

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held in the Council Chamber at the Guildhall, Gainsborough on Monday 30 January 2017 commencing at 4.00pm.

Present: Councillor David Cotton (Chairman)
Councillor Matthew Boles
Councillor Jackie Brockway
Councillor Jessie Milne

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

Representatives of Non union staff: Kate Hearn
Rachel Parkin

In attendance:
Alan Robinson Monitoring Officer
Emma Redwood Team Manager – People and Organisational Development
Steve Anderson Information Governance Officer
Katie Coughlan Governance and Civic Officer
Jana Randle Governance and Civic Officer

Also in Attendance: Helen Stokes, UNISON - Lincoln Branch Secretary

Apologies: No formal apologies received

40 MINUTES (JSCC.28 16/17)

(a) Meeting held on 24 November 2016

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held on 24 November 2016 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

41 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

42 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE (JSCC.28 16/17)

Members gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule which set out the current position of all previously agreed actions as at 24 November 2016.

It was noted that all actions had been completed.

RESOLVED that progress on the matters arising schedule as set out in report JSCC.28 16/17 be received and noted.

43 NEW BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY (JSCC.30 16/17)

The Committee gave consideration to a report which presented a new Bullying and Harassment Policy for consideration and subsequent adoption by the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee.

The Council had a Bullying and Harassment Policy in place, however due to updates in legislation, changes to the Acas definition and incorporating best practice a review had been required to provide employees with the most up to date information. Rather than making amendments a new policy had been written.

The policy would apply to all staff including employees, contractors, casual and agency staff and volunteers of the organisation for matters relating to issues of bullying or harassment and directed staff to resolve matters through an informal as well as a formal process.

The policy covered all situations both within the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, including for example, business trips, conferences and work-related social events.

It was noted that the policy had been developed by the People and OD Team Manager. Independent advice had been sought from an external specialist. The policy had also been sent to Unison and staff reps for consultation. Staff reps had given positive feedback to support the new policy and Unison had indicated their support also.

In response to questions from the Lincoln Branch Secretary, the People and OD Team Manager confirmed that the new Policy moved away from the previous approach of having harassment advisors. The organisation was now smaller and capacity for this role was limited. However the Council did have an Employee Assistance Programme, through which staff could receive guidance and advice on range of matters including Bullying Harassment. It was also confirmed that members of the HR Team would be trained to deal with bullying and harassment cases. Training had already commenced around the organisation for a number of managers on related issues such as Dignity at Work and the Policy still had an emphasis on resolving such matters informally in the first instance.

It was suggested that a flow chart of the procedure be included in the Policy, to make it simple for both managers and staff to understand at a glance. The People and OD

Team Manager indicated she would be happy to include such a diagram, prior to submitting the Policy to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for formal adoption.

The Lincoln Branch Secretary further suggested that the Policy should include reference to the Whistle Blowing Policy and again the People and OD Team Manager indicated she would be happy to include a reference prior to submitting the Policy to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for formal adoption.

The Branch Secretary indicated she would be happy to review the proposed amends prior to submission to the Policy Committee.

The Lincoln Branch Secretary also requested that Unison representatives be included in any training and guidance offered to staff and Managers, in order that all understood the Policy and all were interpreting it in the same way. This would allow them to fulfil their role to the best of their ability.

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

- (a) the Bullying and Harassment Policy be approved for formal adoption; subject to the inclusion of a flow chart of the process and reference to the Whistleblowing Policy being included; 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 Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

Note: Councillor Brockway joined the meeting at this point.

44 INFORMATION GOVERNANCE POLICY REVIEWS (JSCC.31 16/17)

The Committee were asked to give consideration to the first five, of a raft of Information Governance Policies which required review. These were the Data Protection Policy; the Information Management and Protection Policy; the Data Quality Policy; the Remote Working Policy; and the IT Access Policy. The purpose of each Policy was briefly summarised to the Committee, and was set out in the report, along with the main revisions which had been made to each policy and the reasons for change.

The Committee indicated they found the revision sheet pages, most useful and this approach should be adopted wherever possible.

In response to a questions it was confirmed that the new Password Policy had not been applied to the PSN Network.

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

- (a) The Five Information Governance Policies, namely: -
- Data Protection Policy
 - Information Management and Protection Policy
 - Data Quality Policy
 - Remote Working Policy; and
 - IT Access Policy
- 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 Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

45 WORK PLAN (JSCC.32 16/17)

Members gave consideration to their future work plan as set out in report JSCC.32 16/17. It was noted that if any Committee Member wished to see a report on a particular issue, this could also be raised.

The Lincoln Branch Secretary urged the Committee to give some precedent to the Bomb Threat and Suspicious Package procedure, in light of recent events at other local authorities.

RESOLVED that the Work Plan, as set out in report JSCC.32 16/17 be received and noted.

46 TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

- 30 March 2017 at 4.00 pm.

The meeting closed at 4.26 pm.

Chairman

Following an informal discussion at the conclusion of the meeting it was agreed to hold an additional meeting on 2 March to consider the next raft of Information Governance Policies.