

ORGANISATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6 JANUARY 2016

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ORGANISATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6 JANUARY 2016

Present:

Councillor B Wright	Chair
Councillor T Mansbridge	Vice-Chair
Councillor J Barry	Councillor B Ridgway
“ A Dale	“ R Welton
“ B Lewis	“ J Windle

Also Present

Sarah Sternberg - Assistant Director – Governance & Monitoring Officer (for Min No 508)
Sue Broadhead - Overview & Scrutiny Manager
Donna Cairns - Senior Governance Officer
Sarah Cottam - Governance Officer

505 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence submitted to this meeting.

506 Declarations of Interest

Members were requested to declare the existence and nature of any disclosable pecuniary interest and/or other interest, not already on their register of interests, in any item on the agenda and withdraw from the meeting at the appropriate time.

There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

507 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the special meeting of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee held on 9 December 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

508 Whistleblowing Policy

The Committee considered the Council's Whistleblowing Policy in support of the Standards Committee review in March 2016.

Sarah Sternberg, Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer, attended the meeting to answer any questions.

At the last meeting Councillor R Welton requested that the Committee examine the Policy within its remit and ensure robustness of the HR procedures that supported the Policy.

The Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that the Policy was coming up for review at the Standards Committee and any comments from Members would be considered in the process.

Councillor R Welton wished to see clear mechanisms in place for people to report issues through the Whistleblowing Policy and that the HR procedures in place were easily understandable.

It was requested that paragraph 11.3 of the Policy be reworded to state that the Council would not initially expect a disclosure to be made to the press.

The Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer advised that the issues raised would be considered in the review of the Whistleblowing Policy at the next Standards Committee in March 2016.

RESOLVED – That the Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer would consider the issues and comments raised by Members and these would be considered as part of the review of the Whistleblowing Policy at the next Standards Committee in March 2016.

(Assistant Director – Governance and Monitoring Officer)

509 Key Decision – Issue No 42

The Committee considered Issue No 42 of the List of Key Decisions which set out the major decisions being taken over the next few months.

RESOLVED – That the List of Key Decisions – Issue No 42 – be noted.
(Governance)

510 Work Programme

The Committee considered its Work Programme for 2015/16 which set out the items that the Committee would consider over the forthcoming year.

RESOLVED – That the Organisation Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for 2015/16 be noted.

(Members/
Overview & Scrutiny Manager)

511 Additional Urgent Items (Public Session)

There were no items of urgent business to be discussed in the public session of this meeting.

512 Exclusion of Public

RESOLVED - That the public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following item of business to avoid the disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006).

513 Administrative Arrangements and Joint Officers Scrutiny Review

The Committee considered, as part of its review into 'Administrative Arrangements and Joint Officers' data on the following:-

- Sickness
- Use of agency/consultants
- Recruitment and Retention
- Overtime

Concerns were raised by Members over the lack of exit questionnaires being carried out when an employee left the Council. It was felt that the Council should be collecting this information to help improve services within the Council.

The Committee requested a copy of the 'Exit Questionnaire' and questioned if Managers in the Council received training on exit interviews.

The data received showed an apparent rise in sickness absence in North East Derbyshire compared to Bolsover and members considered whether there was a link with North East Derbyshire hosting more services in the Strategic Alliance.

However, the Committee felt that the data provided to them was not detailed enough to carry out a thorough analysis. Therefore, they requested the following information/documentation for consideration ahead of the next meeting on 3 February 2016:-

- Copies of the authority's exit questionnaire and guidance/policies supporting this.
- Did Managers receive training/instructions on the need to carry out exit interviews?
- Current percentages of sickness within the authority, the current target and the percentage of people working under these arrangements – sickness levels at North East Derbyshire and Bolsover District Council.
- Percentage of workforce at North East Derbyshire and Bolsover District Councils working under these arrangements and the Strategic Alliance as a whole.

- A breakdown of the pay bands of people working within these arrangements and the numbers for each.
- Had any risk assessments been carried out on the staff working under these arrangements and what were they? Was there a standard form?
- The number of vacancies/leavers that had occurred in each area working under these arrangements and what rates of pay were these on.

The Committee also requested that a representative from Human Resources attend the next Organisation Scrutiny Committee meeting on 3 February 2016 to provide an explanation of the data to Members and to answer any questions on the data provided.

RESOLVED – That:-

- (1) All the information requested above be provided to the Committee ahead of its meeting on 3 February 2016.
- (2) A representative from Human Resources attend the next meeting of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee on 3 February 2016 to provide an explanation to Members and to answer any questions on the data provided.

514 Additional Urgent Item (Private Session)

There were no items of additional urgent business to be discussed in the private session of the meeting.

515 Re-admission of the Public

RESOLVED – That members of the public be re-admitted to the meeting.

516 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Organisation Scrutiny Committee would take place on Wednesday, 3 February 2016 at 3.00 pm.