

---

**BRECKLAND COUNCIL**

**At a Meeting of the**

**GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE**

**Held on Wednesday, 16 April 2014 at 10.00 am in  
Anglia Room, The Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham**

**PRESENT**

Mr P.J. Duigan (Chairman)	Mrs S.M. Matthews
Mr T R Carter (Vice-Chairman)	Mr B J Skull
Mr S.G. Bambridge	Mrs A.L. Steward
Mr W.P. Borrett	Mr D.R. Williams JP
Mr C. S. Clark	

**Also Present**

Mrs L.S. Turner

**In Attendance**

Ruth Hassall	- HR Manager
Helen McAleer	- Senior Committee Officer
Riana Rudland	- Community Development Manager & Interim Environmental Services Manager

**Action By**

**12/14 MINUTES (AGENDA ITEM 1)**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2014 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**13/14 APOLOGIES (AGENDA ITEM 2)**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chapman-Allen, Goreham and Stasiak.

**14/14 NON-MEMBERS WISHING TO ADDRESS THE MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 5)**

Councillor Turner, Deputy Leader & Executive Member for Community & Environmental Services, was in attendance.

**15/14 LOCAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE : 3 APRIL 2014 (AGENDA ITEM 6)**

The Minutes of the Local Joint Consultative Committee (LJCC) meeting held on 3 April 2014 had been tabled for Members.

The Chairman of the LJCC drew attention to the changes in Legislation referred to at Minute No 17/14.

**RESOLVED** that the unconfirmed Minutes of the LJCC meeting held on 3 April 2014 be adopted.

**16/14 DEVELOPING STRONGER COMMUNITIES (AGENDA ITEM 7)**

The Community Development Manager presented the report which sought approval to increase the establishment by one full time equivalent to appoint an apprentice on a two year, fixed term contract.

There were two pots of unallocated money which were left over from previous funding bids. The funding bodies no longer existed and Norfolk County Council had confirmed that they did not want the money back, but the original grant conditions still applied and so the money had to be spent on similar projects.

It was proposed that the apprentice would be based in the Communities team initially and would then move to the Marketing & Communications team. There was money available to fund the post and any additional training or equipment that might be required.

Councillor Bambridge suggested that the money might be better spent more generally within the Council, but it was pointed out that the original grants had been for projects aimed at getting people into work or up-skilling and improving communications with community groups.

The Executive Member for Community & Environmental Services reminded Members of a scheme run by the Pride Officer which had given temporary employment to a group of out-of-work people. One of whom was now a permanent employee of the Council. She said that she had discussed the proposals at length with the Executive Member for Communications, Organisational Performance, Development & Public Protection and also with the Interim Communications Team Leader.

Councillor Bambridge asked if the money would be better spent in the community supporting many young people rather than just one.

The Community Services Manager considered that the apprenticeship post would provide more sustainable value for the money than running a series of workshops for example. She also confirmed that there would be no additional costs to the Council.

Councillor Williams noted that during the discussions by the LJCC he had raised concerns about the apprentice representing the Council in the community and stressed the need for training to protect the Council's reputation.

It was confirmed that the apprentice would be managed by the Communities team and mentored and trained as any other member of staff on the Council's policies and procedures. The job would be mainly office based and any information for distribution to community groups or to be placed on the Council's website would be checked by senior officers before being released.

Councillor Steward was committed to apprenticeships and for transparency she mentioned her involvement in Getting Kids into Apprenticeships. She wanted assurance that the apprentice would end up with a good qualification.

The Community Development Manager confirmed that it was intended that the apprentice would get a recognised qualification. It was proposed to work with Norwich City College, but there were other colleges that might have appropriate

**Action By**

courses. There were discussions underway to improve the Council's digital communications and the apprentice might need additional training to become involved in that project if it progressed.

Councillor Clark thought it was a great initiative and asked whether the basic salary should be higher.

The HR Manager advised that the amount was the National Rate for apprenticeships.

Councillor Carter was fully in favour of the proposal and pleased that the employment would be worthwhile and Councillor Borrett also heartily endorsed it as a very positive step.

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Community & Environmental Services noted that as the Council no longer had the Voice magazine most of its publicity came from community based projects and the post would enhance the Council's integration with community groups.

**RESOLVED** that the establishment be increased by 1FTE and the appointment of an apprentice on a two year fixed term contract, to support marketing and communication activity on Developing Stronger Communities and Pride in Breckland, be approved.

**17/14 PRIDE IN BRECKLAND (AGENDA ITEM 8)**

The Community Development Manager presented the report which sought approval to increase the establishment by one full time equivalent (FTE) to appoint a Pride Officer.

The Pride Board wanted to reinvigorate the Pride project and had proposed that a dedicated officer be appointed using funding accumulated from the Second Homes Council Tax Grant which had to be used for community engagement.

The Pride Board had a large amount in its reserve which could not be used as revenue for the Council. The Pride Officer would focus on Health & Wellbeing linking in with other projects in the district, such as the Master Gardener Project which was already underway.

Councillor Borrett asked who sat on the Pride Board and was advised that it was made up of representatives from the Police, Fire & Rescue, Public Health, Area Partnerships and various community groups, together with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council.

The Deputy Leader & Executive Member for Community & Environmental Services said they had tried to make it as all-encompassing as possible and had recently invited new people to sit on the Board which was completely independent. She supported the views of the Board.

Councillor Bambridge thought it would be useful if a back-bench Member could sit on the Board to provide a different perspective. He endorsed the Board and said that lots of little organisations could be helped by small grants but they were afraid to apply.

**Action By**

Membership had been discussed at the last Board and new people had been invited to replace those that had failed to participate. The grant application process had also been discussed and the form had been refreshed to make it easier. It was also planned to hold another round of Participatory Budgeting.

Councillor Williams noted that most of the money had gone to the bigger towns during the last round of Participatory Budgeting and he was advised that it would be done differently as lessons had been learned.

Councillor Steward said it was up to Ward Representatives to make their areas aware that funding was available. She was more concerned that the money was put to the right use and hoped that the Pride Officer post would be able to ensure that it was.

Councillor Williams asked about the processes and procedures used by the Board. He felt it was extremely important that the public could see how decisions on grant applications were made. He was advised that the Policies and Procedures were all on the Council's website. Grant applications were scored by the Group and those which received enough points were awarded a grant. Each area or group represented on the Board had one vote. If the application was for their area or by their group they did not participate in the voting. The application form made clear the criteria that needed to be met.

The Deputy Leader & Executive Member for Community & Environmental Services advised that she could sign off grants up to £5,000 that had been approved by the Board. Larger grants went to Cabinet for sign off.

Councillor Borrett asked if grant applications needed the support of the local Ward Member and it was confirmed that they did. The first question on the application form asked if the Ward Member had been informed. If that question was not answered or the Ward Member had not been made aware the application was returned.

**RESOLVED** that an increase to the establishment by 1 FTE and the creation of a Pride in Breckland Officer post, on a 2 year fixed term contract, funded by the Second Homes Council Tax Grant received from Norfolk County Council for community related projects, be approved.

**18/14 LOCALISM ACT 2011 - PAY POLICY STATEMENT (AGENDA ITEM 9)**

The HR Manager presented the report which sought approval of the Pay Policy Statement 2014/15. It was a legal requirement that the Council published the Statement annually and to include comment on the relationship between the pay of the Chief Executive and lower paid staff.

**RESOLVED** that the Council's Pay Policy Statement 2014/15 be adopted.

**19/14 PRP SCHEME AND PAY AWARD 2014/15 (AGENDA ITEM 10)**

The HR Manager presented the recommendations for the PRP Scheme and Pay Award. It was clarified that the award was based on the old appraisal scheme, not the new scheme which had been previously discussed by the Committee and which took effect from 1 April 2014.

**Action By**

It was proposed that there would be a basic 1% performance increase to all staff rated as 'performing' and for those rated as over-achieving or exceptional an additional 0.5% or 1% increase. Those awards would increase the salary budget by 1.325%.

A couple of small errors were pointed out. In Appendix A the salary ranges were the figures for the new financial year. In Appendix C the Guidance was for 2013 figures.

Councillor Clark asked if all staff had the opportunity to overachieve or to be exceptional and it was confirmed that they did, except for a few cases outlined in Appendix C.

Councillor Bambridge was concerned that awards to staff at the top of their grade were not consolidated.

The HR Manager explained that that was to avoid people drifting out of their grade. However, as the maximum of each pay grade was to be uplifted by 1% they would not lose out. She agreed that it was a problem but under the Job Evaluation Scheme each post was rated at a specific grade and if someone was paid higher than their grade it could lead to an equal pay claim.

Councillor Borrett queried the process as it seemed that the decision had already been made and he asked what staff thought the amount would be.

The HR Manager advised that the scheme had stood for a number of years, but it was the percentages that were being agreed. Various options had been put forward to the Corporate Management Team (CMT). They included the request from the Union to pay 2% and an option to make no award at all. CMT had recommended the proposal being considered. The staff had not known the amount and that was an issue that had been raised at LJCC. It was not possible to know what money would be available for the pay award until the budget was set and that didn't happen until the end of February. However, it had been agreed that negotiations with the Union should commence in October.

It was noted that the recommendation from LJCC had been subject to approval by the Union members. It was confirmed that they had agreed to the proposal and therefore the first part of the recommendation was redundant. The recommendation also had the support of the Executive Member.

**RESOLVED** that:

- (1) a Basic Performance Increase (BPI) of 1% of salary be approved;
- (2) the following staff consolidated PRP payments, using the ratings taken from the 2012/13 annual appraisals, be approved:
  - Exceptional = 1.0%
  - Overachieving = 0/5%
  - Performing = 0%
- (3) Pay scales (minimum and maximums) be uplifted by 1.0%; and

**Action By**

- (4) The agreed process and eligibility guidelines be applied from 2013/14.

**20/14 NEXT MEETING (AGENDA ITEM 11)**

It was noted that the date on the Agenda was incorrect. The next meeting would take place on Wednesday 11 June 2014 at 10.00am in the Norfolk Room, Conference Suite, Elizabeth House, Dereham.

**Senior Management Changes (for information)**

The Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Community & Environmental Services informed Members that the Community Development Manager (Riana Rudland) had been made Service Manager for both Communities and Environmental Services across both Councils on a three month trial.

That change released the Interim Environmental Services Manager (Dale Robinson) to take over as the Interim Business Development Manager following the departure of Rob Blanden.

The meeting closed at 11.10 am

CHAIRMAN