

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Tuesday 27 January 2015 commencing at 4.30pm.

Present: Councillor David Cotton (Chairman)
Councillor Nigel Bowler
Councillor Pat Mewis
Councillor Irmgard Parrott

Representatives of Union members: Karen Lond (Vice-Chairman)

Representatives of Non union staff: Carol Bond
Rachel Cooper

In attendance:
Ian Knowles Director of Resources and Section 151 Officer
Julie Heath Senior Communications Officer
Steve Anderson Information Governance and Systems Development Officer
Emma Redwood Team Manager, Human Resources
Nicola Calver Governance and Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Jackie Brockway
Paul Key

Membership: Councillor Irmgard Parrott to substitute for Councillor Jackie Brockway

38 MINUTES (JSCC.32 14/15)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held on 9 December 2014 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

39 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

40 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE (JSCC.33 14/15)

Members gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 19 January 2015.

It was suggested that an update on a practice fire drill be circulated to members of the Committee for their information.

RESOLVED that progress on the matters arising schedule as set out in report JSCC.33 14/15 be received and noted.

41 PUBLIC SERVICE HUB – UPDATE (JSCC.34 14/15)

The Senior Communications Officer addressed the Committee with regard to the Public Service Hub

The official opening of the reception had taken place which had been successful. Following concerns raised, recent changes had been actioned including:

- installation of CCTV;
- additional signage had been ordered;
- uniforms for WLDC staff and ID badges had been purchased;
- regular tenant meetings were being held;
- two Additional security staff were to be employed; and
- colour-coded chairs had been introduced to assist with visitors.

The main issue raised was the marked increase in footfall to almost double of that expected due to a national directive for DWP clients to attend weekly appointments rather than two-weekly. In order to alleviate this, conversations were being held with DWP to suggest staggering appointment times.

It was noted that the reception opening times had been aligned with the national DWP opening hours which included a 10am start on a Wednesday. This was resulting in congregations of people queueing to use Council and DWP services, it did however allow front facing services time to meet as a team or undertake training during this period. A suggestion was made to introduce pop up receptions during this period at a different entrance for Council visitors, and the Senior Communications Officer undertook to investigate.

Officers confirmed that engagement with relevant staff was taking place regularly, encouraging ideas to assist in improving the public service hub.

RESOLVED

- (a) that the update be received and noted; and
- (b) that a further update be submitted to the following meeting of the JSCC.

42 GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE REVIEW (JSCC.35 14/15)

Consideration was given to a report which presented an updated Grievance Procedure for the Authority for adoption. This item had been deferred at the Committee's meeting on 9 December 2014.

The current Grievance procedure was implemented in 2007. However, it had been recognised that the procedure required reviewing to give more clarity to staff and managers and also to make provision to deal with collective grievances should they arise.

As with the previous procedure, the main objective was to resolve the matter quickly and informally and to avoid escalation to a formal hearing. However, it was recognised that not all grievances would be resolved informally and the Policy allowed for escalation to the formal procedure.

The stages for a collective grievance mirrored those for an individual grievance except that the group could nominate a spokesperson from amongst them to present and speak on their behalf.

In addition, if one or more employees were not satisfied with the outcome of their grievance, they would be able to move to the appeals process either as an individual or a group.

RESOLVED that it be **RECOMMENDED** to the Policy and Resources Committee that: -

- (a) the Grievance Procedure be approved for formal adoption; and
- (b) delegated authority be granted to the Director of Resources to make minor house-keeping amendments to the Policy in the future, in consultation with the Chairmen of the Policy and Resources Committee and Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

43 POLICY REVIEW – INDUCTION AND PROBATION (JSCC.36 14/15)

Consideration was given to a report which presented an updated Induction and Probation Policy.

The current Policy was last updated in 2007, however, it had been recognised that the Policy required reviewing to make provision to allow the right of appeal if an employee was dismissed during the probationary period.

The Committee as a whole were happy with the changes made to the policy and felt that it was more comprehensive and the associated paperwork was easier to complete. A few amendments were suggested during consideration of the policy:

- that Unison be added in to employee support given a the 2-week period;
- that the checklist include recording the receipt of ICT policy documents prior to start date;
- that ‘Safeguarding Children’ be amended to ‘Safeguarding’ and that named officers, are replaced by ‘Safeguarding Officers’

It was noted that the policy would apply to all officers, regardless of their level or place of work.

Unison representatives were mindful that union administration needed to be completed for new starters as expediently as possible and undertook to provide application forms to HR for despatch alongside other induction paperwork.

RESOLVED that it be **RECOMMENDED** to the Policy and Resources Committee that: -

- (a) the Induction And Probationary Policy as amended be approved for formal adoption; and
- (b) delegated authority be granted to the Director of Resources to make minor house-keeping amendments to the Policy in the future, in consultation with the Chairmen of the Policy and Resources Committee and Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

44 DATA QUALITY POLICY (JSCC.37 14/15)

Consideration was given to a report which presented a new Policy, the Data Quality Policy, which aimed to improve and maintain the quality of data held in corporate information systems.

Members noted that this would ensure provision of quality data to inform their decision making, resulting in better judgements on behalf of the people of West Lindsey.

The Director of Resources explained the three levels of assurance to the JSCC, giving them confidence in compliance to processes, checks at Director level as well as Internal Audit involvement.

Appendix 1 to the report set out a list of systems that were deemed critical to the council's business, and the Information Governance and Systems Development Officer invited challenge to add to the list.

RESOLVED that it be **RECOMMENDED** to the Policy and Resources Committee that:

- (a) the Data Quality Policy be approved for formal adoption; and
- (b) delegated authority be granted to the SIRO to make minor house-keeping amendments to the Policy in the future, in consultation with the Chairmen of the Policy and Resources Committee.

45 WORK PLAN (JSCC.38 14/15)

Members gave consideration to their future work plan as set out in report JSCC.38 14/15. It was noted that if any Committee Member wished to see a report on a particular issue, this could also be raised.

As an agreed Committee Timetable for 2015/16 was awaited, Committee dates beyond 10 March 2015 were unavailable. Therefore all planned business had been scheduled to come to the following meeting to ensure that JSCC were aware of matters for consideration within their pipeline.

Following discussion it was agreed that Future Meeting Dates, Policy Review - Drugs and Alcohol, Policy Review - Travel Policy and Driving Policy would be brought to the meeting on 10 March. All other items would be brought forward within the new civic year.

RESOLVED that the Work Plan, as set out in report JSCC.38 14/15 be amended as discussed and noted.

The meeting closed at 17.28 pm.

Chairman