



CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON TUESDAY 11TH OCTOBER 2005 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor G.R. Price - Chairman
E. Gibbs (UNISON) - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

H.A. Andrews, E.K. Griffiths, G. Jones, R. Woodyatt

Together with:

M. Davies (Chief Executive), S. Rosser (Deputy Chief Executive), J. Howsam (Director of Social Services), D. Hopkins (Director of Education and Leisure), G. Hardacre (Head of People Management and Development), G. Wright (Head of Support Services), J. Powell (Personnel Manager – Employee Services), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

Trade Union Representatives

B. Barrowman (GMB), Mrs. P. Baldwin (UNISON), D. Bezzina (Unison Regional Organiser), C. Vickers (NAS/UWT) and M. Jackson (Trade Union Job Evaluation Co-ordinator)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D.T. Davies, P.D. Ford, D.T. Hardacre and D.V. Poole, Ms. A. Stevens (SHA), M. Payne (GMB) and G. Smith (AMICUS).

1. MR DAVE BEZZINA - UNISON REGIONAL ORGANISER

The Chairman welcomed Dave to his first meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made during the course of the meeting.

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman -

Minutes of the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 17th February 2005 (minute nos. 1 - 9 on page nos. 1 – 4).

MATTERS ARISING

4. Minute No 6 – Bonus Review (minute no. 4a (i))

It was noted that a further meeting has been scheduled for Friday with Trade Union representatives and the Regional Officer in an attempt to resolve outstanding issues.

5. GMB Branch Secretary Office Accommodation (minute no. 4b(ii))

In view of the length of time taken in progressing this matter Mr. Barrowman (GMB) requested an update on the proposals to provide GMB Branch Secretaries office accommodation. He was assured by the Chairman that there is a meeting scheduled for later in the week to determine whether there is any surplus accommodation at Tiryberth depot and that every effort would be made to resolve this matter as soon as possible.

6. Pension Changes 2005 and 2008 (minute no. 6)

Mrs. Baldwin (Unison) circulated a leaflet which highlighted the current position in respect of the proposed pension changes and expressed concerns at the proposals contained therein.

She referred to the proposed consultation period and indicated that Unions will have only until the middle of October to negotiate new proposals, a position which does not give the opportunity for informed discussions nor adequate consultation.

Mrs. Baldwin pointed out that in view of this position, if a sensible solution cannot be achieved through proper negotiation, there may be a requirement to instigate industrial action.

MINUTES OF DIRECTORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

7. Minutes of the Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee

The minutes of the Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 13th June 2005 were received and noted.

A request was made for an update on Brynheulog residential home and Mr. Howsam (Director of Social Services) reported that all of the residents wish to move and are in the process of doing so. With regards to staff, all but one (who has requested early retirement/redundancy) have accepted redeployment.

8. Minutes of the Directorate of the Environment Joint Consultative Committee

The minutes of the meeting of the Directorate of the Environment Joint Consultative Committee held on 13th April and 21st September 2005 were received and noted.

(a) Housing Restructuring (minute no. 3.6 - 21st September 2005)

Following a query on the proposed restructuring of the housing department, it was noted that the report would be presented to Cabinet in the next few weeks.

(b) **Parking at Tiryberth (minute no. 3.7- 21st September 2005)**

Mr. Barrowman expressed concerns that highways staff have been requested to move their vehicles from the depot by the end of the week and highlighted service and other requirements which mean that vehicles would need to be parked on the site. Mr. Wright (Head of Support Services) indicated that he was not aware of any deadline being given and would take up the matter with the relevant officers.

9. Minutes of the Education and Leisure Directorate Joint Consultative Committee

The minutes of the Education and Leisure Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 4th May and 15th June 2005 were received and noted.

10. JOB EVALUATION UPDATE

Mr. J. Powell (Personnel Manager - Employee Services) provided an update in respect of the GLPC job evaluation exercise and pointed out the change in the process as a result of representation from the Trade Unions.

He confirmed that the timetable for evaluation is on schedule and referred to tentative discussions with Mr. Jackson (Trade Union Job Evaluation Co-Ordinator) in respect of possible pay structures and confirmed that this will be the subject of detailed discussions with the trade union in due course.

Mr. Powell referred to the introduction of pay modeller software which officers are being trained to use and which will assist in the process.

Mr. Jackson reiterated the progress being made and confirmed that the same process is being applied to all staff. He confirmed that a presentation from the consultants on the pay modeller software had proven it to be a useful management tool and that the principle of job grades would be the subject of further discussion.

A query was raised in relation to the number completed to date and the quality check undertaken on those received. It was estimated that in the region of some 350 posts have been evaluated and around two thirds have been 'care thumbed' to ensure consistency in the evaluation process.

Mr. Gibbs (Unison) highlighted concerns expressed that in some areas 'grouping' of posts has been adopted and the posts are perceived as being different and as such should be evaluated separately. Mr. Powell reported that this issue has already been brought to his attention and pointed out that as part of the process where posts are seen as being different they will be evaluated separately provided there is good reason to do so.

Mr. Bezzina (Unison) welcomed this information and proposed the dialogue on the pay and grade model and stressed the importance of ensuring that with the use of two schemes issues of potential perceived equality of pay are addressed.

Mr. Davies (Chief Executive) indicated that it is recognised that there may be areas which overlap and confirmed that this would be taken into consideration when the final information is available

At this point Mr. G. Hardacre (Head of People Management and Development) gave an update on the Hay exercise and confirmed that all officers will receive details of the points

totals and the points for the grade/band and indicated that those officers will have 28 days to appeal (to the end of October) and that he would be preparing a report detailing comments received during the consultation process.

It was noted that any new job or those substantially changed since the initial exercise would be re-evaluated and this is in the process of being carried out.

11. MAKING THE CONNECTIONS/COLLABORATIVE WORKING

Mrs. Baldwin circulated a letter which highlighted efficiency reviews/service improvement through staff and trade union involvement and, in confirming that unions would wish to work in partnership to achieve this aim, sought information on further savings for future years.

Mr. Rosser (Deputy Chief Executive) pointed out that a 1% target has been set by the National Assembly and the Council will seek to identify efficiency savings as part of the budget strategy. He indicated that whilst the target has been set, guidance is awaited from the Welsh Assembly Government as to how this is to be evidenced but it is accepted that this target will need to be achieved.

With regards to making the connections and collaborative working Mr. Davies referred to ongoing discussions with various parties in assessing potential areas for collaboration. He pointed out that whilst officers are seeking to identify areas where the ten south east Wales authorities might work together, consideration is also being given to those areas where there may be limited collaboration (Gwent-wide working, Head of the Valleys or 2/3 authorities working together in partnership).

Mrs. Baldwin confirmed that a Task and Finish Group of the Joint Council for Wales has been examining this matter and its findings are to be presented within the next few weeks. She highlighted issues which have been considered with regards to staffing and reiterated the need to consult with trade unions should collaborative working be agreed in certain areas.

Mr. Davies then referred to the receipt of the proposed terms of reference of the Jeremy Beecham Review of Local Government and Mrs. Baldwin confirmed that unions have also been consulted.

12. CONSULTATION BETWEEN TRADE UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Concerns were expressed that in some areas reorganisation/restructuring has been progressed without the trade unions being advised at the initial stage and a request was made that the consultation be undertaken at the earliest stages in order that staff can be approached for their views.

The Chairman noted these comments and pointed out that it was the intention to pursue any reorganisation/restructuring in partnership and not the intention to exclude trade unions at any stage.

Concerns were also expressed that on some occasions arranged joint meetings are not as positive as they could be and while accepting that on occasions they are not constructive, it was proposed that a more structured approach should be adopted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13. Social Work in Wales - Garthwaite Report

Mr. Howsam referred to the content of the above document and indicated that he is preparing a report for consideration by the Social Services Scrutiny Committee which will be discussed at the next directorate Joint Consultative Committee.

14. Home Care Workers

Councillor G. Price was pleased to announce that the last advertisement for Home Care Workers had resulted in 105 enquiries being received.

Reference was made to the efforts to resolve the issue which had arisen with regards to Home Carers and to the role of individual members in the process. Mrs. Baldwin made specific reference to the part played by Councillor Woodyatt in reaching a conclusion. It was noted that a review would be undertaken in six months.

15. E-Coli

Mr. Davies gave an update on the current position in relation to the e-coli outbreak and noted the professional manner in which staff within the Environmental Health, Procurement, Education, Catering and Cleaning areas have been dealing with the situation.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the quarterly meetings for 2006 had been scheduled for 24th January, 18th April, 11th July and 24th October 2006. Special meeting would be convened as and when required.

The meeting closed at 3.00 pm

CHAIRMAN