

**JOINT EMPLOYEE COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2021 at Worksop Town Hall**

**Present:**

Employer's Representatives:

Councillors D Pidwell, S Isard and C Tindle.

Subs: K Greaves and D Pressley.

Employee Representatives:

M Bassett, K Circuit, D Fretwell, P Lee and J Whalley.

Officers in attendance:

K Childs and E Hinsley.

(Meeting commenced at 3:00pm)

The Head of People and Culture welcomed all to the meeting and read out the Fire Alarm/Evacuation Procedure. As there were no members of public present, there was no need to enquire whether any member of the public wished to film/record the meeting.

1. NOMINATIONS FOR THE ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

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

2. NOMINATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR

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

The Chair requested all present to introduce themselves for the benefit of new Members.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C Entwistle, J Evans and J White and Employee Representatives J Common and T Walstow.

The Chair wished Councillor J Evans a speedy recovery on behalf of the Joint Employee Council (JEC).

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 21<sup>ST</sup> APRIL 2021

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021 be approved.

**6. MINUTES FOR ACTION**

The Head of People and Culture (HPC) informed the Committee that the Domestic Abuse Policy had been approved by Cabinet at the meeting on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

**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) **Update on Progress of People Strategy Action Plan**

The Head of People and Culture (HPC) provided an update on progress towards the actions identified in the People Strategy Action Plan for 2021/22.

As part of mental health awareness week staff were encouraged to 'reconnect with nature'. A photography competition was held with a prize for the best photo.

The results of the staff survey on flexi-time had been analysed and hybrid working arrangements were being considered to allow staff more flexibility. The proposed NHS move to Queens Buildings would also affect the working environment in the future.

The Council was looking at the possibility of using the apprenticeship scheme to deliver training, which would also allow staff to gain qualifications.

In response to questions the HPC informed the Committee that with the ending of national restrictions, the Council is not requiring all staff to return to the office at once. A minimal office presence has been requested to support front line staff. Control measures will be maintained to reassure staff who may be anxious about returning to the office.

Staff that do not need to use emails for their job are not given an email address. The HPC stated that communication is more difficult with these employees and this is something she would like to discuss with members of these departments. The majority of staff still receive physical payslips despite regular promotion of electronic payslips.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the update report and attachment be noted.

(b) **Update on Development of e-Recruitment**

The Head of People and Culture (HPC) apprised Members of the development of the e-Recruitment platform.

The e-Recruitment platform was intended to allow prospective applicants to apply online and improve the overall recruitment experience. This new process would be replicated offline for

those who cannot, or prefer not to apply online, to ensure that individuals are not disadvantaged by the new platform.

At the last JEC meeting, it was agreed that a demonstration would be organised for Committee Members to view the platform and its capabilities prior to the full launch.

In response to questions, the HPC advised that although the original invitation was for Members of the JEC, she had no objections to any other Members attending, should they be interested in viewing the demonstration. The HPC advised that applicant's details would be deleted from the system after six months due to data protection.

**RESOLVED** that the contents of the update report be noted.

#### **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 Paragraphs 3 and 4, and therefore, in accordance with Section 100A of the Act, the press and public be excluded from the meeting:

Agenda Item No. 10(a) – Shared Cost AVCs – Paragraph 3

Agenda Item No. 10(b) – Staff Sickness – Mental Health – Paragraph 3

Agenda Item No. 10(c) - 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) Shared Cost AVCs**

Further to the JEC supporting the introduction of a shared cost AVC scheme at the last meeting, the Committee was presented with the proposed terms under which the scheme would operate. The previous report was also appended for the benefit of new Members.

Following questions the HPC advised Members of the lower earnings limit.

**RESOLVED** that the information contained in the report be noted, and the terms identified be supported.

##### **(b) Staff Sickness – Mental Health**

The HPC reported that an analysis of employee absence due to mental health had been conducted, to better understand the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on staff mental health.

Two charts were included with the report showing the number of absences by mental health type over the last three years and the number of days lost due to those absences over the same period.

**RESOLVED** that the information and measures put in place to safeguard employee health and wellbeing during the pandemic, be noted.

(c) Review of Agency Workers

Members were updated on the use of agency workers and consultants for the period 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. The information was appended to the report with a year's worth of data for comparison.

**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 working, to require that managers complete the quarterly monitoring form, which will be reported to the Joint Employee Council.

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

As there was no other urgent business to discuss, the Chair commented that it was good to return to face to face meetings. He thanked everyone for their attendance and input and closed the meeting.

(Meeting closed at 4:26pm)