

## **HUMAN RESOURCES ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSITY POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

MEETING, 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2010

Present – Councillors Kay (Chairman), R. Allen, Ayub, R. Barrow (as deputy for Councillor P Barrow), Burrows and J. Silvester.

### Also in Attendance

Ms. C. Aykol	-	Human Resources Officer
Ms. K. Kidd	-	Workforce Planning Officer
Mrs. S. Bailey	-	Principal Democratic Service Officer

Councillor Kay in the Chair.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor P. Barrow.

### **13. MINUTES**

The minutes of the proceedings of the meeting of the Policy Development Group held on 15<sup>th</sup> September, 2009 were submitted and signed as a correct record.

### **14. UNDER AND OVERPAYMENTS OF SALARY**

A report of the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development was submitted which put forward a draft policy for dealing with under and overpayments of salary to staff for the consideration and comment of members.

The report advised that a draft policy on dealing with under and over payments of salary had been produced in response to the need for:-

- a written statement of the Council's position regarding under and overpayments;
- a desire to deal with such cases sensitively and with understanding;
- guidelines for operational staff who deal with correction of under and overpayments; and

- a request from the Trade Unions for the development of a policy.

A copy of the draft policy was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

The draft policy had been produced following a discussion with payroll and income recovery and initial TU comments had also been sought. The policy addressed how under and overpayment could be prevented initially, the recovery of overpayments, writing off debts, procedure for the repayment of underpayments, bank charges and roles and responsibility.

Following consideration of the report, members discussed the policy and made a number of comments/observations:-

- the practicalities and legalities surrounding the recovery of over-payments;
- long term over-payments were harder to address; and
- the possibility of including a reminder on pay slips asking staff to check their salary carefully and to notify payroll of any discrepancies.

It was agreed that the policy be submitted for consultation with the Trade Unions.

## **15. ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY STATEMENT**

The Assistant Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report which put forward a draft Anti-Harassment Policy for the consideration and comment of members.

The report advised that the existing Anti-Harassment Policy was due for review. The revised policy would replace the existing Anti-harassment Policy with an Anti-harassment Policy Statement, which outlined the Council's position with regard to unacceptable behaviour and referred harassment complaints to be dealt with in accordance with the Grievance Procedure.

The draft Policy Statement was attached to the report and had been produced as a basis for further consultation and development.

Following consideration of the report, members discussed the revised policy statement and felt the following areas should be included/addressed:-

- age;
- religion;

- gender;
- gestures, sneers and non-verbal harassment;
- inappropriate criticisms by managers; and
- abuse of electronic systems such as e-mail, telephone, texting.

It was agreed that the Anti-Harassment Policy statement, as now amended, be used as a basis for consultation with the Trade Unions.

## **16. MARKET RATE PAY SUPPLEMENT**

Ms. C. Aykol updated members on the latest review of Market Rate Supplements paid by the Authority.

Members were reminded that the Authority had a Market Pay Supplement Policy which had been in place for some time and which had recently been revised as part of the pay review. There were approximately 100 posts, mainly professional roles, which were subject to the payment of Market Supplements.

The policy was reviewed annually and the 2010/11 review was currently ongoing. The review would involve a comparison between salaries paid by the authority and salaries paid by other authorities and external organisations to establish whether it was reasonable to pay a supplement and whether recruitment and retention difficulties would be experienced if such payments were not made.

The review would be completed by the end of February with staff being informed of the outcome in March.

A more detailed update would be provided at the next meeting of this Group.

It was agreed that the update be noted.

## **17. EQUALITIES UPDATE**

Ms. K. Kidd updated members on the latest development in terms of equalities.

Members were reminded that the Bolton Council had been a leading authority on equalities for some time. Recent changes, such as the Single Equities Bill and the dispersal of the Authority's Fairness Team last year, had meant that existing policies and procedures needed to be updated.

Following the changes, members were advised that Corporate HR was now responsible for workforce equalities and were currently looking to obtain better baseline data, revisit targets, plan actions to meet any gaps and complete a

fuller staff audit.

This work was in the preliminary stages and would be reported to this group in due course.

It was agreed that the update be noted.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and finished at 10.40 am)