

JOINT EMPLOYEE COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 11th September 2013 at Worksop Town Hall

Present:

Employer's Representatives:

Councillor G Wynne (Chair for the meeting)
Councillors C Entwistle, J Leigh, S May, and J B Rickells

Employee Representatives:

K Circuit, P Rodgers, T Walstow and J Whalley

Officers in attendance: C Crossland and L Hull

ACTION BY:

(Meeting commenced at 2.30pm.)

(The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and read out the Fire Alarm/Evacuation Procedure.)

11. NOMINATIONS FOR THE ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Councillor G Wynne be elected Chair for the meeting.

12. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Greaves.

13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

(a) Members

There were no declarations of interest by Members.

(b) Officers

There were no declarations of interest by officers.

14. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 19TH JUNE 2013

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 19th June 2013 be approved.

15. MINUTES FOR ACTION

In relation to Minute No. 10(a), Disciplinary Procedure, Members were advised that the procedure is being discussed at the Policy Working Group.

RESOLVED that the Minutes for Action be received.

16. OUTSTANDING MINUTES LIST

In relation to Outstanding Minute Number 41(a), Staff Car Parking, the Head of Human Resources advised that the report is currently with the Trade Union for consultation and would hopefully be presented to the December meeting.

In relation to Outstanding Minute Number 42(c), Employee Survey Results – 2013 Appraisals, the Head of Human Resources advised that this would be covered as part Agenda Item 6(d).

RESOLVED that the Outstanding Minutes List be received.

SECTION A – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PUBLIC

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

17. REPORT(S) OF THE EMPLOYER'S REPRESENTATIVES

(a) Grievance Procedure

Members were presented with a draft revised Grievance Policy and Procedure and asked for comments. The Policy is subject to the completion of Trade Union consultations.

Members were advised of the proposed main changes:

- Amendments to the document style and format
- Strengthened and improved clarification of a number of policy principles
- The introduction of a flow chart
- Strengthening of coverage of equality and diversity considerations
- Introduction of an employee grievance form

RESOLVED that:

1. The draft Grievance Policy and Procedure be noted.
2. A final draft be submitted to the next meeting, following completion of consultations, prior to Cabinet approval.
3. The policy and procedures be reviewed every two years.

(b) Flexible Working

Members were presented with a draft revised Flexible Working Guidance document for comment. The document has been presented to the Trade Unions and consultations are underway.

Details of legislative changes to statutory rights in term of Flexible Working are currently being developed. Although legislative changes are not finalised it was considered proactive to review the Councils current Flexible Working Guidelines, which had not been review for a number of years.

Members were advised of the proposed main changes:

- Amendments to the document style and format
- Insertion of key sections and contents page
- Coverage of equality and diversity considerations

Members were advised that the existing Guidelines are already broader than the current legislative requirements, and already reflective of the proposed new statutory right, therefore no change is proposed in this regard.

Members asked questions/ raised issues in relation to:

- Part time and job share employees
- The number of flexible working full time and part time employees
- The number of flexible working disabled employees

A suggestion was made that a 3 month timescale, where possible, be introduced for the submission of applications before implementation.

The Chairman and Members commended the fact that the Council does not endorse zero hour contract working.

RESOLVED that:

1. The draft Flexible Working Guidelines be noted.
2. A final draft be submitted to the next meeting, following completion of consultations, prior to Cabinet approval.
3. Information in relation to the number of flexible working employees be circulated to Members.

(c) Employee Award Scheme

Members were presented with the final proposed Annual Employee Award Scheme. Members were advised that in appreciation of the Council's workforce an annual awards scheme has been developed to recognise commitment and achievement both on an individual and team basis.

Members and employee representatives commented that the scheme was a welcomed idea to celebrate success.

Members were advised that nominations will be considered by a judging panel who will select the appropriate employee for each award category. Judging of nominations will be via a special annual meeting of two members from the employer's side and two members of the employee's side of the Joint Employee Council.

Members were asked for nominations for the Judging Panel. It was agreed that T Walstow, K Circuit and Councillors S Greaves and S May be appointed to the Judging Panel. It was suggested that a substitute from either side be allowed.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Employee Award Scheme be recommended to Cabinet for approval.
2. Employee representatives T Walstow and K Circuit and Councillors S Greaves and S May be appointed to the Judging Panel.

(d) Learning and Development

Members were informed of the progress to date and future activities within learning and development. The Joint Employee Council were asked to recommend any further suggestions for future improvements.

Members were advised that: the Council has retained its liP status; an electronic appraisal system has been introduced; a bespoke Leadership and Talent Academy was developed and launched; and an electronic training evaluation system has been created.

The Head of Human Resources advised that, to date, 95.6 % of appraisals have been completed. He advised that he has been assured that the outstanding appraisals are in the process of being scheduled.

Members asked questions/ raised issues in relation to:

- Specific training
- Development of employees
- Generic skills
- Frequency of appraisals

Some Members raised concerns that appraisals were still outstanding and felt that all managers should support the appraisal process.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

18. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, and after considering the public interest test as set out by the officer in the body of the report, Members agree that the following items of business involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1, 2 and 4, and, therefore, in accordance with Section 100A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting:

Agenda Item 7(a) – Review of Agency Workers – Paragraph 4

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

19. REPORT(S) OF THE EMPLOYERS REPRESENTATIVES

(a) Review of Agency Workers

The Joint Employee Council were updated on the use of agency workers for the period 1st April to 30th June 2013. Following a request Members were also updated on the number of consultants.

Members asked questions/ raised issues in relation to:

- Monitoring employees who have retired and returned to work for the Council
- Number of consultants employed by the Council
- Number of temporary employees

RESOLVED that:

1. The report be noted

2. The number of employees who are employed by the Council on a temporary basis be presented in future reports to the Joint Employee Council.

20. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

As there was no other urgent business to discuss, the Chairman closed the meeting.

(Meeting closed at 3.35pm.)