its officers, and this would begin to be seen through service reviews.

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- Although apprenticeship schemes may not cover all roles within the Council, it could be used to employ individuals in more practical roles, particularly to train plumbers, bricklayers etc within the CSU.
  - Apprenticeships were being considered and built into all service reviews.
- Members appreciated the situation regarding the funding of apprenticeships, and the problem with certain professional roles.
  - The Panel was advised that the Authority had tried to work alongside Boston College with regard to apprenticeships however, only certain standard courses could be offered.
- Funding was not being provided to colleges to provide apprenticeships other than a core of practical/manual skills or more general office-based skills. Specific apprenticeships for areas that were public sector specific were required. The Local Government Association should be approached to consider this.
- The report stated that the Authority would be required to employ six apprentices. What areas would they be employed in?
  - The apprentices would largely be located within the Place-based team, and would be identified through service reviews. The Authority was required to take on six apprentices or it would incur a penalty.
- The Panel requested that, as the Apprenticeship Policy was developed, that there be member involvement.
  - Members were advised that guidance was still being prepared, and that further detail would be available in April/May 2017. Once further information on the apprenticeship levy was published by the Government (anticipated by May 2017), further information on the Authority's Apprenticeship Policy would be provided to the Panel.

**AGREED:**

- a) That the update report be noted: and
- b) That more detailed information on the Authority's Apprenticeship Policy be provided to the Panel at its meeting in May, to include information on the apprenticeship levy published by the Government

PA, CM

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**31. POLICY DEVELOPMENT PANEL WORK PROGRAMME**

Consideration was given to the report of the Executive Manager Governance, which set out the Work Programme of the Policy Development Panel. The Work Programme consisted of two separate sections, the first setting out the dates of the future Panel meetings along with proposed items for consideration, and the second setting out the Task Groups that had been identified by the Panel.

The Panel received an update on the progress of the work of the Paper and Postage costs throughout the Authority Task Group, and were advised that its Final Report would be presented to the Panel in February 2017.

The Panel was advised that, following its review of implemented planning decisions, the Performance Monitoring Panel had suggested that two of its members, Councillors B Alcock and A M Newton, work with the Public Open Spaces Task Group to address some of the recommendations arising from the review. The Task Group had been set up by the Policy Development Panel and would begin its work following completion of the Paper and Postage Task Group. The Policy Development Panel was in agreement that Councillors B Alcock and A M Newton should join the Task Group.

**AGREED:**

- a) That both sections of the Panel's Work Programme, as set out in the report of the Executive Manager Governance, be noted;
- b) That the Paper and Postage costs throughout the Authority Task Group present its Final Report to the Panel in February 2017; and
- c) That members of the Performance Monitoring Panel, Councillors B Alcock and A M Newton join the Public Open Spaces Task Group, set up by the Policy Development Panel.

CM, AP

(The meeting ended at 7.35 pm)

(End of minutes)