

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, 5 July 2018 commencing at 4.00 pm.

Members: Councillor David Cotton (elected as Chairman)
Councillor Mrs Jackie Brockway
Councillor Mrs Jessie Milne

Representatives of Union members: James Deacon

Representatives of Non-union staff: Rachel Parkin (elected as Vice Chairman)

In attendance: Alan Robinson, Strategic Lead Governance and People/Monitoring Officer
Emma Redwood, People and Organisational Development Manager
Simon Hunt, Health & Safety Co-ordinator
Laura Hart-Thompson, Senior Customer Services Officer
Ele Durrant, Democratic and Civic Officer

Apologies: Councillor Matthew Boles
Amy Potts, Senior Project Support Officer

1 TO ELECT A CHAIRMAN FOR THE CIVIC YEAR

The Monitoring 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 2018/19 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 Rachel Parkin be appointed as Vice-Chairman for the 2018/19 Civic Year.

3 MEMBERS' DECLARATION OF INTEREST

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

4 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held on 29 March 2018 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

5 MATTERS ARISING SCHEDULE

The Committee gave consideration to the Matters Arising Schedule, setting out the current position of previously agreed actions, as at 27 June 2018. The Democratic and Civic Officer highlighted that the annual sickness report was being presented to Committee at this meeting and so the related item on the matters arising schedule had been completed.

RESOLVED that the Matters Arising Schedule as at 27 June 2018 be received and noted.

6 PANIC ALARM PROCEDURE

The Committee was asked to give consideration to a report regarding the panic alarm procedure for alarms located in the Public Services Hub. The Senior Customer Services Officer explained that, whilst staff members were aware of the locations of the panic alarms, how to use them and how to respond to an activated alarm, the purpose of the procedure was to formalise best practice for all aspects of the panic alarms, including training for staff and regular testing. She added that there was a section within the policy that detailed how testing would be carried out and recorded and that training had been rolled out for all relevant staff.

The Vice Chairman noted that it would be important for the training to be included in induction sessions for new employees so that they understood the procedure and necessary action to take from the outset. The Senior Customer Services Officer confirmed this would be the case and that she had also had discussions with the Health and Safety Co-ordinator regarding the training being recorded in line with health and safety considerations. It was confirmed that the People and Organisational Development Manager and the Health and Safety Co-ordinator would work with the Senior Customer Services Officer to ensure training, testing and recording of such was suitable across all relevant areas and staff groups.

The was Committee discussion regarding the testing procedures and

whether it was possible to conduct a drill in the same way as fire drills were carried out. It was explained that mock situations were used as training and testing drills. It was agreed that this was a good opportunity for the council to be pro-active and test procedures in advance of them being needed.

On further discussion it was

RESOLVED that:

- a) Members, unions and staff representatives approve the updated procedure so the new regular testing dates can commence and all staff can undertake regular dummy incident practices and training on using and resetting the alarms; and
- b) Delegated authority be granted to the Customer First Strategic Lead to make minor housekeeping amendments to the procedure in future, in consultation with the Chairman of JSCC.

7 **MOBILE PHONE USAGE POLICY**

The Committee was asked to give consideration to a report regarding the mobile phone usage policy. The Monitoring Officer explained the policy was initially written and adopted in 2015 and included reference to the use of mobile phones. The current version had updated the usage of mobile telephone element and included references to social media, use of pin or passwords, and driving whilst using a mobile phone.

A Member of Committee enquired about the use of work devices for personal use and it was explained that some people did choose for their work devices to be their only device. In these instances, it was right and proper for them to pay towards the cost of the device. It was also explained that there were not individualised contracts therefore asking for people to contribute to the cost of any personal calls assisted with managing the usage of work devices.

There was a concern raised regarding the security of such devices and whether the policy had taken GDPR into consideration. It was confirmed this was the case and that all devices were encrypted, required passcodes and also had a 'kill mode' whereby data could be erased remotely if the device was reported as lost or stolen.

There was discussion regarding the use of mobile phones whilst driving. The People and Organisational Development Manager emphasised that staff must comply with the laws regarding use of phones whilst driving and there was categorically no expectation for anyone to answer their phone whilst driving, regardless of whether they chose to use hands-free technology.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the members, unions and staff representatives support, note and recommend the revised Mobile Phone Usage Policy to the Corporate Policy and Resources Committee for formal consultation; and
- b) delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director of Resources (S151 Officer), to make minor housekeeping amendments to the policy in future, in consultation with the chairman of the Corporate Policy & Resources committee and chairman of JSCC.

8 ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

The People and Organisational Development Manager introduced a report regarding the updated Accident & Incident Reporting & Recording Procedure. She explained that the Health and Safety Co-ordinator had worked closely with Team Managers and the procedure had been reviewed and rolled out across the organisation. There were robust procedures in place and training had taken place throughout the teams. She highlighted that the reporting of accidents and incidents, and the necessary checks and actions that followed, had become embedded within the council and improvements had been made.

A Member of Committee enquired about the importance of people being aware of their environment prior to accidents or incidents occurring and it was explained that the Health and Safety Co-ordinator had also been working closely with teams for updated and robust risk assessments. It was highlighted that the depot staff had been heavily involved with the risk assessments and accident procedure and the Health and Safety Co-ordinator confirmed there had been some fantastic work done off the back of this work.

There was further discussion regarding car accidents on council business versus an accident that might happen on a daily commute and also access to support for staff through the Employee Assistance Programme. It was noted that it was positive that teams were working with the Health and Safety Co-ordinator to manage the risks and support the accident reporting procedure.

RESOLVED that members, unions and staff representatives support and note the changes to the reviewed procedure.

9 END OF YEAR ABSENCE REVIEW 2017/2018

The Committee heard from the People and Organisational Development Manager in relation to the end of year absence review for 2017/18. She

highlighted that the organisation ended the year with an absence rate of 5.84 days FTE which was a lower figure than the national average for public sector workers and was also a lower figure than seen in previous years. It was explained that there had been significant work undertaken with team managers and supporting staff, such as using phased return to work. It was also noted that the ability to work flexibly was a major bonus in that some staff were able to work from home when feeling under the weather, meaning germs were not being spread around the office and work could be carried out where otherwise a day might have been lost to sick leave. It was acknowledged that it was not possible for all staff to work this flexibly but that it was of benefit to those who could.

A Member of Committee enquired whether there could be any link found between sickness levels and staff satisfaction. The People and Organisational Development Manager noted that the results from the staff survey had been compiled that morning and that, although a full report would come before Committee later in the year, she was able to highlight there had been a clear improvement in satisfaction rates across all but one of the questions asked of staff. The Committee noted that over the past year there had been a marked improvement for staff engagement and satisfaction which was good to see.

The Chairman enquired as to how the information would be shared with staff and Members alike, as it was positive on all fronts. It was explained that an infographic would be shared with Members via the Member Newsletter and that staff would be communicated with through the staff televisions and via the Comms Team. It was requested by Committee that it be put on record for JSCC to share congratulations to all staff for their hard work and commitment.

RESOLVED that the levels of absence for the year April 2017 to March 2018 be noted.

10 **REVIEW OF EQUALITY POLICY**

The Committee were informed of the review of the Equality Policy. It was explained that this was a formal document and governed by national policy and that the principles of the Equality Act 2010 were embedded within the council's employment practices. The policy applied to all Councillors, employees and others who worked on behalf of the council.

There was discussion regarding consideration of customers, as well as council employees, and that it was important to recognise what may need to be addressed in the future as well as at the current time.

RESOLVED that:

- a) members, unions and staff representatives support, note and recommend the attached Equality Policy 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 & Resources committee and chairman of JSCC.

11 **ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT**

The People and Organisational Development Manager introduced the annual corporate health and safety report and explained it was a summary of performance of the corporate health and safety service throughout the authority. She highlighted that it demonstrated the work of the Health and Safety Co-ordinator over the past few months since his appointment. There was involvement with the Health and Safety Champions where they had been given more clarity as to their roles and expectations. There had been significant work around fire safety and the Health and Safety Committee had continued. The Health and Safety Co-ordinator had been heavily involved with reviewing the council's health and safety measures, rolling out training and looking at incident reporting. There was expected to be a spike in incident numbers as the reporting levels improved but this was a positive move which enabled work to continue with risk management and improving health and safety across the organisation.

The Committee were happy with the work undertaken and pleased to hear of the positive steps already proving to be of benefit to different work areas, such as the depot teams.

RESOLVED that members, unions and staff representatives support and note the Corporate Health and Safety Report.

12 **STAFF ENGAGEMENT GROUP - PROGRESS UPDATE**

The People and Organisational Development Manager advised Committee that at a recent meeting of the Staff Engagement Group there had been discussions regarding the outcomes of the staff survey and also suggestions for improving the office environment. She added that a further update would be provided at the September meeting.

13 **WORK PLAN**

The Work Plan for the business of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee was presented. Members were advised that there would be amendments made to the work plan over the coming weeks as additional items were due to be brought to Committee throughout the Civic Year.

The Chairman enquired whether there was a need to review the Committee Terms of Reference in light of the cancelled meeting in May. The People and Organisational Development Manager stated that a new Staff Representative had been appointed and that discussions with Unison seemed likely to provide another Union Representative. The Chairman suggested that it may still be necessary to consider options should there not be any other Union Representative identified and the People and Organisational Development Manager agreed to draft a paper to be discussed at the September meeting.

RESOLVED that the work plan be noted.

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

NOTED that the next meeting of the JSCC be held on Thursday 6 September 2018, 4.00pm in the Council Chamber, Guildhall.

The meeting closed at 5.24 pm.

Chairman