

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

At a Meeting of **Human Resources Committee** held in Council Chamber, County Hall, Durham on **Thursday 16 June 2016 at 10.00 am**

Present:

Councillor J Hillary (Chairman)

Members of the Committee:

Councillors S Iveson (Vice-Chairman), J Armstrong, J Blakey, J Brown, J Clark, T Henderson, D Hicks, S Morrison, J Robinson, K Shaw and K Thompson

Also Present:

J Kemp – Human Resources Advice and support Manager

N Orton – Pensions Manager

L Mason – HR Business Lead, Neighbourhood Services

J Walt – HR Business Lead, Children and Adults Services

S Weston – HR Business Lead, ACE/RED, Resources

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors K Henig, B Moir, R Ormerod and A Surtees.

2 Substitute Members

There were no substitute Members.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2016 were agreed as a correct record and were signed by the Chairman.

5 Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

6 Applications for Early Retirement and/or Voluntary Redundancy for Council Employees

Consideration was given to the joint report of the Corporate Directors Children and Adults Services, Neighbourhood Services and Regeneration and Economic Development, and the Human Resources Advice and Support Manager (for copy see file of Minutes).

In discussing one of the applications at paragraph 6 in the report Members were informed of the reasons for the length of the payback period for initial costs which at 3.18 years was longer than the usual 2.5 years. This was due to the employee being temporarily promoted into a higher graded post during the final year or so of employment. This had led to an increase in the value of the employee's final salary benefits (those based on service before 1 April 2014) and a corresponding increase in the capital cost of releasing the pension benefits early. However, annual savings had been calculated based on the employee's substantive post, meaning the overall payback period was longer than the normal 2.5 years.

The comment was made by Councillor Clark that it would be useful for the Committee to be briefed on the procedure in connection with the issue of Section 188 Redundancy Notices.

Members discussed the cases at paragraphs 16 and 17 in the report at length, and were particularly concerned about the workload of employees carrying out this specialist service and the pressure on existing staff following the departure of the employees referred to in the report.

In response to questions Members were informed that the Council was recruiting to this Service but that it had not been possible to secure suitable alternative employment for the employees specified because of the specialist nature of the work and the specific criteria required.

Following discussion about service provision and retention of staff within the service, it was suggested that current employment figures, together with details of training and recruitment be provided at the next meeting for information.

Resolved:

That

- a) the cases of early Retirement and Voluntary Redundancy be noted and agreed with effect from the dates specified in the report;
- b) the cases of Compulsory Redundancy and Early Retirement be noted and agreed with effect from the dates specified in the report;
- c) the information requested by Members, as outlined above, be provided at the next meeting of the Committee.