

CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of meeting held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Almada Street, Hamilton on 4 May 2005

Chair:

Councillor Pat Watters

Councillors Present:

Archie Buchanan, Pam Clearie, Stewart Crawford, Gerry Docherty (Depute), Jim Docherty, Bev Gauld, Tommy Gilligan, Davy Keirs, Hector Macdonald, Billy McCaig, Brian McCaig, John McGuinness, Ian McInnes, Denis McKenna, David McLachlan, Mary McNeill, John Ormiston, Patricia Osborne, William Ross (Senior Depute), Graham Scott, David Shearer, Jim Wardhaugh

Councillors' Apologies:

David Baillie, Jim Daisley, Liz Handibode, Carol Hughes, Edward McAvoy, Michael McCann, Henry Mitchell, Betty Rush, May Smith

Attending:

Corporate Resources

G Killin, Head of Personnel Services; S McLeod, Administration Officer; A Wilson, Employee Relations and Involvement Manager

Finance and Information Technology Resources

A Murray, Assistant Finance Manager (Accounting and Budgeting)

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Resources Committee held on 9 March 2005 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Committee decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Corporate Resources – Workforce Monitoring – February and March 2005

A report dated 12 April 2005 by the Executive Director (Corporate Resources) was submitted on the following employee information for Corporate Resources for the period February and March 2005:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ disciplinary hearings, grievances and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers
- ◆ Joint Staffing Watch as at 12 March 2005

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 9 March 2005 (Paragraph 6)]

4 Council-wide Workforce Monitoring – February and March 2005

A report dated 12 April 2005 by the Executive Director (Corporate Resources) was submitted on the following Council-wide employee information for the period February and March 2005:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ disciplinary hearings, grievances and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers
- ◆ labour turnover
- ◆ recruitment monitoring
- ◆ Joint Staffing Watch as at 12 March 2005

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 9 March 2005 (Paragraph 7)]

5 Corporate Resources - Resource Plan 2005/2006

A report dated 14 April 2005 by the Executive Director (Corporate Resources) was submitted on the Corporate Resources' Resource Plan for 2005/2006. The main aims and objectives, the service delivery proposals and the key action plans for all major activities within Corporate Resources were detailed.

The Committee recommended to the Executive Committee: that the Corporate Resources' Resource Plan for 2005/2006 be approved.

6 Proposals to Amend the Local Government and Teachers' Pension Schemes

A report dated 20 April 2005 by the Executive Director (Corporate Resources) was submitted on proposals to amend the Local Government and Teachers' Pension Schemes.

As part of a major review of pension arrangements, the Government had been consulting on proposals to amend all public sector pension schemes, including the Local Government and Teachers' Pension Schemes in Scotland.

As part of the process, it had been intended to amend the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) from 1 April 2005 in England and Wales and from 1 April 2006 in Scotland. Those proposals included raising the minimum retirement age from 50 to 55 and removing the ability of employees to retire before age 65 on full pension. Thereafter, from 2008, there would be fundamental changes to the Pension Scheme based on the Government's "Green Paper" proposals. Those changes would also be reflected in other public sector schemes.

Following votes for industrial action by all of the major public sector unions on this issue, the Regulations implementing the changes to the LGPS from 1 April 2005 had been rescinded and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) had agreed to establish a tripartite Committee with key stakeholders to agree how to develop proposals on pensions that would be affordable and sustainable. As part of this, the ODPM had asked for comments on the proposals in the Green Paper to be submitted by 31 May 2005.

The Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) had written to the Scottish Public Pensions Agency requesting the establishment of a specific Scottish group mirroring that for England and Wales. In addition, COSLA would respond to the ODPM on the general arrangement.

In terms of the importance of this issue and in recognition of the fact that pensions were a major element of local authority employees' Pay and Conditions of Service, it was proposed that the Council's approach should be that:-

- ◆ all public sector schemes should be dealt with in the same way and on the same timescales
- ◆ existing scheme members should be offered protection along the principles of "you have what you hold"
- ◆ the Trade Unions should be fully involved in developing the new pensions arrangements
- ◆ the above be communicated to COSLA as the formal position of the Council

The Committee decided:

(1) that the Council's response in principle to the consultative process be as follows:-

- ◆ all public sector schemes should be dealt with in the same way and on the same timescales
- ◆ existing scheme members should be offered protection along the principles of "you have what you hold"
- ◆ the Trade Unions should be fully involved in developing the new pensions arrangements; and

(2) that the above be communicated to COSLA as the formal position of the Council.

7 Vocational Development Programme Rollout

A report dated 7 April 2005 by the Executive Director (Corporate Resources) was submitted on the rollout of the Vocational Development Programme.

The South Lanarkshire Council Vocational Development Programme (VDP) pilot had started in the academic year 2003/2004. The aim of the Programme was to give pupils the opportunity to have first hand experience and, where appropriate, qualifications in specific occupational areas. This would enable young people throughout the area to make an informed decision on their future choice of career.

In order to provide a full range of opportunities to as large a number of pupils as possible, it was proposed that the Vocational Development Programme (Mainstream) be expanded to include all schools in South Lanarkshire. This would result in a total of approximately 460 third year pupils starting on the Programme in 2005/2006, more than doubling the previous intake. The Mainstream Programme would include the additional occupational areas of Administration, Early Years Care and Education and Manufacturing.

The approximate numbers for year 2005/2006 for each option would be as follows:-

- ◆ 100 Construction
- ◆ 100 Hospitality
- ◆ 65 Social Care/Early Years Care and Education
- ◆ 65 Manufacturing
- ◆ 65 Administration
- ◆ 65 Finance and Customer Services

It was also proposed that the December Leavers' Programme be expanded from 100 to 250 participants and that the Special Needs Programme be expanded to include some young people with emotional behavioural difficulties. The Special Needs Programme would be individually tailored to fit the pupil's vocational profile. This would increase the inclusiveness of the Programme and would allow 46 young people to participate in 2005/2006.

Where there were training programmes within the Council, it was proposed that young people on the Vocational Development Programme be invited to apply, with places being "ring fenced" for them.

Partnerships with the private sector would assist in providing placement opportunities for young people in all areas. Initial work to establish this relationship with the private sector had been undertaken.

Funding had been secured through the European Social Fund for the following 2 projects which would form part of the Programme:-

- ◆ Vocational development in Special Needs schools and further develop the work being carried out by the Vocational Development Programme
- ◆ Vocational, educational and personal support for 50 disengaged young people in the rural area. This would be run in partnership with Education Resources and Integrated Children's Services and was based on a model successfully piloted in Cathkin High School

It was proposed that the following posts be established:-

- ◆ 1 post of Co-ordinator (temporary initially for 1 year) graded SCP 46–57 (£19,161 to £22,574) to assist with the Vocational Development Programme, funded through City Visions
- ◆ 1 post of temporary Co-ordinator (temporary initially for 1 year) graded SCP 46–57 (£19,161 to £22,574) to assist with the Special Needs Programme, funded through the European Social Fund
- ◆ 2 posts of Co-ordinator (temporary for 2 years) graded SCP 46–57 (£19,161 to £22,574) to support the Rural Project for disengaged young people, funded through the European Social Fund

Funding of £1.3 million for the Vocational Development Programme had been secured through the City Growth Fund via City Visions.

The Committee decided:

- (1) that the Vocational Development Programme be rolled out to all South Lanarkshire Council mainstream secondary schools;
- (2) that the occupational areas of Administration, Early Years Care and Education and Manufacturing be added to the Programme;
- (3) that the Vocational Development Programme be expanded as follows:-
 - ◆ Mainstream Programme from 155 pupils to approximately 615 pupils
 - ◆ Special Needs Programme from 26 to 46 pupils
 - ◆ December Leavers' Programme from 100 to 250 pupils;
- (4) that the following posts be established:-
 - ◆ 1 post of Co-ordinator (temporary initially for 1 year) graded SCP 46–57 (£19,161 to £22,574) to assist with the Vocational Development Programme, funded through City Visions

- ◆ 1 post of temporary Co-ordinator (temporary initially for 1 year) graded SCP 46–57 (£19,161 to £22,574) to assist with the Special Needs Programme, funded through the European Social Fund
- ◆ 2 posts of Co-ordinator (temporary for 2 years) graded SCP 46–57 (£19,161 to £22,574) to support the Rural Project for disengaged young people, funded through the European Social Fund

[Reference: Minutes of 20 October 2004 (Paragraph 14)]

8 Appeals Panel

The minutes of the meetings of the Appeals Panel held on 10 and 31 March and 22 April 2005 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Committee decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

9 Hospitality Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Hospitality Committee held on 12 April 2005 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Committee decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

10 Early Retirement and Redeployment

A joint report dated 11 April 2005 by the Executive Directors (Corporate Resources) and (Finance and Information Technology Resources) was submitted on early retirements and the redeployment exercise during the period 1 October 2004 to 31 March 2005. Authority had been delegated to the Executive Director (Corporate Resources), in consultation with the Executive Director (Finance and Information Technology Resources), to approve applications for early retirement on the basis that a report detailing the corresponding costs and savings would be submitted to the Committee at 6 monthly intervals.

The Committee decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 15 December 2004 (Paragraph 11)]

11 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.