Employment Committee – Meeting held on Monday, 25th September, 2023.

Present:- Councillors Zarait (Chair), Khawar (Vice-Chair), Escott, D. Parmar and Qaseem (arrived 6.40pm)

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Bedi

PART 1

8. **Declarations of Interest**

   No declarations were made.

9. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 22nd June 2023**

   Members requested that the change in date of the September Committee meeting from 12th September to 25th September be noted.

   Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd June 2023 be approved as a correct record.

10. **Updated Acceptable Use of Systems and Technology Policy Report**

    The Associate Director, Chief Digital and Information Officer introduced the report. The updated acceptable use of systems and technology policy wrapped up five previous separate discreet policies in ths area. Subject to approval by members, officers would publicise the updated policy and provide learning opportunities for staff to ensure they were fully aware of their obligations with regard to the policy and to protect the council from cyber threats.

    There were questions from members on training timescales and on compliance. On training it was explained that if the updated policy was approved, officers would start in the next few days to work with HR on raising awarenes of the policy and on training including e-learning and in-person training. Action would not be taken against any staff regarding policy breaches until they had been given the opportunity to learn and take in the policy.

    On compliance a member asked if there had been any reported cases of non-compliance in the past year. The AD stated that while he was aware that there had been some issues in the past with internal use of IT, this had not been recent. External threats were constantly monitored and evidence of some activity had been seen in this area and countered using the tools available to IT colleagues.

    Resolved – That the Committee approved the adoption of the latest version of the Acceptable Use of Systems and Technology Policy.

11.   Senior Management Restructure Report

The Chief Executive introduced the Senior Management Restructure report. The restructure proposed a common sense structure which would remedy some of the confusion that previous restructures had caused. The proposal was to move to a 'London' structure of Directors, Executive Directors and Heads of Service, which was more widely used and recognised and would also help with recruitment, giving clarity on the position-level being advertised.

The Chief Executive advised that there had been wide consultation with staff regarding the restructure, firstly at an informal level and then through formal consultation, and feedback had been taken on board resulting in tweaks and changes in response to this. If approved by members the proposed restructure would be presented to Council later in the week for approval.

The Chief Executive also drew members' attention to the recommendation for Slough Borough Council to have its own Director of Health, given the health inequalities in Slough.

In answer to questions about the grading system and the expected impact of the restructure in terms of performance and efficiency, it was explained that differences in grading eg between Grade SML 11 and SML 12, which both covered Heads of Service posts, were dependent on the job evaluation and the level of resource responsibility, the grading had also been independently evaluated. In terms of expected impact on performance the Chief Executive explained that the senior management restructure was not a work in isolation, and a cultural change was needed in the organisation in terms of accountability, performance, all staff having an appraisal and understanding where their work fit into the wider organisational objectives; the restructure was a part of this process.

Members also raised questions on potential vacancies at senior level and retention policy. In answer it was clarified that the recruitment process would begin as soon as the senior management restructure was approved, with roles being marketed as a place to come if candidates wanted to make a real difference. If candidates could see that they were coming to an organisation that was developing and improving and helping its people develop then it was hoped they would stay in the organisation.

Resolved – That the Committee:

i)   Noted the contents of the report.
ii)   Recommended the report to Council to –
   a) Approve the chief officer structure as set out in Appendix A and agree the pay grades for the new Director posts which included grades over £100,000.
   b) Note the other proposed changes to the structure at Appendix A that the Head of Paid Service intended to make and approve the redundancy package(s) set out in Appendix B.

     c) Authorise the Monitoring Officer to make any consequential changes to the Constitution, including Article 12, Part 3.6 Scheme of Delegation to Officers, Part 4.7 Officer Employment Rules, and Part 7.

     d) Delegate to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader decisions to depart from the multi-borough agreement to share a statutory Director of Public Health (recruitment to that post would then be conducted in the normal way).

12. Attendance Record

Resolved – that details of the Members' attendance record 2022/23 be noted.

13. Date of Next Meeting - 18th January 2024

The date of the next scheduled meeting was confirmed as 18th January 2023.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 6.50 pm)