



Council
18 July 2011

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**Subject: Recommendation from Policy and Resources Committee.
Representation on Joint Staff Consultative Committee**

Report by: Director of Neighbourhoods and Health

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Purpose / Summary: To inform Council of the recommendations from the Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 16 June 2011 and seek agreement from Council on the number of Councillor and employee representatives and reserves to sit on the Joint Staff Consultative Committee (JSCC). To ask the Council to nominate Councillors to sit on the JSCC and for Council to agree the quorum and frequency of meetings of the JSCC.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

Council is recommended to:

- 1) **Agree the following representatives on the Joint Staff Consultative Committee.**
 - **4 Elected Members and 4 Elected Member reserves**
 - **4 employee representatives (made up of 2 West Lindsey Branch of Unison appointed and 2 staff elected employee representatives) and 6 reserve employee representatives (made up of 3 West Lindsey Branch of Unison appointed and 3 staff elected employee representatives)**

- 2) **Agree to quorum for the Joint Staff Consultative Committee to be 4 made up of 2 Elected Members and 1 Unison appointed and 1 staff elected employee.**

3) Agree that Joint Staff Consultative Committee meet at the same frequency as the Policy and Resources Committee.

4) Nominate 4 Elected Members to sit on Joint Staff Consultative Committee and nominate 4 reserve Elected Members to Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: None arising from this report.

Financial: None arising from this report.

Staffing: The inclusion of any additional employee representatives on JSCC would have an implication for the time commitment of the staff involved.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights: The inclusion of a broader range of employee representatives on JSCC is likely to lead to more comprehensive views being considered and therefore be a more inclusive process.

Risk Assessment: Taking the views of staff into account on how they would wish to be represented increases the opportunity for better communication and improved policy development which reduces the risk of policies not being supported and owned within the organisation. Broadening representation beyond the existing arrangement of only Unison appointed members leads to a risk that the strength of the voice of Unison could be diminished.

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: None arising as a result of this report.

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

Policy and Resources Committee report 16 June 2011 –West Lindsey website Committee Admin system.

Report OR.59 10/11 Organisation and Resources Committee 7 April 2011 – accessible from Committee Administration system on the website.

Call in and Urgency:

Yes

No

Key Decision:

Yes

No

1 Introduction

1.1 The Policy & Resources Committee at the meeting on 16 June 2011 considered a report on representation on the Joint Staff Consultative Committee; the minute from that meeting is as follows.

**REPRESENTATION ON JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
(PR.04 11/12)**

Consideration was given to a report which sought to inform Members of the results of a recently undertaken staff survey which had sought the views of staff on how they would wish to be represented on the Joint Staff Consultative Committee (JSCC). The report further requested that having considered the survey results, Members make recommendations on the future make-up of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee for consideration by Council.

Lengthy discussion took place with differing views being expressed. Supporters of the recommendation expressed concern that as the majority of staff were not in Unison they did not have a voice at JSCC thus the balance and equality needed to be addressed.

However, Members opposed to the recommendations were of the opinion that staff could be unaware of the reasons why Unions existed, the expert advice they had available to them together with the true implications of the proposals. It was considered there were a number of benefits realised by non-union members, several of which were cited and a Member urged that all unions should be afforded the opportunity to approach or write to all staff in connection with points raised in the first instance.

In response supporters considered it was down to individuals to choose whether they wished to be members or not, and pay subscriptions. The suggestion that unions represented all was disputed and it was considered the suggested approach may cause staff to feel intimidated.

It was clarified that formal negotiation process between the Council and the Unions, would not be affected by the proposals and would not be bypassed as feared by some. Officer stressed and re-emphasized that there was no intention to marginalize the Unions, whose views and the work undertaken to-date was much valued and wanted. The principles out of which the recommendations had been borne were again outlined, these been a way of redressing the balance and ensuring as many employees had voice at this forum.

Further arguments both in support and opposition to the proposals were put forward arising from which it was proposed and seconded that the approach suggested earlier in the debate be undertaken in the first instance. On being put to the vote the motion was declared lost.

Having been proposed and seconded the recommendations as written were put to the vote and it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (a) the results of the staff survey on how staff would wish to be represented on the Joint Staff Consultative Committee be received and noted; and
- (b) as a result of the survey conducted and the comments expressed during the debate it be **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL** that:
 - (i) representation on the Joint Staff Consultative Committee in the future, be comprised of the following:
 - 4 Elected Members and 4 Elected Member reserves; and
 - 4 Employee Representatives (made up of 2 West Lindsey Branch of Unison appointed and 2 staff elected employee representatives) and 6 reserve employee representatives (made up of 3 West Lindsey Branch of Unison appointed and 3 staff elected employee representatives); and
 - (ii) the quorum for the Joint Staff Consultative Committee in the future be 4; made up of 2 Elected Members; 1 Unison appointed and 1 staff elected employee.

2 Terms of Reference

The JSCC is a consultative committee and it does not have decision making powers. It is a way of supporting communication between the Council and employees of the Council and it gives the opportunity for policies affecting employee interests to be considered by elected Members and employee representatives prior to them being agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee. For JSCC to function effectively it needs to be able to take into account a range of views.

The terms of reference for JSCC are set down in the Councils Constitution as follows :-

- (a) To establish regular methods of communication and negotiation between the Council and employees of the Council, in order to prevent differences and to adjust them should they arise, always provided that no question of individual discipline, promotion or efficiency shall be within the scope of the Committee.

- (b) To consider and advise on any relevant matter referred to it by any Committee of the Council, or by any of the employee groups represented on the Consultative Committee.
- (c) To make recommendations to the Policy and Resources Committee as to the adoption of policies affecting employee interests (except those relating to terms and conditions on which they are employed) or on any other matter referred to it.
- (d) The Consultative Committee may submit for consideration by, and the advice of, the appropriate national or provincial negotiating body established to deal with National Scheme of Conditions of Service affecting employees.”

3 Joint Staff Consultative Committee

The meetings of JSCC have previously taken place late on an afternoon to allow Councillors and staff representatives to meet at a time that is most convenient.

Subject to Council agreeing the recommendations nominations will be sought from staff that would wish to put themselves forward to represent their colleagues. A ballot will then take place of staff that have been nominated and seconded for the 5 staff elected positions.

The next meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee will be scheduled to take place prior to the September 2011 meeting of the Policy and resources Committee.

The appointment of 4 Elected Member representatives and 4 reserve Elected Members to the JSCC does not need to be strictly in accordance with the numbers of members in each of the political groups however it would be good practice for it to follow the spirit of the constitution. It is considered that the best fit would be for there to be 2 Members and 2 reserve Members nominated by the Conservative group, 1 Member and 1 reserve member from the Liberal Democrat group and 1 Member and 1 reserve Member in total from the Labour and Independent groups. Prior to the Council meeting nominations will be sought from the political groups.

4 Conclusion

It is felt that the Joint Staff Consultative Committee should have representation from Elected Members, Unison nominated and also staff elected representatives.