

People Services Committee

18 September 2024

Present: Councillor D Clements, Councillor C George, Mrs S Hoss, Councillor M James, Dr R Plummer and Councillor V Thomas.

Also in attendance: Joy Arkley (Head of People Services), Georgia Jones (Democratic Services Officer), Tegryn Jones (Chief Executive), and Caroline Llewellyn (Democratic Services Manager).

[Councillor M James left the meeting during consideration of report 01/24, Human Resources Management Report. Dr R Plummer joined the meeting during consideration of report 02/24, Member Support and Development Update.]

(Virtual Meeting: 1.00pm – 2:10pm)

1. Election of Chair

The Chief Executive opened the meeting and reported that only one nomination had been received for the office of Chair: Mrs J James.

It was **resolved** that Mrs J James be appointed Chair for the ensuing year.

2. Election of Deputy Chair

As no other nominations had been received, Councillor D Clements nominated herself for the office of Deputy Chair.

It was **resolved** that Councillor D Clements be appointed Deputy Chair for the ensuing year.

In the absence of Mrs J James, Councillor D Clements continued to Chair the remainder of the meeting.

3. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M Bowen, Mrs J James and Councillor C Williams.

4. Disclosures

No disclosures of interest were received.

5. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on the 15 May 2024 and the Member Support & Development Committee held on the 17 April 2024 were presented for confirmation and authentication.



On the proposal of Councillor D Clements, seconded by Councillor M James, it was **resolved** that the minutes of the meetings held on 15 May 2024 and 17 April 2024 be confirmed and authenticated.

6. Action Log and Matters arising

Members noted the action log.

Noted.

7. Human Resources Management Report

The Head of People Services presented a Human Resources Management Report which provided updates regarding the Pay & Grading Review, the HR Policy Review, Sickness Absence, Wellbeing Champions, Training Data, Training Provision, Voluntary Staff Benefits, and Volunteering.

A Member noted the 'Joiners and Leavers' statistics and queried whether the Authority conducted exit interviews. The Head of People Services confirmed that the Authority offered exit interviews however very few individuals chose to complete them. It was agreed that the Exit Interview Policy be added to the review list.

The report featured statistics regarding the ethnicity distribution within the Authority and a Member queried whether the Authority had a targeted approach to broaden the demographic of Authority staff. The Head of People Services confirmed that the team were looking to develop a recruitment strategy that took into account all protected characteristics to address this matter.

The report outlined training data including the percentage of employees that had completed their mandatory training and a Member asked whether the Authority had a target for training completion. In response, the Head of People Services confirmed that the Authority aimed to achieve a 95% completion rate on mandatory training as this took into account elements such as sickness absence, and potential barriers such as access to IT equipment.

Noted.

8. Member Support and Development

The Chair welcomed the Democratic Services Manager who presented a report that outlined updates on matters relating to Member support and development. The report featured updates regarding Members' training plan and past training activities, Welsh Government (WG) Training Sessions, Member attendance, Inductions, Personal Development Reviews (PDR's) and WG performance appraisals, the Members' travel policy, Wales Councillor Support Self Evaluation Framework and the Welsh Members Seminar.



A discussion ensued regarding the Members' attendance as it was reported that attendance at training events had been 58%, against a target of 65%. A Member queried whether the figure included training that Members had completed in their own time, if they were unable to attend the original session. In response, the Officer confirmed that at present, only attendance at the arranged sessions was recorded however she agreed to explore possible processes where Members could notify Officers if they completed training by watching session recordings. It was agreed that links to recordings of training sessions be stored centrally on the Members SharePoint for easy access for both new and existing Members.

An update regarding PDR's and WG Performance Appraisals was featured in the report. Members took the opportunity to express their frustration regarding the lack of feedback from the WG following the submission of their appraisals. The Chief Executive agreed to liaise with WG to understand the process once appraisals were submitted. On the topic of Authority PDR's, the low level of Member engagement was discussed and Members suggested ways in which participation could be encouraged such as providing examples and suggestions of available training options on the form and conducting short interviews rather than utilising a form.

The Chief Executive highlighted the low levels of attendance for Study Tours, and he suggested that the Authority may need to consider a different model to inspire attendance. In response, a Member suggested that Study Tours be themed with clear learning outcomes as this may encourage participation and this was noted by Officers.

The report featured details regarding the Authority's Travel Policy for Members and explained that following a request from some Members for the policy to be reviewed, Officers had concluded that the policy was fit for purpose. Despite this assessment, the policy was presented to the Committee for Members' consideration also. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the policy should be reviewed by all Members and considered by the National Park Authority in December 2024. The Officer agreed to provide a deadline to allow Members' comments to be collated prior to the December meeting. A Member added that travel claims associated with electric vehicles would need to be considered as part of the policy review and this was noted.

Noted.