





**Brighton & Hove
City Council**

Overview & Scrutiny Commission

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| Title: | Overview and Scrutiny Commission Ad hoc Panel - Staff Disabilities |
| Date: | 22 February 2010 |
| Time: | 10.00am |
| Venue | Council Chamber, Hove Town Hall |
| Members: | Councillors: Watkins (Chairman) Davey Marsh Harmer-Strange |
| Contact: | Mary van Beinum Overview & Scrutiny Support Officer 01273 – 29 - 1062 |

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|  | The Town Hall has facilities for wheelchair users, including lifts and toilets |
|  | An Induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter and infra red hearing aids are available for use during the meeting. If you require any further information or assistance, please contact the receptionist on arrival. |
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AGENDA

Part One**Page**

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| 3. | Cabinet Member for Central Services Councillor Ayas Fallon-Khan | |
| 4. | Evidence-gathering Session | 9 - 12 |

To Hear information from representatives of:

- 1) Job Centre Plus, Regional office
- 2) Human Resources
- 3) Council's Supported Employment Team
- 4) Union representative

5. Date of Next meeting

The next Panel meeting will be held on Friday 12 March at 10am in Hove Town Hall

6. Any Other Business

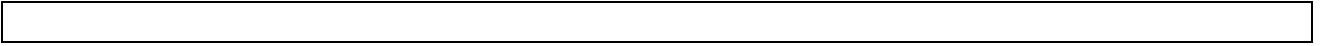
The City Council actively welcomes members of the public and the press to attend its meetings and holds as many of its meetings as possible in public. Provision is also made on the agendas for public questions to committees and details of how questions can be raised can be found on the website and/or on agendas for the meetings.

Agendas and minutes are published on the council's website www.brighton-hove.gov.uk. Agendas are available to view five working days prior to the meeting date.

Meeting papers can be provided, on request, in large print, in Braille, on audio tape or on disc, or translated into any other language as requested.

For further details and general enquiries about this meeting contact Mary van Beinum, (01273 291062 – email mary.vanbeinum@brighton-hove.gov.uk) or email scrutiny@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Date of Publication 17 February 2010



Agenda Item 1

To consider the following Procedural Business:-

A. Declaration of Substitutes

Where a Member of the Committee is unable to attend a meeting for whatever reason, a substitute Member (who is not a Cabinet Member) may attend and speak and vote in their place for that meeting.

Substitutes are not allowed on Scrutiny Select Committees or Scrutiny Panels.

The substitute Member shall be a Member of the Council drawn from the same political group as the Member who is unable to attend the meeting, and must not already be a Member of the Committee. The substitute Member must declare themselves as a substitute, and be minuted as such, at the beginning of the meeting or as soon as they arrive.

B. Declarations of Interest

- (1) To seek declarations of any personal or personal & prejudicial interests under Part 2 of the Code of Conduct for Members in relation to matters on the Agenda. Members who do declare such interests are required to clearly describe the nature of the interest.
- (2) A Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a Select Committee has a prejudicial interest in any business at meeting of that Committee where –
 - (a) that business relates to a decision made (whether implemented or not) or action taken by the Executive or another of the Council's committees, sub-committees, joint committees or joint sub-committees; and
 - (b) at the time the decision was made or action was taken the Member was
 - (i) a Member of the Executive or that committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee and
 - (ii) was present when the decision was made or action taken.
- (3) If the interest is a prejudicial interest, the Code requires the Member concerned:-
 - (a) to leave the room or chamber where the meeting takes place while the item in respect of which the declaration is made is under consideration. [There are three exceptions to this rule which are set out at paragraph (4) below].
 - (b) not to exercise executive functions in relation to that business and

(c) not to seek improperly to influence a decision about that business.

(4) The circumstances in which a Member who has declared a prejudicial interest is permitted to remain while the item in respect of which the interest has been declared is under consideration are:-

- (a) for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the item, provided that the public are also allowed to attend the meeting for the same purpose, whether under a statutory right or otherwise, BUT the Member must leave immediately after he/she has made the representations, answered the questions, or given the evidence,
- (b) if the Member has obtained a dispensation from the Standards Committee, or
- (c) if the Member is the Leader or a Cabinet Member and has been required to attend before an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee to answer questions.

C. Declaration of Party Whip

To seek declarations of the existence and nature of any party whip in relation to any matter on the Agenda as set out at paragraph 8 of the Overview and Scrutiny Ways of Working.

D. Exclusion of Press and Public

To consider whether, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted, or the nature of the proceedings, the press and public should be excluded from the meeting when any of the following items are under consideration.

Note: Any item appearing in Part 2 of the Agenda states in its heading the category under which the information disclosed in the report is confidential and therefore not available to the public.

A list and description of the exempt categories is available for the public inspection at Brighton and Hove Town Halls.

Agenda Item 2

To Note the Panel Terms of Reference as agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Commission 8 September 2009

“Wishing positively to support officers in the good work already being done:

- To ensure progress on the issues raised about staff disabilities from the Diversity Peer Challenge (see below)
- To investigate issues relating to performance under the Local Area Agreement (see below)
- To investigate action take by the council to encourage people with disabilities to apply for a job.”

Note that : Progress from the Equalities and Inclusion Action Plan is being monitored via the regular reports within the existing OSC work programme. The draft Single Equality Scheme was reported to 15 December OSC and an additional meeting of OSC was set up on 12 January 2010 to consider and comment on the draft SES. The SES was approved at 11 February 2010 Cabinet.

Extract on Employment and Training from the Diversity Peer Challenge March 2009 organised by the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) and carried out by its trained peers.

Including action as at 29 October 2009 as reported to November 2009 Cabinet

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3.4 Employment and Training/ Areas for Improvement:

| Peer Challenge comment | BHCC response/action | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <p>a) The Council has not been able to meet its own employment targets other than that for disabled people.</p> | <p>We continue to actively recruit from all groups and monitor this activity on a quarterly basis. We are currently 0.5% away from our target for BME people in the workforce. The trends have however generally been positive and the table below shows that all groups are going through interview and on to appointment.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| <p>b) The Council needs to continue its focus on BME staff retention and would benefit from lessons learned from exit interviews.</p> | <table border="1" data-bbox="624 1010 1481 1160"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th><u>Applications</u></th> <th><u>Interviews</u></th> <th><u>Offers</u></th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Disabled</td> <td>1.93%</td> <td>2.78%</td> <td>3.21%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Non Disabled</td> <td>98.07%</td> <td>97.22%</td> <td>96.79%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Local Employment Partnership has succeeded in recruiting over 80 local people into the council who were previously long term unemployed.</p> <p>In order to continue to work towards a representative workforce we have recently undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment of Recruitment and Selection and actions identified include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of Disability Officer to work in conjunction with Access Officer to improve access to work/retention of disabled staff. • Ongoing continuing consultations with the community around Recruitment & Selection policy & practice e.g. liaising with job centre to obtain feedback from unemployed BME group about encouraging BME applications and discussions with MOSAIC. • HR to raise equalities issues with DMTs promptly especially, when presenting quarterly equalities monitoring data. • Link to staff forum group on 'understanding turnover' and continue work on reviewing exit policy and information. | | <u>Applications</u> | <u>Interviews</u> | <u>Offers</u> | Disabled | 1.93% | 2.78% | 3.21% | Non Disabled | 98.07% | 97.22% | 96.79% |
| | <u>Applications</u> | <u>Interviews</u> | <u>Offers</u> | | | | | | | | | | |
| Disabled | 1.93% | 2.78% | 3.21% | | | | | | | | | | |
| Non Disabled | 98.07% | 97.22% | 96.79% | | | | | | | | | | |

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| c) It was reported that there is a lack of a consistent/understood corporate response to the provision of translation and interpreting services to customers. | To be addressed within the ESG communications plan as above 3.1c |
| d) Reasonable adjustments for Disabled people and interpreting/translation are currently funded through team budget; this may provide a barrier to good employment practice within areas where budgets are under pressure. | The Access to Work guidance has been updated and new work is underway with the reasonable adjustments working group as below 3.4j. As we have clear responsibilities to make reasonable adjustments and provide interpreting or translation they will continue to be prioritised within service budgets. |
| e) Concern about changes to the sickness management procedure was reported. | This will be addressed within the current Equality Impact Assessment of Absence Management which includes a focus on how disability related absence is recorded. |
| f) No transparent policy around disability leave was available. | |
| g) It was reported that support options in the job application process were not known by all managers and therefore were not made available to all job applicants. | To be addressed within Recruitment & Selection Policy Review to ensure clarity of requirements of managers in relation to reasonable adjustments. Effective communication to all managers and appropriate and timely adjustments to be made. |
| h) It was noted that there is poor application | Equality Impact Assessment to continue to focus on all areas and issues related to religion to be addressed |

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| <p>of awareness training into the work context for some people, for example “religion is not an issue at all in my service”.</p> | <p>appropriately. The Single Equality Scheme will include actions in relation to religion and belief for the first time.</p> |
| <p>i) The staff bus not accessible to people with mobility impairment.</p> | <p>The current arrangements with Brighton & Hove Bus Company allow them to designate any available vehicle for use on the 11x route although they endeavour to ensure that only accessible buses are used. There are some buses that were purchased before the DDA regulations came into force and they hope to have all their buses fully compliant with DDA regulations by 2010, 7 years before regulations become law in 2017. Any members of staff using other transport are able to reclaim their fares via petty cash.</p> |
| <p>j) The slow speed of consideration / provision of reasonable adjustment can be frustrating.</p> | <p>A new reasonable adjustment working group has been set up with representation from the Disabled Workers Forum, the unions, HR, ICT, Health & Wellbeing, Supported Employment and appropriate managers. The group will explore what else needs to be put in place to ensure that everyone’s needs are addressed promptly and effectively.</p> |
| <p>k) Responses to some requests for reasonable adjustment were institutionalised with managers assuming they knew what response was needed rather than making decisions with the disabled member of staff.</p> | |

Brighton & Hove City Council - Organisational Health – Mid Year Progress Report 2009/10
Reported to December 2009 Cabinet

| Reference | Indicator | Unit | target | Latest Information | Performance |
|-----------|---|------|--------|--------------------|-------------|
| BV011c | Percentage of top 5% of earners with a disability At the end of September, 13 of the 363 top earners i.e.3.58% have a disability compared with 4.6% for the same period last year. The actions in place to address this are included in those across the whole council with the addition that where we are using search providers they will be briefed prior to the assignment, that we are actively seeking to increase the number of staff with a disability at this level. | % | 5.50 | 3.58 | • red |
| BV016 | Percentage of employees declaring they meet the Disability Discrimination Act disability definition compared with the percentage of working disabled people in the City At the end of September, there were 268 employees who met the disability definition compared with 7,316 working disabled people i.e. 3.66%. This compares with 3.77% at the same period last year. The percentage of staff meeting the DDA disability definition has reduced and actions are in place to promote the Coty Council as an employer through placing advertisements in RADAR a annual directory for individuals with a disability seeking work and to work with Jobcentre Plus in targeting minority groups in recruiting through the Local Employment Partnership. In addition work is underway in relation to the retention and development of existing disabled staff. | % | 5.00 | 3.66 | • red |

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| Ref. | National Indicator number of 'local' reference to enable ease of reference | |
| Indicator | Description of measure | |
| Unit | How the indicator is measured: normally either number, percentage of monetary | |
| Target | The latest target set | |
| Latest information | Contains the most up-to-date data available to measure the indicator | |
| Performance | • Green | On track to deliver target |
| | • Amber | An area in need of improvement |
| | • Red | Off-track and requires attention |
| | • Grey | Not able to make a judgement of performance due to lack of information |

Staff Disability Scrutiny Panel; briefing note

1) The Council uses the Two Ticks (positive about disability) symbol which means that an employer has agreed to the five disability symbol commitments which are:

- to interview all disabled applicants who meet the minimum criteria for a job vacancy and consider them on their abilities

- to ensure there is a mechanism in place to discuss, at any time, but at least once a year, with disabled employees what they can do to make sure they can develop and use their abilities

- to make every effort when employees become disabled to make sure they stay in employment

- to take action to ensure that all employees develop the appropriate level of disability awareness needed to make your commitments work each year

- to review the five commitments and what has been achieved, to plan ways to improve on them and let employees and Jobcentre Plus know about progress and future plans

These organisations welcome applications from disabled people, and in the main, support disabled people well in the work place.

2) The council has proactively encouraged applications from all minority groups through the DiverCity campaigns which have been running for the past four years. This has resulted in increased applications, interviews and offers of work to individuals with disabilities when in March 2008 3.3% of individuals who had declared a disability in their application were successfully appointed to vacancies within the council.

3) Our ongoing partnership with Jobcentre Plus developed through the Local Employment Partnership signed in 2008 has built on this success by targeting long term unemployed individuals through firstly the partnership agreement and subsequently through the Future Jobs Fund. The latest figures available (November 2009) show that 3.7% of individuals appointed to the council considered they had a disability. JobCentre records are similarly positive with 10% of individuals employed through the Local Employment Partnership scheme were disabled.

4) There is work to be done in encouraging individuals to declare they have a disability. JobCentre Plus client advisors have been briefed on this issue and this work will be ongoing for council staff working on recruitment initiatives including Future Jobs Fund. The Human Resources (HR) Department will also be reviewing the recruitment brochure to highlight that the council welcomes applications from minority groups particularly those from disabled applicants.

5) To improve the support to disabled staff the council is developing an additional training session for HR practitioners to improve their knowledge of the Disability Discrimination Act to enable them to provide more effective advice and support on disability related issues. This is being facilitated by the Legal Director for the Employer's Forum on Disability. This training takes place in mid April 2010.

6) The council has recently appointed a Disability Employment Officer who works alongside, and gains support from, specialist workers delivering employment support or overseeing employment projects designed to increase general employability in the city.

7) Following work to look at ways of improving accessibility for disabled staff to specialist equipment to help them perform their duties more efficiently, a variety of work place equipment and accessories are now available for loan from the Learning Resource Centre (LRC). This can be accessed following recommendation from a Display Screen Equipment Assessment (DSE) or Occupational Health assessment. The equipment has been provided by Directorate funding and will be kept in the LRC to provide access.

*Recruitment Strategy Manager
February 2010*

Disability Employment - Supported Employment

The Supported Employment team is based at the **Knoll Business Centre** in Portslade, Hove

It helps people who have disabilities or who are on benefits into work.

Contact Details

The Supported Employment Team
Brighton & Hove City Council
Castleham Hove, Knoll Business Centre
Old Shoreham Road, Hove, BN3 7GS
Telephone 01273 - 295961
Email: set@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Supported Employment

Supported Employment provides support for disabled people who face complex or additional barriers when seeking employment.

If you are disabled and want to work, we would like to hear from you. Our Employment Officers can provide you with advice and support on how you can realise your full potential and gain employment.

We help by:

- talking to you about your options
- carrying out a work-focused assessment
- agreeing a job preparation action plan
- updating your CV
- providing advice on suitable work opportunities
- writing letters of support to employers
- completing application forms
- providing mock interviews
- supporting you at the interview

Once you are employed we can continue to help both you and your employer with:

- the induction and training process
- information on job adjustments
- job coaching
- on-going support and improving your skills

Our support continues for as long as the employee or employer needs it. To access our service please contact us on (01273) 295961 or by completing an [online application form](#)

