

Minutes of the fourteenth meeting

Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) Remuneration & Nomination Committee

Tuesday 28 June 2010 10.00am – 13.00pm

Present:

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

In attendance:

Rob Hazel – Director of Finance and Business
Adam Sampson – Chief Ombudsman
Lesley Hancock – Head of Human Resources

Committee Secretary

Andy Taylor – OLC Secretary & Head of Compliance

Preliminary issues:

The quorum requirements for the meeting were met.

Item 1 – Welcome, apologies and conflicts of interest

1. The Chair welcomed those in attendance.
2. There were no apologies received.
3. There were no conflicts of interest declared

Item 2 – Minutes of the previous meeting

4. The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2011 were approved for publication and for distribution to OLC Members.

Item 3 – Matters arising & action points

5. Members noted those items where action had been completed and that others were included as agenda items.
6. The Committee Secretary made a short presentation to members, identifying the corporate policies held within the Legal Ombudsman staff intranet site along with details of the corporate policy review process and monitoring database.

7. Members requested in future, where draft policies had been updated prior to approval by the committee; details were to be included in the monthly report forwarded to members by the Director of Finance and Business Services.
8. Members noted the terms of reference for the staff forum and requested that minor amendments should be made to the document. For example, to include details of the appointment and selection process for forum members. The Chief Ombudsman also advised members the forum had met on three occasions and that membership now included a member of the Senior Management Team.
9. The Director of Finance and Business Services updated members with developments in respect of the HR action plan. Members were advised that individual action plans were coming to a close and that other matters had been incorporated into the change programme managed by the Head of Change.
10. Members were advised that the staff handbook was nearing completion and a final draft will be issued in advance of the next meeting.
11. Members discussed the 'positive action' paper presented to the OLC meeting held on 20 June 2011. Members reminded the Executive the additional information should be presented for consideration at the next RemCo meeting in November.
12. In addition to this, members also requested the following to be presented at the November meeting;
 - sight of a corporate promotions policy
 - a full evaluation of staff recruitment campaigns, to include; details of areas of under-representation; areas of risk and a clear action plan with proposals to take forward into future recruitment campaigns;
 - a communication plan to publish details of the positive action plan internally and externally;

Action:

- The Director of Finance and Business Services to include details of all updated draft HR policies in the monthly report issued to members.
- The Head of Compliance to update the terms of reference for the staff forum to reflect the recommendations made by the committee, for example include a section relating to the appointment and selection process for forum members.
- The Head of HR to issue a final draft of the staff handbook to members for approval in advance of the next meeting.
- The Director of Finance and Business Services and Head of HR to liaise with appropriate staff, for example the Ombudsman responsible for equality and diversity and the Equality and Diversity Manager in order to produce a corporate promotions policy, evaluation of previous recruitment campaigns and action plan relating to future campaigns along with an appropriate communication plan.

Item 4 - Chair's update

13. There were no matters raised by the Chair.

Item 5 –HR update

14. The Director of Finance and Business Services updated members with developments within human resources as follows;

- The HR operating system 'My HR' had been successfully launched and communicated to staff.
- Four of the seven action points identified by internal audit have now been closed, with the remaining three scheduled to be completed before the next OLC meeting in September.
- Individual HR staff action plans were also drawing to a close.
- Ministerial approval for the organisational pay remit had been obtained.
- Development of the flexible benefits scheme continued to progress, with staff expected to be able to formally select options in August 2011.
- The Industrial Tribunal pre-hearing has been put back to early July. This was necessary due to the claimant being ill. It was also understood that some concessions had been made by the claimant in advance of the pre-hearing.
- An additional HR campaign was in progress to recruit an additional 20 staff into the operations team on a fixed term contract basis to support casework management.

Item 6 – Flexible working strategy

15. Members noted the flexible working strategy paper and were advised that the document had been approved by the Executive. Members suggested that a clear distinction between part time and flexible working should be made in the strategy and to detail the implications for both staff and the organisation. For example; offering flexibility for staff, but at the same time balancing this with the needs of the organisation, for example where increased demand occurs.

16. Questions were invited and members were advised that;

- An interim working at home policy had been developed, allowing staff to work from home for initially one day per week. Agreement to work from home was subject to the individual's role and business requirements with prior approval from an appropriate manager also being required. This had been set in place in order to manage staff expectations and also to achieve fairness to staff.
- All requests for home working were made by staff using the 'My HR' operating system and this included a monitoring tool.

ACTION:

- The Head of HR to review staff contracts in light of the flexible working strategy paper and to identify any contractual issues and provide an update to members at the next meeting in November.

Item 7 – Draft HR strategy

17. The Head of Human Resources presented the paper and members were advised that it contained nine key areas that were linked to the corporate values. Focus was on the organisation being perceived as an ‘employer of choice’ with appropriate ‘kite marks’ being obtained in the future in order to support this vision.
18. Members suggested that the nine key areas could be further grouped in order to avoid elements of duplication, resulting in four or five revised themes within the HR strategy.
19. Members requested that the paper also includes a set of clear KPI’s and accountabilities, with updates provided to members via a revised suite of monthly HR information and KPI’s from the Director Of Finance and Business Services.

ACTION:

- Members to provide the Head HR with detailed comments in respect of the HR strategy as soon as possible. Once received, the Head of HR to incorporate recommendations into a subsequent draft and submitted to members for approval at the November meeting.
- The Director of Finance and Business Services to update the monthly HR information report in order to include the revised HR KPI’s contained in the final, approved HR strategy document.

Item 8 – Pay remit and policy

20. The Director of Finance and Business Services confirmed that the Ministry had approved the pay remit and policy and provided members with a summary of both papers, including details of future pay review dates.
21. Members approved both documents for publication as soon as possible, subject to a clear communication being made.

ACTION:

- The Director of Finance and Business Services to publish the pay remit and strategy to all staff along with a clear communication.

Item 9 – Policy and communications

22. The Chief Ombudsman presented members with a recommendation to review the grading of the leadership post for the Policy and Communications Team. This followed a widening of the span of control of the function, the associated increase in demands upon the post holder and the growth in the strategic importance of the role.

- 23.** Members considered the documentation presented in support of the recommendation and advised the Chief ombudsman that further information was required before a final decision would be made. This included a revised job description, person specification and salary information.

ACTION:

- The Chief Ombudsman to provide members with the required additional information by mid July in order for further consideration to take place and a decision to be made by members.

Item 10 – 2012 committee meeting timetable and any other business

- 24.** Members agreed the schedule of future meetings as follows;

- 13 March 2012; 11.15 am in Birmingham
- 12 June 2012; 10.00am in London
- 6 November 2012; 11.15am in Birmingham

Item 11 – Next meeting

- 25.** The next meeting will be held on 29 November 2011 at Baskerville House, Birmingham commencing at 11.15am.

Andy Taylor
OLC Secretary
Date: 19/07/2011