

Human Resources Committee

23 November 2022

Present (In Person)

Councillor M James (Chair)

Councillor Mrs D Clements, Dr R Heath-Davies, Mrs J James, Mr GA Jones, Councillor R Jordan and Councillor PJ Morgan.

Present (Remotely)

Councillor A Wilcox

[Councillor SL Hancock joined the meeting remotely during consideration of item 7, HR Metrics.]

(Oriell y Parc, St Davids and Virtually: 12.45 p.m. – 2.30 p.m.)

1. **Apologies**

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Disclosures of interest**

There were no disclosures of interest.

3. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 29 June 2022 and 27 July 2022 were presented for confirmation and signature.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meetings held on 29 June 2022 and 27 July 2022 be confirmed and signed.

4. **Matters Arising**

a) Restructuring (Minute 6b) HR Committee 29 June)

One Member noted that she would find it helpful to receive copies of the staff newsletter, as they had done during lockdown. The Chief Executive agreed to send this to Members going forward.

There also followed some discussion regarding Members' request for cost profiling of the staff structure in the medium to long term to ensure it remained affordable. The HR Manager agreed to provide staff costs pre and post restructure, with an indication of which posts were not core funded. This would be provided in advance of the pay and grading review. The Chief Executive added that it was proposed to hold a further budget workshop on 21st December, by which time it was hoped that an indication of next year's National Park Grant would have been provided by Welsh Government.



It was agreed that:

- a) **A copy of the staff newsletter be circulated to Members;**
- b) **Staff costs pre and post restructure would be made available to Members prior to the Budget Workshop on 21st December.**

- b) HR Management Report – HR Metrics May 2022 (Minute 7f) 29 June)
It was noted that percentage figures in respect of absence rates had not been provided in the report before the Committee.

It was **requested** that in future a note of actions be made, to help officers.

5. Minutes of the Director Recruitment Panel

The minutes of the meetings held on 27 July 2022 and 8 August 2022 were presented for confirmation and signature.

With regard to the minutes of the meeting held on 27th July, Dr. R Heath-Davies, asked for a correction to the minutes to record that she was present at the meeting, but had left early due to other commitments.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meetings held on 27 July 2022 and 8 August 2022 be confirmed and signed subject to the above amendment.

6. Employee Forum – report of meeting

The report of the meeting of the Employee Forum held on 27 July 2022 was presented for consideration.

It was **RESOLVED** that the report of the meeting of the Employee Forum held on 27 July 2022 be adopted.

[Councillor S Hancock joined the meeting remotely during consideration of the following item]

7. Human Resources Metrics

Statistics were provided in respect of a number of Human Resources Metrics and further explanation was provided in respect of some of these as follows. An apology was made that these papers had been printed in black and white.

- a) Joiners and Leavers – it was noted by a Member that the high numbers of leavers in August and September seemed high. The HR Manager reported that the higher than average monthly figures captured contract end dates for seasonal and fixed term contracts. Reasons for leaving would be provided in the report to the next meeting. The Chief Executive noted that the Authority's retention rate overall was high.
- b) Age Distribution – it was noted that the Authority was exploring ways to mitigate an aging workforce, including a trainee programme, which had



enjoyed some success in DM and HR. Initial work had started on a more structured programme which it was hoped to pilot through the Warden Team, and a further report on this would be made to a future meeting, if this was agreed as part of the restructure of Countryside Management. One Member suggested that there could be merit in offering career progression across the three Welsh NPAs. The HR Manager said he would explore this option.

- c) Absence Rates – Apologising for not having provided the percentage rates in the report, the HR Manager advised that the Authority’s rate was 2.1% which was lower than both the Office for National Statistics rate of 2.2%, and also the public sector rate of 3%. The most common reason for absence was Covid. A Member asked about benchmarking against the other Welsh National Parks, and was advised that the three parks had a significantly different workforce, however some comparisons would be possible.
- d) Ethnicity Distribution – The HR Manager clarified that a large proportion of staff had not declared their ethnicity, and staff would be reminded of the importance to provide information. He did not believe that any staff had classed themselves as Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME). This compared to 1.3% in Pembrokeshire as a whole.
- e) Distribution of Grades and Scale Summary – A typographical error was noted in respect of the maximum salary for scale 3. It was noted that the pay settlement had been communicated to staff, and that a recommendation regarding the enhanced leave provision, which formed part of the settlement, would be presented to the Authority’s Leadership Team later in the month. The Chief Executive noted that as the Authority had a larger proportion of staff on scales 1-3 (as it ran three visitor centres), the recent pay settlement had had a greater impact compared to the other two Welsh National Parks.
- f) Health and Safety – it was noted that in future, further information would be provided in respect of Health & Safety compliance and training in future reports, there being some overlap in this regard with the remit of the Audit and Corporate Services Review Committee. It was suggested that training for Members in respect of health and wellbeing was needed.

Noted. It was agreed that additional statistics would be provided in respect of reasons for leaving, percentage absence rates and Health and Safety at future meetings. It was also noted that benchmarking against other National Parks would be explored.

8. Pay and Grading Review

Apologising for the length of the report, the HR Manager explained that he had included additional background information for the benefit of new Members of the Committee. The report set out in detail the work programmed for the three phases of the review and outlined the work undertaken to date.



He added that based on staff feedback from the recent restructure, staff perceived that Members had not been involved sufficiently and not as much as staff would have wished. The HR Manager, said that due to staff anxiety over pay during the restructure consultation, he recommended that final approval for any changes to pay and grading would be rest with the Human Resources Committee.

Members were not entirely comfortable with the approach recommended and felt without a deeper understanding of the evaluation framework they should not remain impartial. Members also asked for greater clarity on how the appeals process would work. It was suggested that an outline of the role of the Committee in the review process should be provided, as well as the appeals process, and that these could be discussed in a workshop which would follow the budget workshop on the 21st December. It was clarified that the Pay and Grading Policy would not be available until later in the process but a draft appeals process would be presented to Members prior to this.

It was **agreed** that additional information as noted above would be provided to the Committee in respect of the pay and grading review prior to a HR Workshop on 21 December.

9. Exclusion of the Public

It was **resolved** that the public be excluded from the meeting as exempt information, as defined in Paragraphs 12 and 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, would be disclosed.

[Councillor R Jordan and Mrs J James apologised that they had to leave the meeting before discussion on the following item had finished, however they were present for the vote.]

10. Organisational Restructure

The report provided Members with a progress update on the organisational restructure and outlined the new appointments that had been made to date. The final structure, following the Administration Review, was provided and Members were asked to agree that this be implemented in full by 1 April 2023, although it was noted that some elements of the new structure would be implemented from 1 January 2023 to provide a period of migration during which budgets, business processes and new ways of working could be aligned. Members agreed that prompt implementation of the new structure was important to ensure clarity for all concerned and asked whether they could be provided with an electronic version of the structure as the document they had received was not easy to navigate. The HR Manager said he would try and provide members with full access to Cezanne HR so they could navigate the electronic organisational chart.



Members were advised that a soft implementation for the restructure would be 3 January 2023 with a hard implementation of 1 April 2023; this would coincide with the new financial year. It was advised that between January and the end of March, work would be undertaken to develop the Delivery Plans, in support of the new strategy.

It was **resolved** that:

- a) The Placemaking Department structure be agreed, to include a Development Management Manager and a Planning Policy Manager;
- b) The remaining structure as detailed in Appendix A of the report be agreed, including the realignment of all administration roles to sit within departmental or directorate structures.

