

Minutes of the tenth meeting

Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) Remuneration & Nomination Committee

Tuesday 14 October 2010 11.30am – 1.00pm

Present:

Rosemary Carter (Chair)
Tony Foster (Member)
Margaret Doyle (Member)

In attendance:

Liz Shepherd – Director of Operations
Adam Sampson – Chief Ombudsman
Lesley Hancock – Head of HR

Committee Secretary

Andy Taylor

Preliminary issues:

The quorum requirements for the meeting were met.

Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed those in attendance.
2. There were no apologies received.

Item 2 – Minutes of the previous meeting

3. The minutes of the meetings held on 14 June 2010 and 6 July were approved for presentation at the next OLC meeting on 15 November 2010.

Item 3 – Matters arising & action points

4. Members noted those items where action had been completed and that others were included as agenda items. Examples of the training content were yet to be issued to members by HR.

5. As part of the outstanding equality and diversity information, Members received a paper detailing staff geographical locations based upon their respective home post code.
6. Members noted that an Equality, Diversity and Accessibility paper and raw data was presented to the OLC at the meeting held on 27 September 2010. Further work was to be undertaken on this topic by the equality and diversity ombudsman and a revised paper will be presented to the OLC on 15 November 2010. This will include an assessment of the catchment areas used by other bodies within central Birmingham to ensure that LeO obtains equality and diversity data on a comparable basis.
7. In addition to the above paper, Members asked for detailed data to be provided in respect of the recent recruitment campaigns. This should include an analysis of each stage of the recruitment process, for example details of successful candidates, those not progressing and those deciding not to accept offers made. Wherever possible, the data and analysis should include all relevant equality and diversity parameters.

ACTION:

- HR to forward examples of the training content to members by 5 November 2010.
- HR to provide data and analysis based upon the relevant equality and diversity parameters for the recruitment campaigns.
- The Committee Secretary to include Equality, Diversity and Accessibility on the committee agenda for the 15 November 2010 meeting.
- Equality and Diversity Ombudsman to provide demographics information for the meeting of the OLC on 15 November and attend the subsequent meeting of Remco.

Item 4 - Chair's update

8. The Chair advised Members of the change of secretariat, with the compliance team taking responsibility for the future administration and servicing of the committee.

Item 5 – Pay policy

9. Members received a draft version of the proposed pay policy. Questions were invited and Members were advised that:

- The paper was a consolidation of previous information provided by Towers Watson and revisions included following an internal review by the Finance Team; however an equality and diversity review was still to take place.
- Discussions had also taken place with the Ministry of Justice regarding the principles of pay and LeO would provide assurance to the Ministry in respect of applying their principles relating to pay.
- A separate flexible working policy will be presented to the Committee as soon as possible.

10. Members requested that HR make a number of amendments to the document and following this, the Committee Secretary to electronically represent the paper for approval.

ACTION:

- HR to amend the document as requested and forward to the Committee Secretary for electronic distribution to Members for approval.
- HR to present a draft of the proposed flexible working policy to the committee as soon as possible

Item 6 – Employee handbook

11. Members received a draft version of the proposed employee handbook. Questions were invited and Members were advised that:

- The aim of the handbook was to provide staff with a summary of all HR policies and where appropriate, act as a signpost to more detailed information contained within specific organisational policies and procedures.
- HR will check the Working Time Directive in respect of voluntary work and if appropriate amend the relevant section of the handbook.
- A section relating to personal relationships was included within the organisation in order to manage any potential line management issues that may arise under these circumstances.

12. Members requested that HR make a number of amendments to the document and following this, the Committee Secretary to electronically represent the paper for approval.

13. Members also asked for the handbook to be further reviewed by the committee once all HR policies had been written.

ACTION:

- HR to amend the document as requested and forward to the Committee Secretary for electronic distribution to Members for approval.
- The Committee Secretary to liaise with HR and following the completion of all relevant HR policies, to include a review of the employee handbook on a future committee agenda.

Item 7 – Sickness absence procedure

14. Members received a draft version of the proposed sickness absence procedure. Questions were invited and Members were advised that:

- The absence periods outlined within the paper were linked to the mechanics of the proposed organisational Group Income Protection (GIP) scheme.
- The GIP scheme will be introduced in due course as a core benefit to staff. A procurement process was underway and implementation of the scheme will be dependent upon the outcome of this exercise.
- The Executive Management Team had discussed the procedure at a recent meeting and agreed that an employee may have up to 16 days payment equal to normal basic pay during their probation period, unless specified otherwise in their employment contract.

15. Members requested that HR make a number of amendments to the document and following this, the Committee Secretary to electronically represent the paper for approval.

ACTION:

- HR to amend the document as requested and forward to the Committee Secretary for electronic distribution to Members for approval.

Item 8 – Attendance management procedure

16. Members received a draft version of the proposed attendance management procedure and requested that HR make a number of amendments to the document. Following this, the Committee Secretary should electronically represent the paper to Members for approval.

ACTION:

- HR to amend the document as requested and forward to the Committee Secretary for electronic distribution to Members for approval. A copy of the disciplinary procedure is also to be forwarded with the revised attendance management procedure.

Item 9 – Capability procedure

17. Members received a draft version of the capability procedure. Questions were invited and Members were advised that:

- The procedure has three stages in order to effectively and consistently manage concerns regarding an individual's performance.
- The aim of the process was to manage capability issues as quickly as possible for the benefit of all parties concerned. It was felt that if external mediation was included as a formal part of the process, this may unduly extend the time taken to conclude the process, however an element of internal mediation may be of benefit, for example where the relationship between a staff member and their line manager may have broken down. In such cases, informal mediation may be facilitated by a suitably trained member of staff from the HR team.

18. Members requested that HR make a number of amendments to the document, for example the inclusion of a flowchart. Following the amendments being made, the Committee Secretary shall electronically represent the paper to Members for approval.

ACTION:

- HR to amend the document as requested and forward to the Committee Secretary for electronic distribution to Members for approval.

Item 10 – Equality, diversity and accessibility information provided to the OLC

19. Members asked for further information to be presented at the next meeting in order to confirm that all HR policies were being correctly assessed in order to meet the necessary equality and diversity requirements. The Committee Secretary explained that as part of the compliance process a database of policies was in existence and this included tracking equality and diversity screening and impact assessment details. Further information will be presented at the committee meeting to be held on 15 November.

ACTION:

- The Committee Secretary to liaise with the Director of Operations and jointly present the equality and diversity screening process and details of the status of HR policies at the November meeting.

Item 11 – RemCo Terms of Reference

20. Members received a copy of the current committee terms of reference for review. It was agreed that the document should be updated to reflect the change in status of the organisation and also to include reporting to the OLC, for example; the presentation of approved committee minutes and an annual committee report.

ACTION:

- The Committee Secretary and Director of Operations to jointly review the terms of reference and electronically communicate any proposed changes to Members for approval before the November meeting.

Item 12 – Future agendas and any other business

21. The Chief Ombudsman reported that further effort was required regarding the management of an unforeseen increase in the volume of work. Options available were redeployment of staff within the organisation, outsourcing and fast track recruitment and a paper will come to the Committee and to the OLC in due course. External assistance may be available from Sandra Jenner. It was also noted that BIOA was running a seminar on this topic on 15 November; however, this coincided with the next OLC and RemCo meeting.

22. The Chair advised that the secretariat will develop an appropriate schedule of agenda items and communicate this to Members as soon as possible. The expectation was not only to have a clear timetable of topics but also confirmed meeting dates for 2011 onwards.

Item 13 – next meeting

23. The next meeting will be held on 15 November 2010 in Birmingham

Andy Taylor
Committee Secretary
Date: 19/10/2010