

**WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

MINUTES of the Meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held via MS Teams on Thursday, 1 July 2021 commencing at 4.00 pm.

**Members:** Councillor David Cotton (Chairman)  
Councillor Matthew Boles  
Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway  
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne

**Representatives of Union members:** James Deacon (Vice Chairman)

**Representatives of Non-union staff:** Amy Potts

**In attendance:** Emma Redwood, Assistant Director People and Democratic Services  
Robert Gilliot, Waste and Recycling Team Manager  
Ele Snow, Democratic and Civic Officer  
John Bingham, Assistant Data Protection and Freedom of Information Officer

**1 TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE CIVIC YEAR**

The Democratic and Civic Officer opened the meeting and sought nominations for the position of Chairman. On receiving nominations and being voted upon unanimously, it was

**RESOLVED** that Councillor David Cotton be elected as Chairman for the 2021/22 Civic Year.

Councillor Cotton thanked the Committee for nominating him as Chairman and took the chair.

**2 TO APPOINT A VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE CIVIC YEAR**

The Chairman asked for nominations for the position of Vice Chairman. On being nominated and voted upon unanimously, it was

**RESOLVED** that James Deacon be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the 2021/22 Civic Year.

**3 MEMBERS' DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 4 MINUTES

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held on Thursday, 25 March 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

#### 5 NEW DEPOT UPDATE

The Waste & Recycling Team Manager gave an update by way of a presentation, updating the Committee on the depot relocation to Caenby Corner. The two current depots were no longer fit for purpose, with neither site being large enough to expand to handle future needs (ie) food waste.

The Committee heard that a grant had been secured for roof solar panels, which had been fitted. A nature pond was planned to be situated at the front of the site and self-contained water tanks for run-off from the site would filter any contaminants, with the clean water feeding the pond. It was explained that the build was due to complete by the end of October 2021 and it was envisaged that site visits may be arranged from the end of August.

A Member of the Committee enquired about the relocation of staff and it was confirmed that staff engagement had been ongoing for some considerable time. The Assistant Director of People was not aware of any dissatisfaction nor loss of staff as a result of the proposed relocation. Travel allowance was being looked at for those staff affected by the move to the new site.

The needs of street cleaners had been addressed by securing a storage facility in Gainsborough town centre, not only providing a place for their barrows but toilet facilities, hand washing, electric were also available to them.

Members of the Committee thanked the Waste & Recycling Team Manager for the update and expressed anticipation for the opening of the new depot.

#### 6 DATA PROTECTION POLICY

The Assistant Data Protection & Freedom of Information Officer introduced a report regarding the review of the existing Data Protection Policy. He explained there were minor text changes to update the policy for compliance with the UK GDPR. There were no questions/comments from the Committee on the policy. Accordingly, having been moved and seconded, with a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) The amendments to the Data Protection Policy be recommended to the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for formal adoption; and

- b) Delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to make minor housekeeping amendments to the policy in future, in consultation with the Chairman of the CP&R Committee and the Chairman of JSCC.

## 7 **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION POLICY**

The Assistant Data Protection & Freedom of Information Officer presented his second report regarding the review of the existing Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Policy. The Committee heard that the policy had been reviewed and minor changes were required, one of which was the £2 increase to charges made for environmental information requests. It was highlighted that the FOI webpage gave full information on charges made by the council for FOI requests.

Having been moved and seconded, with a unanimous vote it was

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the amendments to the Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Policy be supported and recommended to the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for formal adoption; and
- b) Delegated authority be granted to the Chief Executive to make minor housekeeping amendments to the policy in future, in consultation with the Chairman of CP&R Committee and the Chairman of JSCC.

## 8 **ANNUAL SICKNESS ABSENCE 2020-21**

The Committee heard from the Assistant Director of People & Democratic Services regarding the Monitoring of Sickness Absence for the whole of the previous financial year April 2020 – March 2021.

It was explained that the annual target figure for sickness absence was 7.0 per FTE, and the figure achieved was below this at 5.93 per FTE. This did not include Covid 19 absence, which had to be reported separately, however if Covid data had been included, the achieved figure was still under target at 6.77 per FTE.

It was highlighted that the Operational staff had had an exceptional year with low levels of absences. Members heard that short term absence, such as musculoskeletal problems and general illness was low for the year, whilst longer term absence accounted for 47% of the overall yearly absence.

With regard to Covid 19 data, figures for people who self-isolated were kept separate and did not count towards sickness triggers. This was reported as still being below the target of 7.0 per FTE.

Overall, the data for West Lindsey District Council sat well in comparison benchmarking carried out with other Lincolnshire authorities.

With no further questions or comments, the contents of the Annual Sickness Absence report were **NOTED**.

## 9 **NATIONAL PAY AWARD UPDATE**

The Assistant Director of People & Democratic Services detailed the current position of ongoing pay negotiations, advising that, at the time of the meeting, no conclusion to the negotiations had been arrived at. The Chairman highlighted that, as discussed in previous years, the lower salary bands at the council had been weighted to ensure pay was in excess of the living wage. As with previous negotiations, it was confirmed that the Committee would receive details of any national pay awards as and when an agreement was reached.

The contents of the report were duly **NOTED**.

## 10 **STAFF COVID SURVEY RESULTS**

Members of the Committee were provided with the results of the third staff survey. Questions had been kept the same for comparison purposes and the response rate had been 64%. The Assistant Director of People & Democratic Services advised that they were seeing a slight change in the key headlines – with less staff wanting to work solely in the office (10%); an increase in the number of staff wishing to work from home (42%); and at 48% a mix of working from home / scheduled time in the office. There was a doubling of people who did not feel connected to their team at 11%. She explained that the results would be extrapolated out to each Assistant Director for their respective teams in order to identify trends.

There was discussion regarding the twice-weekly testing, as encouraged by the Government, it was confirmed this was not compulsory for staff however the message from Management Team was that testing should be encouraged.

Phase 1 of returning to the office was due to start on Monday 5 July 2021, with priority given to those staff who had to do their work in the Guildhall and those who were suffering from social isolation. This would stay in place for between four to six weeks to understand any issues, before the next Phase was rolled out. It was highlighted that Government guidance was still that if you could work from home, you should do so.

The Chairman commented that he would like to see another survey done, as things got back to 'normal' and it was confirmed there would be further follow up with staff as the return to the office progressed.

With no requirement for a decision, details of the report were **NOTED**.

11 **WORK PLAN**

With no questions or comments from the Committee, the work plan was duly **NOTED**.

12 **TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The date and time of the next meeting of the JSCC, to be held on Thursday, 2 September 2021, 4pm was **NOTED**.

Following discussions regarding the benefits of meeting virtually, the location of the next meeting, whether it be a return to the Council Chamber or continuing via MS Teams, was left undecided, to be confirmed at a later date.

Councillor J. Milne wished to congratulate and thank all staff who were still working through a difficult time during Covid 19.

The meeting closed at 5.04 pm.

Chairman