

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Monday, 21 September 2015

Present:

Councillor AER Jones (Chair)

Councillors P Davies L Rennie
G Davies P Gilchrist
M McLaughlin

Deputies

Councillors D Roberts (In place of AR McLachlan)
A Hodson (In place of JE Green)

1 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

2 MINUTES

The Committee were requested to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of 27 October, 2014.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of 27 October, 2014, be approved.

3 EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL

The minutes of the Employment and Appointments Panel (Chief Executive) meetings held on 24 November, 2014, 16 and 29 January, and 5 and 6 February, 2015; Employment and Appointments Panel (Director of Resources) meeting held on 24 November, 2014 and Employment and Appointments Panel (Head of Specialist Services) meetings held on 10 December, 2014 and 8 and 14 January, 2015 were submitted for information.

Resolved – That the minutes be noted.

4 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor P Davies it was -

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of

the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 (in that it relates to an individual) of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

Before the public left, the Head of Legal and Member Services informed the meeting that the information in the exempt report might be made public after the meeting. There was no requirement for the matter to go to Council.

The Chair commented that a member of the public, Mr Brace, had asked to address the Committee but this request had been denied and it had been explained to Mr Brace that he could put his comments in writing and this would then be responded to.

5 VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE / EARLY VOLUNTARY REQUIREMENT REQUEST

The Chief Executive introduced a report which sought the Committee's approval to the release of the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment. Mr Adderley had requested Voluntary Severance/Early Voluntary Retirement under the terms of the Council's Severance Scheme.

In February 2014, Council agreed to make £9.4m savings from remodelling over two years 2015/16 and 2016/17. Additionally, in February 2015, Council agreed a further £1.5m saving from a reduction in senior management costs in 2015/16. Over the past 15 months 309 employees had left the Council. The Council had sought volunteers for severance/early retirement as part of the remodelling process.

The Regeneration and Environment strategic area included the following services: Waste and Environment, Parks and Countryside, Highways Management, Traffic and Transport, Regulation Trading Standards Environmental Health, Housing and Regeneration, Planning, Building Control and Cultural Services, Strategic Investment and business development. There were three Chief Officers who managed these areas who reported to the Strategic Director and there was a Senior Manager who had responsibility for Strategic Investment. Work had commenced on reviewing the Council's future operating model which would consider the full range of options for delivering services in the most appropriate and cost effective way, focused on delivering outcomes for residents of Wirral in line with the approved Wirral Council Plan.

A report would be brought forward in due course setting out the options and recommendations for the Council's Operating Model. Some changes might be delivered in the short term and some would be phased over a longer period. Whilst, still at an early stage, potential options for changes to service delivery meant that the post of Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment might no longer be required or the duties required might be significantly

different in any new delivery model. On that basis it was proposed that Mr Adderley's request be approved as a management saving at this stage.

If agreed, an interim structure would be required and it was proposed that the Council's Head of Asset Management / Assistant Chief Executive, David Armstrong, took line management responsibility for posts currently reporting to the Strategic Director, Regeneration and Environment. There were no additional costs associated with this arrangement.

Under paragraphs 5e and 10d and e, Part 3, Schedule 4A, Part 1 of the Scheme of Non-Executive Delegation of Functions to Officers (set out in the Council's Constitution), the Chief Executive had delegated authority to approve the request and interim structure. However, in view of the seniority of this post, it was considered appropriate for the request to be considered by this Committee. This was consistent with paragraph 7 of the above mentioned Scheme of delegation which stated, 'In deciding whether or not to exercise such delegated powers, the Directors should consider whether to consult the appropriate committee Chair and have regard to their views. Officers shall always be entitled to refer matters for decision to the appropriate member body or council where they consider it expedient to do so.'

The report gave details of the severance payment entitlement and the Acting Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development also detailed the approximate cost to the Council of the early release of pension which was £207,000 as a one off payment or £228,000 if paid over five years. This was paid to Merseyside Pension Fund.

The salary saving from deletion of this post would be £150,675 per annum including on-costs.

Responding to comments from Members, the Chief Executive stated that the new operating model for the Council should be ready by October so that discussions on this would be had before Christmas. There would be a relatively short period of time when the interim structure would be in place. Those post holders who would report to David Armstrong in the interim were capable people who could maintain service continuity and delivery during the interim period.

Members considered both direct and indirect implications of approving the request.

Members expressed their sadness at the impending departure of Mr Adderley as he was a highly regarded officer with the Council. There would be a need to ensure the momentum of economic regeneration was maintained.

Councillor Gilchrist expressed his disagreement with the Chief Executive's recommendation. He was thankful to Mr Adderley for the numerous

regeneration projects which had been kept 'alive' by his tenacity during the economic recession but he could not agree with the Early Voluntary Retirement request.

Councillor P Davies stated the Committee needed to base its decision upon the business case which the Chief Executive had made. There would be a significant saving in this senior management post and he acknowledged the need to make sure David Armstrong's interim role was as short as possible. He expressed thanks to Kevin Adderley for the first class job he had undertaken with the authority but acknowledged that there were other opportunities he wished to pursue. He suggested that the Committee records its appreciation for the huge contribution Kevin Adderley had made to the authority and that the request should be agreed. Other members of the Committee echoed the thanks to Mr Adderley expressed by Councillor P Davies.

On a motion by Councillor P Davies, seconded by the Chair, it was –

Resolved (7:1) - That this Committee approves the request for Voluntary Severance / Early Voluntary Retirement made by Mr Kevin Adderley.