



## **CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON WEDNESDAY, 22ND APRIL 2015 AT 2.00 PM**

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#### **PRESENT:**

G. Enright (UNISON) - Chair  
Councillor K.V. Reynolds – Vice Chair

#### **Councillors:**

D.T. Hardacre, K. James, Mrs. B. Jones, Mrs. R. Passmore, D.V. Poole, T.J. Williams,  
R. Woodyatt

#### **Together with:**

C. Burns (Interim Chief Executive), N. Scammell (Acting Director of Corporate Services and S.151 Officer), D. Street (Corporate Director Social Services), G. Hardacre (Head of HR and Organisational Development), L. Donovan (HR Service Manager - Customer Services), E. Sullivan (Democratic Services Officer).

#### **Trade Union Representatives:**

K. Andrews (GMB), S. Brassinne (UCATT), D.A. Williams (UNITE) and T. Hearne (UNITE)

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence had been received from Mr D. Bezzina (UNISON), Mr N. Blundell (UCATT), N. Funnel (GMB) and Mr B. May (UNITE) and Councillors Mrs C. Forehead and G. Jones.

#### **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest received at the beginning or during the course of the meeting.

#### **3. CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 28th January 2015 (minute nos. 1-10) be approved and signed as a correct record.

#### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

**5. HOUSING/WHQS JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

The draft minutes of the Housing/WHQS Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 19th March 2015 were noted.

**6. CONSULTATION BETWEEN TRADE UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT: TRADES DISPUTE**

The Head of HR and Organisational Development outlined the on-going disagreement relating to the award of lieu hours for unworked bank holidays and confirmed that despite several months of discussion the issue remained unresolved. Mr Hardacre sought the endorsement of the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee to move the issue onto the Joint Secretary's Committee as the next stage of the negotiation process.

The Trade Union representatives fully supported moving the issue on to the Joint Secretary's Committee and outlined their concerns in relation to the issue and the affect on non-standing working individuals. The difficulties in defining a 'day' in terms of leave in lieu for those on a non-standard working pattern, where a working day exceeded the standard 7.24hrs were summarised and the complex nature of the issue became apparent during the course of the debate.

Having fully considered the issue the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee unanimously agreed that the dispute be forwarded to the Joint Secretary's Committee.

**7. COLLABORATION UPDATE**

Councillor D.V. Poole, Cabinet Member of Community and Leisure Services, provided an update on two issues. He advised that the proposed Regional Trading Standards Services collaboration would not proceed but a proviso had been put in place that would allow discussions to restart should circumstances change.

In terms of the delivery of pest control services to Blaenau Gwent Borough Council, Councillor Poole advised that the dispute in relation to the Service Level Agreement with that authority continued. Blaenau Gwent sought to leave the agreement, which included a no break clause, without penalty. The Cabinet Member confirmed that Blaenau Gwent had been informed that financial reparation would be sought should they break with the agreement but an offer of a reduced service at a reduce cost had been made and was currently under discussion.

The Corporate Director of Social Services provided an update on potential areas of regional collaboration and confirmed that indications received from Welsh Government suggested that a greater emphasised would be placed on regional working going forward.

Councillor R. Passmore, Cabinet Member for Education referred to a feasibility study on collaborative Youth Service provision. The Cabinet Member also confirmed that a new governance arrangement with the Education Achievement Service had been agreed.

The Interim Chief Executive provided a brief update on the proposals for local government reorganisation in relation to the mapping of preferred boundaries. Mr Burns referenced the potential legislative requirements and time frame that a re-designation of this size would require. It was acknowledged that the reorganisation process was still at a very early stage and progress would be subject to continuing political agreement. The Council's unanimous support for the WLGA response to the White Paper was noted.

The Chair confirmed that UNISON would also be submitting their response to the White Paper.

## **8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Interim Chief Executive provided an update on the budget process and the savings to be achieved going forward.

Mr Burns confirmed that £12.4M of savings had been achieved during this financial year with no significant loss to front line services whilst safeguarding staff. It was noted that estimated savings of £14M would need to be achieved within the next financial year and a further £12M in the following year. Reference was made to the General Election process and its impact on the receipt of the indicative budget settlement figure from Welsh Government. It was estimated that this would make confirmation of the final settlement figure unlikely before November 2015.

In terms of the budget process, options for potential savings were already being collated to ascertain what was feasible. The first stage of Members Seminars on the Medium Term Financial Plan would be held prior to the August recess giving them the earliest possible view of the proposals. The process would then move on to Scrutiny and Public Consultation well in advance of deadlines.

Reference was made to the budget philosophy agreed by Council and it was noted that these approaches to protect front line services and staff would remain in the forefront. Where possible services would be reduced rather than lost and to look again at other areas, such as asset management, where potential savings could be achieved that did not affect the public or staff. Alternative methods of service delivery such as mutualisation or Trust involvement in certain areas would also be considered. The avoidance of compulsory redundancies would continue to be a priority with staff savings presently being achieved through natural wastage and redeployment. The involvement of the Trade Unions would continue to be crucial and the Interim Chief Executive welcomed discussions as to how savings can best be achieved and invited early contributions for consideration. The Interim Chief Executive said that the early involvement of the trade unions in identifying options would be most welcome and could prove more beneficial to everyone than merely asking them to comment on proposals at the end of the process.

Councillor K.V. Reynolds, Leader of Council, emphasised that the philosophy of protecting front-line services would continue going forward. He thanked Trade Union colleagues for their previous involvement and welcomed the opportunity to work closely with them once again. He referenced the areas in which savings had been secured, including the need to increase Council Tax changes for a second year; the impact of which had been mitigated by an extensive consultation and open and honest communication with the public. The Leader emphasised the importance of working together and the valuable role of the Trade Unions in what will be difficult times ahead.

The Chair welcomed the involvement of the Trade Unions at this very early stage in the budget decision making process.

## **9. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was noted that future meetings of the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee are scheduled as follows: Wednesday, 22nd July 2015 at 2pm and Wednesday, 21st October 2015 at 2pm.

The meeting closed at 2.32 p.m.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 22nd July 2015, they were signed by the Chair.

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CHAIR