

WEST LINDSEY DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of a Meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held in the Council Chamber - The Guildhall, Marshall's Yard, Gainsborough, DN21 2NA on Thursday, 23 November 2017 commencing at 4.00 pm.

Members: Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne
Councillor Matthew Boles

Representatives of Union members: James Deacon

Representatives of Non-union staff: Rachel Parkin (Vice Chairman, in the Chair)
Kathryn Hearn

In attendance: Alan Robinson, Monitoring Officer
Emma Redwood, Team Manager People and Organisational Development
Ele Durrant, Democratic and Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor David Cotton (Chairman)

20 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The Chairman welcomed all present and acknowledged the difficulties with parking in the town as a result of the Coca Cola Truck in the area. It was explained that this was why Councillor Cotton had been unable to attend.

The Chairman noted that Councillor Boles had informed Committee that he would be arriving 10 minutes late. As the Committee would not be quorate until his arrival, the meeting was adjourned at 16:01.

On the arrival of Councillor Boles, the Committee was reconvened at 16:07.

21 MEMBERS' DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

22 MINUTES OF THE JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 OCTOBER 2017

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held on 5 October 2017 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

23 **MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE**

The Committee gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule, setting out the current position of previously agreed actions, as at 15 November 2017.

RESOLVED that the Matters Arising Schedule as at 15 November 2017 be received and noted.

24 **REVIEW OF DISCIPLINARY RULES PROCEDURE**

Members gave consideration to a report regarding the review of the Disciplinary Rules Procedure and were asked to support and recommend the procedure to the Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for formal adoption. The Committee were advised that permission was being sought for delegated authority to 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 & Resources Committee and the Chairman of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

The People and Organisational Development Manager provided a summary sheet of the changes within the document and explained that the purpose of most changes was to emphasise the severity of actions to be classed as gross misconduct. It was explained that there was a new section included regarding the behaviour of Officers outside of the workplace but that this was standard procedure for most organisations.

There was discussion regarding the acceptance of gifts and hospitality and it was explained that this was covered within the Officer Code of Conduct and there was no longer a separate procedure for this matter.

All present agreed that the amended Disciplinary Rules Procedure was very clear and easy to read and made the distinction of what was considered to be gross misconduct.

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

- a) the review of the Disciplinary Rules Procedure be supported and approved 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.

25 **REVIEW OF FLEXI-TIME POLICY**

The Committee was asked to give consideration to a report regarding amendments made to the Flexi-Time Policy. It was explained that the changes within the report were minor corrections only, such as typing errors or amended job titles, and that the terms of the policy remained the same. The People and Organisational Development Manager explained that Members were asked to note and accept the minor housekeeping amendments in view of the fact that delegated authority had been granted to the Director of Resources to make this level of amendments, in consultation with the Chairman of the Corporate Policy & Resources committee and the Chairman of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee.

RESOLVED that the amendments to the Flexi-Time Policy be **noted and accepted**.

26 **DISCUSSION ITEM - MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE**

The People and Organisational Development Manager introduced an item for discussion regarding mental health in the workplace and the council's current and future approach to this subject. She explained the paper had been produced for the Joint Staff Consultative Committee following recent news coverage of the "Thriving at Work" report, an independent review of mental health and employers by Lord Dennis Stevenson and Paul Farmer presented in October 2017.

The Committee discussed how important it was to provide a supportive environment for employees whilst acknowledging that people did not always want to talk to colleagues or managers about mental health issues and that, in some circumstances, an individual may not realise there were issues to be addressed. It was noted that modern day working patterns, such as flexi-time, working from home and out-of-office meetings meant that colleagues could go significant time without having contact with each other and this could make it difficult to notice if there were problems.

The People and Organisational Development Manager acknowledged this and explained that there had recently been training provided for Team Managers regarding mental health awareness and how to manage change within the workplace. The Employee Assistance Programme was also discussed as a valuable resource for employees to access and she noted plans for a section on the staff website to be created as a resource area with links to self-help options and other possibilities.

Members agreed that, as this was an important area and subject to national scrutiny, there would possibly be further work required in the future. Committee was minded to hold the information for possible changes or initiatives that may arise at a later date.

27 **WORK PLAN**

The Work Plan for the business of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee was presented. Members were advised that, as the January meeting had been cancelled, it appeared there was a significant amount of planned business for the subsequent meeting in March 2018. However, given the very recent recruitment into the role of Health and Safety Advisor, it was likely that some scheduled items would be postponed.

RESOLVED that the Work Plan be noted.

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

Members were advised that, as previously circulated, the January meeting had been cancelled. Therefore, it was

NOTED that the next meeting of the JSCC be held on Thursday 29 March 2018, 4.00pm in the Council Chamber, Guildhall.

The Chairman noted there were no further meetings in 2017 and wished all present best wishes until the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 4.35 pm.

Chairman