

**WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL**

MINUTES of a Meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held in the Council Chamber on Thursday, 5 October 2017 commencing at 4.00 pm.

**Members:** Councillor David Cotton (Chairman)  
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne

**Representatives of Union members:** James Deacon

**Representatives of Non-union staff:** Rachel Parkin (Vice Chairman)  
Kathryn Hearn

**In attendance:** Alan Robinson, SL - Democratic and Business Support  
Katie Coughlan, Senior Democratic & Civic Officer  
Ele Durrant, Democratic & Civic Officer  
Andy Gray, Housing and Communities Team Manager  
Grant White, Lead Officer Enterprising Communities  
Emma Redwood, Team Manager People and Organisational Development

**Apologies:** Councillor Matthew Boles

**11 MEMBERS' DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at this point in the meeting.

**12 MINUTES OF THE JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 JULY 2017**

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held on 6 July 2017 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**13 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE**

The Committee gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule, setting out the current position of previously agreed actions, as at 27 September 2017.

**RESOLVED** that the Matters Arising Schedule as at 27 September 2017 be received and noted.

## 14 **BODY WORN CAMERAS**

Members gave consideration to a report regarding the proposal to introduce body worn cameras for use by enforcement officers. The Committee was provided with an overview of the need for Body Worn CCTV and was requested to recommend the Body Worn CCTV Policy to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for formal adoption.

The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager explained that within the policy there were clear processes for the collection, storage of and access to any camera footage and staff would be given training on the code of practice for usage as well as the practical training.

A member of Committee voiced support for the introduction of such CCTV and felt it was a positive step for the protection of enforcement officers. The People & Organisational Development Team Manager explained there would be a cohesive communications strategy aimed at staff and members of the public to explain how the cameras would be used and why. It was agreed that it was important for the public to be aware of the introduction of these cameras as the intention was for the wearing of such devices to be preventative as much as for the collection of evidence in untoward circumstances.

A member of Committee enquired about the right to consent to being filmed and whether this would have an impact on the use of the cameras. The Housing and Environmental Enforcement Manager explained that the activation of the camera would be at the discretion of the using Officer and would normally be preceded by a verbal notification that the camera was to be turned on. Lack of consent to film in such circumstances would not be a consideration however, if the use of the camera was proving to be an aggravating factor, the Officer would be expected to judge whether it was of benefit to continue filming. It was made clear that the body worn cameras were not lone working devices and were not to be used in place of joint visits.

Questions were asked about access to the footage once recorded and it was explained that the footage would be held on a standalone computer with several layers of encryption and would not be available for Officers to access without due authorisation. The recording would be of HD quality and the system would keep a log of all recordings and associated actions, such as when it was downloaded and by whom.

There was further discussion about the use of the cameras in potentially volatile situations and whether there was the option to record audio rather than film footage. It was explained that the cameras held an 'auto-start' like function whereby any footage would cover the preceding 30 seconds before the camera was activated. The Committee also suggested options for communications with the public such as lanyards for Officers or postcards to hand out at the time of the visit. The Team Manager for Enterprising

Communities explained that one option being considered was to have the legal implications on a postcard for Officers to distribute on visits, especially in situations where the camera had been activated.

The Committee again noted their support for the introduction of these cameras and felt it was a positive step.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the Body Worn CCTV Policy be supported and recommended to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for formal adoption; and
- b) delegated authority be granted to the Chief Operating Officer to make minor housekeeping amendments to the policy in future, in consultation with the Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and the Chairman of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

## 15 **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME REVIEW**

Consideration was given to a report about the use and value of the Employee Assistance Programme and Committee was requested to note the contents of the report. The People and Organisational Development Manager explained the Employee Assistance Programme was a support service for staff to access confidential help and support for a wide range of issues. A summary of services offered included a 24/7 helpline, specialist information such as tax, legal and medical information, as well as structured telephone counselling or face to face counselling. It was highlighted that the service was entirely confidential and although the service provider sent data about levels of use to the Council, there was no way of identifying who had accessed the service or their reasons for doing so.

The benefits to the employer were also highlighted in that employee access to a support service could help reduce absenteeism and potentially improve staff turnover.

The value of the service was discussed and it was noted that other providers tended to offer less extensive services at a higher cost and therefore this provider continued to prove value for money. Members questioned general awareness of the service in light of seemingly low uptake amongst staff. Discussion ensued about ways of promoting the service amongst employees and it was explained that whilst new employees were given details during their induction period, it was possible that awareness was limited within existing employee numbers. The People and Organisational Development Manager agreed with Members that there could be greater communication with employees to highlight the services available, especially as people may not be aware of the scope of assistance provided.

All agreed the Employee Assistance Programme was a valuable support tool.

**RESOLVED** that the contents be noted.

## 16 **REVIEW THE RELOCATION POLICY**

Members gave consideration to a report regarding the policy for relocation allowances and were asked to support and recommend the policy to the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for formal adoption. The People and Organisational Development Manager explained that although there were no fundamental changes to the policy, and the amount set out was controlled by HMRC, there were changes to give the policy more clarity with a view to avoiding any uncertainty about how it should be implemented and how repayments should be calculated, if necessary. The amendments made it clear that the option of relocation allowances should be discussed at the first stage of recruitment and the repayment arrangement (in case of an employee leaving the Council within three years) form part of these discussions.

One turn of phrase was questioned by Members and it was agreed that the signed agreement form should read differently. The People and Organisational Development Manager agreed with the suggestions and undertook to amend the relevant section.

There was discussion about how the Council would proceed with collecting repayments and the need to be reasonable in terms of affordability and timescales. All were in agreement that if the situation arose, it would be dealt with discreetly and consideration would be given to things such as affordability checks and maintaining a positive interaction as far as possible.

**RESOVLED** that:

- a) the review of the Relocation Allowances Policy be supported and recommended to the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for formal adoption; and
- b) delegated authority be granted to the Director of Resources to make minor housekeeping amendments to the policy in future, in consultation with the Chairman of the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee and the Chairman of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

## 17 **STAFF SURVEY RESULTS 2017**

Members were provided with a summary of the recent staff survey results. It was explained that the staff survey was reviewed by the Staff Engagement Group in July 2017 and a revised staff survey was published in August 2017

for completion. The final response rate was 53.7% of all staff and the Vice Chairman explained that paper copies of the survey were given to the depots with the responses then added to the online survey results.

There were 14 questions in total, seven of those being comparable with previous years. Of those seven comparable questions all had seen a positive increase of over 10%. The responses from the newly included questions suggested there were areas for improvement and the Staff Engagement Group were therefore seeking support to focus on four key ideas, those being:

1. I feel valued and recognised for the work I do
2. In the last year I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow
3. I believe communication between senior management and employees is effective
4. The current accommodation is satisfactory (eg noise, light, heat and space)

The People and Organisational Development Manager explained that the Staff Engagement Group would create an action plan in order to address some of the issues raised and that the staff survey results would be communicated with the Management Team, Wider Management Team and all staff via a feedback document on Minerva.

On reviewing the contents of the survey results, discussion ensued around concerns raised about inappropriate behaviour. It was agreed that 'inappropriateness' could be a subjective matter and it might have been useful to offer a free text area for those concerned about inappropriate behaviour to have expanded on their responses. It was agreed this would be considered for the next survey. It was also highlighted that in some cases of inappropriate behaviour, it was not possible to communicate the resolution or outcome of such issues as they would be dealt with confidentially through HR processes.

Members felt that communication could be improved in relation to the actions taken as a result of the staff survey. It was agreed that if staff were aware of the changes made, and could start to see improvements as a result, it might have an impact on the response rate for the survey. It was noted that although the response rate had increased, it would be beneficial to raise this even further. The People and Organisational Development Manager explained that the Staff Engagement Group were due to meet two weeks from the date of JSCC and would look at the action plan and next steps. It was also agreed that the Staff Engagement Group would provide feedback to the JSCC on a quarterly basis.

**RESOLVED** that:

- a) the results of the staff survey be noted; and
- b) the Committee be updated of further progress by the Staff Engagement Group on a quarterly basis.

18 **WORK PLAN**

The Work Plan for the business of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee was presented. Members were advised that Officers were in the process of recruiting to the role of Health and Safety Advisor and further items for consideration at JSCC would be added once this role was filled. It was also highlighted that all HR policies would be reviewed on a three year rolling basis through JSCC.

**RESOLVED** that the Work Plan be noted and updated as detailed above.

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

The Committee noted the date of the next meeting to be Thursday 23 November 2017, 4pm, Council Chamber, Guildhall

The meeting closed at 5.05 pm.

Chairman