

JOINT EMPLOYEE COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 19th June 2013 at Retford Town Hall

Present:

Employer's Representatives:

Councillor S Greaves (Chair)
Councillors C Entwistle, J Leigh, S May, and J B Rickells

Employee Representatives:

K Circuit, A Porter, J Rose and J Whalley

Officers in attendance: C Crossland and L Hull

ACTION BY:

(Meeting commenced at 2.35pm.)

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

1. NOMINATIONS FOR THE ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Councillor S Greaves be elected Chair for the ensuing year.

2. NOMINATIONS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that K Circuit be elected Vice-Chair for the ensuing year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Employee Representatives A Dainty and R Parr.

4. 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.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12TH MARCH 2013

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 12th March 2013 be approved.

6. MINUTES FOR ACTION

In relation to the Living Wage Supplement, the Head of Human Resources advised that this action has now been implemented and those employees who qualify will get their pay backdated from 1st April 2013.

RESOLVED that the Minutes for Action be received.

7. OUTSTANDING MINUTES LIST

In relation to Outstanding Minute Number 41(a), Staff Car Parking, the Head of Human Resources advised that a report will be presented to the next meeting.

In relation to Outstanding Minute Number 42(c), Employee Survey Results – 2013 Appraisals, the Head of Human Resources advised that the evaluation of the appraisal round is currently being completed and a report will be presented to the next meeting.

RESOLVED that the Outstanding Minutes List be received.

SECTION A – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PUBLIC

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

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

(a) Employee Suggestion Scheme

Members were presented with proposals in respect of the new draft Employee Suggestion Scheme. A draft scheme was presented to the previous meeting, following support for the scheme further consideration and Trade Union consultation has taken place in terms of appropriate reward types and levels. The draft scheme incorporating the reward structure was appended to the report.

Members asked questions/ raised issues in relation to:

- Reward values
- Number of suggestions
- Keeping the scheme up to date reviewing it on regular basis
- Process for putting suggestions forward

In response to questions raised the Head of Human Resources advised that the number of suggestions received could be monitored and reported intermittently to the Joint Employee Council.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Employee Suggestion Scheme be referred to Cabinet for approval.
2. The number of employee suggestions received be monitored and reported intermittently to the Joint Employee Council.

(b) Annual Employee Award Scheme

Members were presented with the draft 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 were advised of the award categories for nominations.

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

RESOLVED that the draft Award Scheme be noted and a finalised version be brought to the next meeting of the Joint Employee Council.

(c) Work Life Balance Agreement – Legal Updates

Members were presented with information regarding recent updates to the Work Life Balance Agreement to reflect and incorporate recent legislative changes. In March 2013 the statutory parental leave was increased from 12 weeks to 18 weeks unpaid leave and April 2013 Statutory Maternity and Paternity Pay rates were increased.

RESOLVED that the changes made to the Council's existing Work Life Balance Agreement to reflect the recent statutory updates be noted.

(d) Appeals Procedure

Members were presented with the draft Appeals Procedure for consideration. In May 2013 full Council approved revised committee arrangements, which included the establishment of an Appeals Committee made up of elected Members.

Following the changes the process for hearing appeals has been reviewed, in consultation with the Trade Unions, an agreement on a revised Appeals Procedure has been reached. A copy of the draft Appeals Procedure was appended to the report.

The Head of Human Resources advised that all appeals will be heard by the Appeals Committee with the exception of lower level appeals including verbal and first written warnings which will be heard by an officer panel comprising of two members of the Management Team. The process for NJC job evaluation appeals will remain the same.

RESOLVED that the draft Appeals Procedure be recommended to Cabinet for approval.

9. 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 9(a) – Review of Agency Workers – Paragraph 4

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

10. 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 January 2013 to 31st March 2013.

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

RESOLVED that:

1. The report be noted
2. The number of employees who have retired and returned to work for the Council be monitored and reported intermittently to the Joint Employee Council.

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

(a) Disciplinary Procedure

An employee representative asked if the Disciplinary Procedure could be reviewed. An Elected Member commented that it would be useful to look at how recent changes to the Code of Conduct may influence policies.

The Head of Human resources advised that he was happy to have a look at the Policy within the remit of the Policy Working Group and look at how recent changes to the Code of Conduct impact on policies and procedures.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Disciplinary Procedure be discussed at the next meeting of the Policy Working Group.
2. The Policy Working Group look at how recent changes to the Code of Conduct impact on policies and procedures.

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

(Meeting closed at 3.30pm.)