

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport

Minute of the Personnel Committee

11 October 2013

held in Consort House, Glasgow

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**Minute of the meeting of Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's
Personnel Committee held in Consort House, Glasgow, on 11 October 2013**

Present Councillors Kaye Harmon (Chair), Maureen Burke (substitute), Jim Coleman, Eddie Devine, Denis McKenna, Hamish Stewart and David Wilson and Appointed Members Anne Follin, Niall McGrogan, Lawrence O'Neill and Gavin Scott.

Attending Valerie Davidson, Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support/ Secretary); Assistant Chief Executive (Operations); Neil Wylie, Director of Finance & HR and Debbie Mackie, Head of HR and Organisational Development.

1. Apologies

Apologies were submitted from Councillors David Fagan and Chris Kelly, and Appointed Member Alan Malcolm.

2. Declaration of interest in terms of the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc (Scotland) Act 2000

The committee noted that there were no declarations of interest.

3. Minute of previous meeting

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The minute of the meeting of 3 May 2013 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4. SPT staffing statistics to the end of period 6, 14 September 2013

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There was submitted and noted a report (issued) of 2 October 2013 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

(1) appending

(a) staffing statistics for the period from 1 April to 14 September 2013 which included headcount, sickness absence and equalities data; and

(b) a summary of learning and development investment for the same period which had shown a committed spend of £34,851, an increase of 60% compared to the same period in 2012/2013;

(2) explaining that the key movements to date were

(a) a year to date increase in total headcount from 550 to 551; and

(b) a sickness absence rate to date of 3.1%; and

(3) concluding

(a) that SPT headcount and sickness absence rates continued to be positive and contributed to the employee cost savings achieved in 2012/2013; and

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- (b) that significant focus and effort continued to be directed towards the management of sickness absence across the organisation.

5. Revised Equal Opportunities Policy

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 24 September 2013 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

- (1) intimating
- (a) that, as a result of the introduction of the Equalities Act 2010, which defined the groups covered by equality legislation now known as 'protected characteristics', SPT's Equal Opportunities Policy required to be updated;
- (b) that, although SPT's responsibilities remained largely the same as this act harmonised and replaced previous legislation (such as the Disability Discrimination Act, 1995 and the Race Relations Act 1976) and ensured consistency in what employers needed to do to make the workplace a fair environment and to comply with the law, it introduced also some changes to the law which required to be incorporated into SPT's policy; and
- (c) that the revised draft Policy represented also the latest update arising from a rolling review of HR policies and procedures;
- (2) appending SPT's draft Equal Opportunities Policy for consideration; and
- (3) recommending approval of the draft Policy, subject to concluding the necessary consultation with the recognised trade unions.

After consideration, the committee approved the recommendation at (3) above.

6. Pensions Auto-Enrolment

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There was submitted a report (issued) of 2 October 2013 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

- (1) intimating
- (a) that the UK Government had introduced the Pensions Act 2011 which had come into effect in October 2012 and placed a number of duties on employers to ensure that people were encouraged to save for their retirement;
- (b) that the main duties for employers were:-
- to provide employees and casual workers access to a qualifying pension scheme;
 - to pay appropriate employers pension contributions; and
 - to enrol automatically, eligible employees and casual workers into the pension scheme; and
- (c) that the changes were being introduced on a phased basis and the staging date for the Partnership to introduce auto-enrolment was 1 November 2013. At this date

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employees and casual workers who were eligible were due to be auto-enrolled into the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS);

- (2) providing details of the number of staff and casual workers affected, together with estimated costs of implementing the changes;
- (3) explaining that the Pension Regulator had provided guidance and clarification in respect to options available to employers which would allow them to vary their staging date via a postponement and/or deferral option;
- (4) advising members that SPT proposed to adopt both options which would defer significant employers additional costs, reduce the administrative impact on the Partnership and still allow employees or casual workers who wished to become members of the pension scheme to do so; and
- (5) outlining SPT's proposed implementation plan as undernoted:-
 - exercise the option to defer the staging date for auto-enrolment through the use of the transitional arrangements to 1 October 2017;
 - exercise the option to postpone auto-enrolment for any eligible casual worker until 1 February 2014 (3 months after original staging date);
 - recognise that by deferring the staging date, the Partnership was still responsible for auto-enrolling any employee or casual worker who moved into the eligible jobholder category; and
 - ensure that all employees would be advised of the position and their rights in respect of the deferral of auto-enrolment within one month of the original staging date (1 November 2013).

After considerable discussion and having heard Mrs Davidson and Mr Wylie in answer to members' questions, the committee

- (i) noted the terms of the report; and
- (ii) agreed that SPT would contact the 50 employees who were not members of the LGPS, specifically to promote membership of the scheme and report back to committee in due course.