

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

Note of Working Group

Monday 7th September 2020

Annual Assurance Report on Employment Policies and Procedures and Employee Conduct

The HR Service Manager presented the report of the chief Officer Human Resources.

The Committee were advised that the new people Strategy 2020-25 has introduced the new ambition to be the Best Place to Work.

The Committee received assurance that the Council's disciplinary policy is ACAS compliant.

The Committee were informed that the supporting staff at work charter and accompanying reasonable adjustment and carers passports have been agreed and will be launched shortly.

The report highlights workforce implications of meeting the Council's financial challenges, Members were assured that services are being supported in the staffing implications, with the current focus relating to voluntary measures.

Members were advised that Covid-19 has had a number of implications including:

- Disciplinary hearings have been delayed;
- Returns in relation to the annual exercise for register of interests and gifts and hospitality will be delayed until September 2020;
- Alternative survey methods have been used to obtain staff feedback.

Members were directed to the new section in the report giving details in relation to both officer and democratic oversight and monitoring.

Members of the Committee asked questions and received responses as follows:

Q: Given that the gifts and hospitality process has been amended on the basis of the Committee's discussion on the last annual assurance report can confirmation be provided that high risk officers have complied.

A: The HR Service Manager, explained that completion of the exercise had been delayed to September as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and undertook to update the committee as to progress at the formal meeting of Committee on 21st September 2020.

Q: With reference to paragraph 3.2 could a breakdown of disciplinary cases be provided.

A: Information was not available to hand. However, since the working group took place officers have confirmed that the outcomes of these cases were as follows:

- 21 dismissals,
- 1 transfer as alternative to dismissal,
- 25 final written warning,

- 9 written warning,
- 18 refer back to management,
- 27 recommendations to management,
- 16 resignations,
- 9 employment ceased and
- 11 no further action.

Q: With reference to paragraph 3.12 could officers provide additional information in relation to “other voluntary measures” to provide savings.

A: These other voluntary measures include reduction in hours, career breaks, the buying of additional annual leave and flexible retirement.

Q: With reference to paragraph 4.6.2 could officers provide a breakdown of Employment Tribunal claims.

A: Information was not available to hand. However, since the working group took place officers have confirmed that between 1st April 2019 and 31st March 2020 there were 8 Employment Tribunal claims received and the types and outcomes are as follows:

- **Disability Discrimination.** Withdrawn by claimant.
- **Race Discrimination.** Withdrawn by claimant.
- **ET multi.** Went to a hearing and LCC succeeded.
- **Unfair dismissal** Dismissed against the claimant.
- **Unfair dismissal.** Withdrawn by claimant.
- **Unfair dismissal** settled following judicial mediation.
- **ET multiple claim.** Current.
- **ET Other .** Current.

It is recommended by the working group that

1. The Committee approves the recommendations set out in the report.