

JOINT EMPLOYEE COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday, 10th July 2019 at Worksop Town Hall

Present:

Employer's Representatives:

Councillors C Entwistle, J Evans, M Quigley MBE and J Sanger MBE.

Sub: Councillor D R Pressley

Employee Representatives:

M Chester, K Circuit, P Lee, T Walstow and J Whalley.

Officers in attendance: K Childs and B Pinkney.

(Meeting commenced at 3.00pm.)

(The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and read out the Fire Alarm/Evacuation Procedure. Shee also enquired as to whether any member of the public wished to film/record the meeting or any part thereof; however, there were no members of public present.)

1. NOMINATIONS FOR THE ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that K Circuit be appointed as Chair for the ensuring year.

2. NOMINATIONS FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED that Councillor J Evans be appointed as Vice-Chair for the ensuring year.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D G Pidwell and Employee Representatives M Bassett.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

(a) Members

There were no declarations by members.

(b) Officers

There were no declarations of interest by officers.

5. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 10th APRIL 2019

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 10th April 2019 be approved.

6. MINUTES FOR ACTION

RESOLVED that the Minutes for Action be received.

7. OUTSTANDING MINUTES LIST

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) Compassionate Leave Policy

Members were presented with a report that proposed changes to the compassionate leave provisions for staff. This is to help form part of the work life balance agreement.

The current provisions are set out in the report circulated which has a degree of inconsistency.

The proposed changes to the policy have been supported by management. The proposed changes are as follows:

- The term 'immediate family members' has been clarified.
- The proposals bring in provisions for more family members.
- The number of compassionate leave days has increased.
- The policy makes provisions for someone who has a spouse/partner/child with a terminal illness.

Questions were raised regarding the loss of an unborn child. It was recognised that the loss of an unborn child needs to be considered.

RESOLVED that Members agree the revised compassionate leave provisions, subject to the consideration of an amendment for an unborn child, for recommendation to Cabinet.

(b) Transgender Policy

Members were presented with a report that proposes the adoption of a Transgender Policy.

Members were advised that the Equality Act 2010 identifies gender reassignment as one of the nine protected characteristics, Tran's people are identified as those who are proposing to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process for gender reassignment.

Employers and co-workers have certain responsibilities that they must be aware of which have been set out in the report.

In order to demonstrate the organisations commitment to ensuring that transgender employees are treated with dignity and respect, and feel welcome and supported, a Transgender Policy has been developed in consultation with the Policies Working Group, and using the guidance produced by ACAS. The proposed policy is attached to the report circulated.

Following publication of this policy, once adopted, consideration will be given to appropriate training.

It was confirmed that the individual should use whatever toilet they identify themselves as being.

Members requested that training also be considered for elected members.

RESOLVED that Members agree the draft Transgender Policy, for recommendation to Cabinet.

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Part 4 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 agreed that the following items of business involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4, and therefore, in accordance with Section 100A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting:

Agenda Item No. 9(a) – Pay and Grading Review – Paragraph 4

Agenda Item No. 9(b) – Review of Agency Workers – Paragraph 4

SECTION B – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION IN PRIVATE

Key Decisions

None.

Other Decisions

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

(a) Pay and Grading Review

Members were given an update outlining progress on the Pay and Grading Review against the timetable for completion.

A copy of the previous report was provided for information.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

(b) Agency Workers

Members were updated on the use of agency workers and consultants for the period 1st January to 31st March 2019. The data was appended to the report with a year's worth of data for comparison. Verbal updates were given on some service areas.

RESOLVED that:

1. The report on the use of agency workers and consultants be noted.
2. In order to seek to reduce the incidence of agency workers, managers be required to complete the quarterly monitoring form and data be reported to the Joint Employee Council.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

The Chair raised concerns regarding what the council has in place to support Mental Health.

It was advised that various opportunities have been introduced to try and help Mental Health including a health awareness day for all staff. The HR Service Manger agreed to look further into this.

An employee representative raised concerns regarding contractor staff being paid the living wage rate.

Questions were asked regarding counselling that is offered at work. It was advised that staff can get six counselling sessions face to face, which may be increased if necessary.

The Chair raised concerns regarding the cleaners at Queens Buildings. Complaints have been made as cleaners are filling the lifts with bin bags making it difficult for individuals to use the lifts from around 5:30pm. It was advised that this is a fire issue and restricts access for wheelchair users at this time.

The cleaning contract is currently out for tender and the issues have been raised with the relevant Officer.

As there was no other urgent business to discuss, the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

(Meeting closed at 3.55pm.)