

APPOINTMENTS BOARD

Thursday, 2nd February, 2012 at 2.00 p.m.

In a Conference Room, Council House, Walsall

Present

Councillor Towe (Chairman)
Councillor Ali (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Ansell
Councillor Burley
Councillor Chambers
Councillor Robertson
Councillor D. Shires

537/12 Appointment of Chairman

The Clerk sought nominations for the position of Chairman for this meeting only. Councillor Towe was the only nomination.

Resolved

That Councillor Towe be appointed as Chairman for this meeting only.

Councillor Towe in the Chair

538/12 Appointment of Vice-Chairman

Councillor Towe sought nominations for the position of Vice-Chairman for this meeting only. Councillor Ali was the only nomination.

Resolved

That Councillor Ali be appointed as Vice-Chairman for this meeting only.

539/12 Apologies

None received.

540/12 Declarations of Interest

Councillors Burley, Chambers and Robertson declared personal interests in the item on the agenda in relation to Volunteering Guidance as they were members of the Co-operative Party.

541/12 **Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985 (as amended)**

There was no business on the agenda in private session.

542/12 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th October, 2011 were submitted:-

(see annexed)

In relation to Minute No. 528/11, Councillor Chambers advised that the minute should read "the Co-operative Party" and not the "Co-operative Society".

Resolved

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24th October, 2011, a copy having previously been circulated to each Member of the Board, be approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record, subject to Minute No. 528/11 being changed to read "the Co-operative Party" instead of the "Co-operative Society".

543/12 **Volunteering Guidance**

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Bethany Evans (Head of Human Resources) and Tony Cox (Head of Legal and Democratic Services) were in attendance. Bethany presented the report and highlighted the salient points contained therein. Both Tony and Bethany answered questions which fell within their own area of expertise.

There then followed a period of questioning by Members in relation to:-

- How many staff this procedure would impact upon;
- What measures would be in place to monitor the authenticity of the applications for volunteering places;
- Whether the Council would be liable for its staff whilst they were volunteering;
- Whether there would be any guidelines on local selection criteria to ensure it was applied in a fair and consistent manner;
- How the procedure would be managed in areas of the Council where there was a required minimum number of employees to be present at work;
- How the procedure would impact upon people who were currently out of work and were trying to regain employment;

- What the financial implications might be as a result of this procedure;
- Whether other businesses in Walsall would be encouraged to also adopt a similar procedure to spread the potential burden;
- How any refusals of placements would be managed;
- If managers would be required to receive training on this matter to enable them to manage any applications under this procedure;
- Whether the procedure would be advertised as a 'good news story' for staff;
- Whether information would be shared amongst teams and directorates in instances of big events where clear co-ordination would be essential for the Council to remain operational to a sufficient level;
- Whether an additional line of information in the procedure could be included to advise staff to check that the organisation they wish to apply for had public liability insurance.

Following deliberations, Members expressed their concerns at how this procedure would operate in practice and the potential pitfalls that it could cause. In view of this, the Board felt that it would be prudent for the procedure to be trialled for a period of six months to see how it worked in practice with a view to that information being reported back to the Appointments Board at the conclusion of the trial period before a decision was made on its full approval.

Resolved

That the employee volunteering procedure be trialled for a period of six months from its date of implementation and that a full report be brought back to the Appointments Board at the conclusion of the trial period detailing how the procedure had operated in practice as well as any lessons learned.

544/12

Appeals procedure

A report was submitted:-

(see annexed)

Bethany Evans (Head of Human Resources) and Tony Cox (Head of Legal and Democratic Services) were in attendance. Bethany presented the report and highlighted the salient points contained therein. Both Bethany and Tony answered questions which fell within their own area of expertise.

Arising from general questioning by Members, the Board pursued numerous lines of queries in relation to the present situation around pay and grading. Following the conclusion of this discussion, there then followed a period of questioning by Members in relation to:-

- If Walsall did more for its employees in terms of the dismissal process when compared to the private sector;
- If temporary staff now had the same rights as full time employees;
- If current Member training was adequate or whether there was a need to improve upon the current training provided.

Councillor Chambers, being a Member of Employment Appeals Committee A, stated that he felt the proposed changes would be significantly beneficial to the operation of the appeals process and fully supported the proposed revised recommendation.

Resolved

- (1) That the new appeals procedure, as set out in Appendix 1, be approved;
- (2) That the Constitutional Services revised guidelines on dismissal appeals to Members, as set out in Appendix 2, be approved and that Council be recommended to amend the delegations and remit of Employment Appeals Committee A and B by deleting reference to grading appeals.

Termination of Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting terminated at 2.50 p.m.

Chairman

Date