

Staffing and Recruitment Committee  
10 April 2012

**IRVINE, 10 April 2012** - At a meeting of the Staffing and Recruitment Committee of North Ayrshire Council at 1.00 p.m.

**Present**

David O'Neill, Matthew Brown, Anthea Dickson, Jean Highgate, Ruby Kirkwood, Ronnie McNicol, and Pat McPhee.

**Also Present**

E. Murray, Chief Executive; M. Armstrong, Head of Service (Logistics and Infrastructure) (Education and Skills); Y. Baulk, Head of Finance (Finance and Infrastructure); J. M. Macfarlane, Head of Human Resources and M. McKeown, Committee Services Manager (Chief Executive's Service).

**Chair**

Councillor O'Neill in the Chair.

**Apologies for Absence**

Willie Gibson and John Reid.

**1. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest by Members in terms of Standing Order 16.

**2. Right Sizing the Workforce**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive which provided the Committee with an update on the progress made in right-sizing the workforce arising from the Council's overall Change Programme.

An ambitious Change Programme of corporate and service reviews has been embarked upon in order to meet the financial pressures facing the Council in the current economic climate. Savings targets, over a three year period commencing 1 April 2011, were set at 20% for Chief Executive's Service, Corporate Service and Finance and Infrastructure, and 12.5% for Social Services and Health and Education and Skills.

The report provided an update on the progress made to date in right-sizing the workforce. The Council makes quarterly returns to the Scottish Government on actual workforce numbers and Full Time Equivalents (FTEs). The actual workforce numbers data provides a health check on the achievement of the workforce right-sizing decisions reached through the Change Programme and budget review process. The Change Programme impact on workforce right-sizing will result in a reduction of 611.86 FTE budgeted posts, with resultant savings of £18,086M over the three year period to March 2013. The report provided a breakdown by Service and by Grade, and set out associated severance costs relevant to 2010/11 and 2011/12.

The Voluntary Early Retirement (VER) Programme has supported and facilitated right-sizing through the voluntary release of employees, either creating savings directly through straightforward release and non-replacement, or indirectly through the creation of redeployment opportunities. Information on the take up of VER by Service was provided. Currently there are 282 'live' notes of interest in VER. Of these, 43 yet to be approved applications are currently being progressed towards final sign-up. This will leave 239 entries on the VER register available for cross-matching with employees on the Redeployee Register with a view to creating a vacancy through release to enable redeployment.

Human Resources actively promote and pursue the release of suitable VER matches to enable redeployment, thereby benefitting both those employees keen to retire early and also the Council through the avoidance of redundancies and associated costs.

The requirements of the Knowledge and Skills Transfer policy have been incorporated into the Redeployment Procedure. The introduction of an overlap period between the leaving employee and incoming redeployee ensures that vital knowledge and skills will be transferred prior to the retiree's departure.

Voluntary Early Retirement requests will continue to be progressed on an ongoing basis with opportunities to create space for re-deployees through the release of those on the VER Register being actively pursued to achieve the planned outcome of the Change Programme.

Members asked questions and received clarification on the information presented.

Noted.

### **3. Exclusion of the Public and Press**

The Committee resolved, in terms of Section 50(A)4 of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, to exclude from the meeting, the press and the public for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A of the Act.

### **4. Education and Skills - Revenue Budget Savings Early Retirements**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive seeking the Committee's approval for the voluntary early retirement of teachers within Education and Skills.

The report set out proposals to generate efficiency savings amongst the teacher workforce through succession planning linked to Voluntary Early Retirements managed to a timetable set by the Council.

Members asked questions and received clarification in relation to the information presented and in respect of specific proposals.

The Committee agreed (a) to approve the proposals set out in the report; and (b) that a further report be brought back to a future meeting of the committee (or its successor committee) providing information about movements in teacher numbers within North Ayrshire.

### **5. Recruitment of Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development**

Submitted report by the Chief Executive which informed the Committee of the pending retirement of the current Head of Human Resources and sought agreement to advertise the post.

As the remit of the post has expanded over the past two and a half years, with a significant redirection of resources directed towards changing the culture of the organisation, through organisational development, it was further proposed that the post should be re-designated as "Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development". The salary for the post will be in line with other Heads of Service.

The Committee agreed to authorise the Chief Executive to advertise the post of Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development on the terms set out in the report.

The meeting ended at 1.30 p.m.