

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

Minute of Personnel Committee meeting

15 April 2011

held at: Consort House, Glasgow

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Minute of the meeting of the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's Personnel Committee held in Consort House, Glasgow, on 15 April 2011

Present Councillors Denis McKenna (Chair), Jonathan Findlay, Archie Graham, Mark Griffin, Kaye Harmon, Alan Moir, Marie McGurk, George Roberts and appointed member Alan Malcolm.

Attending Valerie Bowen, Senior Clerk, Gordon MacLennan, Chief Executive; Eric Stewart, Assistant Chief Executive (Operations); Neil Wylie, Director of Finance & HR and Pamela Millar, Head of Corporate HR.

1. Apologies

Apologies were submitted from Councillors David Fagan, Bobby McDill, Jim McNally and Chris Thompson.

2. Declaration of interest

The Committee noted that there were no declarations of interest.

3. Minute of previous meeting

The minute of the meeting of 11 February 2011 (issued) was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4. Review of Personnel Appeals Sub-committee Disciplinary Action Appeals procedure

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There was submitted and approved a report (issued) of 29 March 2011 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

- (1) reminding members
 - (a) that a number of SPT policies and procedures had been written some time ago and had become outdated making it difficult to ensure a consistent and modern approach to employee relations; and
 - (b) that, consequently, a review of all HR policies and procedures had been instigated and would be submitted to a future Personnel Committees on a rolling basis; and

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- (2) appending, for approval, a revised Personnel Appeals Sub Committee procedure to be followed at hearings of appeals against dismissal, which had been reviewed against best practice and updated to provide a clearer and easier to use procedure for all involved in the process.

5. SPT structure stage 3

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With reference to the minute of 8 October 2010 (page 1, paragraph 4) when the committee had approved

- (1) revised structures for the Information Technology and Subway Operations departments, the latter now forming part of an overall Operations Management Structure, subject to the conclusion of formal consultation with affected staff; and
- (2) the proposal to withdraw the post which supported the switchboard operation,

there was submitted a report (issued) of 31 March 2011 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

- (a) appending
 - (i) the final structure for Information Technology which had now been implemented; and
 - (ii) the final structure for Operations Management which would be implemented from mid April 2011;
- (b) explaining
 - (i) that SPT had now implemented an automatic call system which removed the need for switchboard attendance; and
 - (ii) that in the Operations Management restructure, 12 posts had now been filled and recruitment to the other 8 posts was in progress;
 - (iii) that, although following the consultation processes there was no requirement to amend the actual structures from what was originally proposed, a proposal had been submitted regarding in-house delivery of Health and Safety training which was actively being considered; and
 - (iv) that following the requirement for engineering and operations managers to be available across Subway and Bus Operations when the business required, managers in Subway Engineering were in the process of discussions to agree a night shift rota;
- (c) informing members
 - (i) that, as it continued to be necessary to review the staff structures and staffing levels to take account of budget pressures, together with the need to streamline the organisation, focusing on customer service and delivery,

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whilst maintaining strong and robust governance arrangements, an early priority for the new Operations Management Team would therefore be to review the structures within their responsibility; and

- (ii) that detailed proposals would be submitted to a future committee for members' consideration; and
- (d) advising members
 - (i) that SPT operated a staff policy which, in circumstances of structural changes, sought to use redeployment, re-training of staff and accommodation within other vacant posts throughout the organisation; and
 - (ii) that this, together with the Voluntary Severance scheme had enabled the reduction in establishment to be handled effectively.

After discussion and having heard Mr Wylie in answer to members' questions and advise members that the Subway Operations structure had now been implemented with the exception of the introduction of a night shift rota which was still ongoing, the committee noted

- (A) the terms of the report; and
- (B) the annual savings of £492,000 which would be achieved as a result of the re-structure.

6. Learning & Development investment to the end of 26 February 2011 (period 12)

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There was submitted and noted a report (issued) of 29 March 2011 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

- (1) appending details of SPT's Learning & Development expenditure for the period from 1 April 2010 to 26 February 2011 which had shown a committed spend to date of £88,000;
- (2) explaining that expenditure to date during 2010/11 had decreased overall on 2009/10, in line with a substantial reduction in headcount and ongoing internal restructuring; and
- (3) informing members that SPT was continuing to make a significant investment in learning and development with the aim of producing an ongoing positive impact on SPT's performance.

7. Staffing report to the end of 26 February 2011 (period 12)

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There was submitted and noted a report (issued) of 6 April 2011 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

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- (1) appending staffing statistics for the period from 1 April 2010 to 26 February 2011 which included headcount, sickness absence and equalities data;
- (2) explaining that the key movements to date were
 - (a) a reduction in total headcount of 45; and
 - (b) a sickness absence level to date of 4.5%, consistent with 2009/10; and
- (3) intimating
 - (a) that the managed reduction in SPT's total headcount had shown significant progress and was contributing to the planned employee cost savings for 2010/11; and
 - (b) that, although sickness absence levels remained at the same cumulative level as in 2009/10, the level had reduced significantly within the last three periods.

8. Review of Sickness Absence, Expenses, Retirement and Flexible Retirement policies

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 6 April 2011 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

- (1) appending
 - (a) draft revised policies for sickness absence, expenses and retirement; and
 - (b) a new, draft Flexible Retirement Policy which reflected the ability of employees to request flexible retirement and detailed the circumstances in which this could occur;
- (2) informing members that the policies were in compliance with the relevant Code of Practice, clear and understandable, met current legislation and provided a modern streamline approach to addressing sickness absence, expenses and retirement issues; and
- (3) recommending approval of the policies as detailed in the appendices to the report.

After discussion and having heard Mr Wylie advise members that the draft policies were subject to consultation with the Trade Unions and any substantial changes made would be submitted to a future committee, the committee approved the recommendations at (3) above.