

MINUTES

Employment Committee

Wednesday, 9 March 2022, 10:00



SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL

**Council Chamber – South Kesteven House,
St. Peter's Hill, Grantham. NG31 6PZ**

Committee Members present

Councillor Sarah Trotter (Chairman)
Councillor Anna Kelly (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Kelham Cooke
Councillor Barry Dobson
Councillor Annie Mason
Councillor Adam Stokes
Councillor Paul Wood

Officers in attendance

Karen Bradford (Chief Executive)
Alan Robinson (Deputy Chief Executive)
Fran Beckitt (HR Manager)
Jane Jenkinson (Senior HR Officer)
Sam Fitt (Project Lead)
Sarah Downs (Democratic Officer)

1. Apologies for absence

There were none.

2. Disclosure of interests

There were none.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2022

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2022 were proposed, seconded, and **AGREED** as a correct record.

4. Updates from the previous meeting

The Leader of the Council confirmed that the Pay Policy Statement 2022 – 2023 was approved at Full Council on 3 March 2022.

5. Gender Pay Gap

The Cabinet Member for People and Safer Communities presented a report on the Council's position with the Gender Pay Gap for 2020/2021. The Authority is legally required to report its pay gap figures annually to show the difference in pay between men and women. The information in the report highlighted key aspects of the gender pay gap reporting requirements and the breakdown of the information and showed significant improvement.

The Project Lead continued that the Council's mean gender pay gap for 2020/2021 had reduced by 0.35% since last year and the median pay gap reduced by 6.4%. This showed significant improvement when compared against the national figure of 14.9% and the public sector figure of 14.8% for the gender pay gap for the whole economy (according to Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2021 annual survey figures).

During discussion, Members raised the following points:

- The report was very positive. A huge improvement was fantastic and especially important when recognising International Women's Day this week.
- The number of women in lower quartile had improved. Was this due to better access to roles that were traditionally male in the past?
- Were women encouraged to take on roles such as HGV driving?
- It was noted that it was important that the best person for each role is recruited, whether male or female. Opportunities given must be equal.

The Project Lead confirmed that there was an increasing amount of opportunities for women within the Council. This was largely due to a more flexible way of working emerging since the pandemic. A large proportion of staff had embraced a hybrid working style. The Waste Team had more female operatives and stereotypes were disappearing in what were traditionally male areas such as the tradespeople within the Direct Works Organisation. The Committee were informed that there were no specific measures to encourage female HGV drivers in particular as there was a shortage of drivers nationwide.

AGREED:

That the Employment Committee noted the outcomes of the 2020/2021 Gender Pay Gap Report.

6. **Pay Review Update**

The Committee were presented with a report that provided a brief update on the pay review following the endorsement of the pay review scope at the Employment Committee meeting on 19 January 2022. Members were asked to note the proposed actions and timescales for the implementation of the review that were detailed within the report – in particular, the next steps, quality impact assessment and working group timetable.

The following points were raised by Members during discussion:

- Were grades being reviewed and was the process similar to a job evaluation?
- The final report was scheduled for March 2023. Would this be too late for the implications to be worked into the budget?

The Deputy Chief Executive informed the Committee that the review was not the national pay negotiation. It was a process to deal with the anomalies that exist within the pay system. The increase in minimum and living wage has caused there to be little difference in pay between some levels of role and the structure in pay must be fair. There was ongoing communication with the Finance Team in reference to the budget.

The Deputy Leader of the Council added that any budget implications from the report would be backdated.

AGREED:

That the Committee noted the proposed actions and timescales for the implementation of the Pay Review.

7. **Work Programme 2021 - 2022**

The Committee noted the contents of the Work Programme 2021 – 2022.

A Member raised the following point:

- It was noted that the Chief Executive's appraisal was recorded as being 'conducted' by the Committee and should be amended as being 'noted' by the Committee.

8. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

Members considered excluding the press and public, following a vote it was **AGREED** unanimously.

DECISION:

That the press and public be excluded during discussion of the following agenda item because of the likelihood that information that is exempt under paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) would be disclosed to them.

9. Chief Executive's Appraisal

Restricted Minute.

10. Any other business, which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, decides is urgent

The Chairman informed the Committee that the extra Employment Committee meeting scheduled for 30 March 2022 was to be rearranged for a different date which was to be confirmed imminently.

11. Close of meeting

The Chairman closed the meeting at 11:10.