

**Durham County Council**

**Human Resources Committee**

**At a meeting** of the **Human Resources Committee** held at County Hall in Durham on **Friday 8 August 2008** at **10.00 am**.

**Present:**

**Councillor J Brown** in the Chair

**Members of the Committee:**

Councillors J Armstrong, J Blakey, D Boyes, M Campbell, J Chaplow, P Charlton, R Crooks, G Huntington, S Iveson, L Marshall, N Martin, E Mavin, D Myers, E Paylor, M Plews, J Robinson, B Stephens, Andrew Turner, A Willis and A Wright

**Other Members:**

Councillors D Bowman, A Cox, J Gray, C Magee, M Simmons, P Stradling and M Wilkes

Apologies were received from Councillors A Bell, J Docherty, A Hopgood, M Potts, A Savory, G Tennant and E Tomlinson

**A1 Minutes of the Meetings held on 13 June 2008 and 9 July 2008**

The minutes of the meetings held on 13 June 2008 and 9 July 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**A2 Age Discrimination Update**

The Committee considered and noted a report of the Head of Human Resources providing an update on developments in relation to age discrimination regulations, including the strategy for older workers (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Head of Human Resources informed Members that the report was prepared for information purposes to update Members on the developing strategy with regard to age discrimination. As case law emerges, the impact of legislation will become clearer with ongoing practices continuing to be monitored in order to ensure that legal and required standards are being met.

### **A3 Competency Framework for the new Authority**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Human Resources providing details of the six competency areas for all employees for the new Unitary Authority (for copy see file of Minutes).

The Head of Human Resources informed the Committee that a workshop was facilitated by PricewaterhouseCoopers with 13 representatives from the existing 8 Councils in County Durham to discuss the development of a behavioural competency framework for all employees for the new Unitary Council.

The Authority will develop and refine the competencies as job descriptions become more clearly defined. Further updates on the competency framework will be provided in due course.

#### **Resolved:**

That the recommendations within the report be approved.

### **A4 Any Other Business**

With reference to the minutes of the meeting held on 13 June (page 2, paragraph 4), Councillor Huntington requested that further information be provided to the Committee with regard to the consultations with private industry as to why sickness absence levels in the private sector are significantly lower than those in the public sector.

Councillor Armstrong commented that, whilst he is supportive of the request for further information, like for like comparisons are not always possible within the public sector and private industry.

Councillor Martin referred to the system for recording sickness absence currently being run by Durham City Council. The system is facilitated by an Agency which collects data from employees reporting sickness absence. Figures indicate a reduction in their sickness absence levels. Councillor Martin added that the new Authority should ensure that best practices from the various Councils are identified and considered for implementation by the new Authority.