



## **CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN  
ON TUESDAY, 8TH SEPTEMBER 2009 AT 2.00 P.M.**

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PRESENT:

Councillor A.J. Pritchard - Vice Chairman - Presiding

Councillors:

Miss. L. Ackerman, C. Hobbs, J.A. Pritchard, L.G. Whittle

Together with:

S. Rosser (Chief Executive), A. O'Sullivan (Director of the Environment), A. Heaney (Director of Social Services), S. Aspinall (Director of Education and Leisure), G. Hardacre (Head of People Management and Development), K. Evans (Personnel Manager - Policy and Performance), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

### **Trade Union Representatives**

A. Woodman (Unison Regional Organiser), J. Poole (UCATT), S. Brassinne (UCATT), N. Funnell (GMB), E. J. Eynon (NUT), B. May (TGWU), L. Horrocks (NASUWT), E. Ashton (UCAC), C. Mathews (UNISON) and J. Shelton (Joint Union)

### **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Bevan, R. Davies, R.W. Gough and C.P. Mann, N. Barnett (Director of Corporate Services), A. Williams (Assistant Director - Resourcing and Performance), E. Gibbs (UNISON), N. Blundell (UCATT), B. Barrowman (GMB), M.J. Payne (GMB), J. Toner (UNITE) and P. Jones (UNITE)

### **1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

### **2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor A.J. Pritchard was appointed Chairman of the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee for the ensuing year.

**3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

In noting that the position of vice chairman is for a union representative, those present indicated that would make a nomination prior to the next meeting.

**4. MINUTES - 28TH APRIL 2009**

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 28th April (minute nos. 1 - 13 on page nos. 1 - 4).

**MINUTES OF DIRECTORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES**

**5. Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 7th April 2009**

The minutes of the Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 7th April 2009 were received and noted.

**6. Education and Leisure Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 15th May 2009**

Subject to an amendment to the last paragraph of minute 3 to read 'assured' the minutes of the Education and Leisure Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 15th May 2009 were received and noted.

**7. Chief Executives Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 10th June 2009**

The minutes of the Chief Executives Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 10th June 2009 were received and noted

**8. Directorate of the Environment Joint Consultative Committee - 13th July 2009**

Subject to an amendment to minute no. 8 to read Tir y Berth, the minutes of the Directorate of the Environment Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 13th July 2009 were received and noted.

Following a query on the progress on salary negotiations in building maintenance DLO, it was noted that discussions are still ongoing.

**9. JOB EVALUATION**

Mr. Hardacre confirmed that the collective agreement became effective on 1st April 2009 and referred to ongoing discussions in order to progress the timeline for the payment of compensation payments (the pay and grading implementation programme having been actioned and any changes to salaries included in the April pay). It is intended that this process will formally commence in October. Trade Unions have been made aware of the schedule and timescales for undertaking the process.

## **10. CONSULTATION BETWEEN TRADE UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT**

It was noted that this was a standard agenda item following concerns previously raised over the lack of consultation between Unison and management. All parties present agreed this had improved immensely but reiterated the requirement to work together and ensure that consultation is undertaken at the earliest possible stage in order that issues can be resolved more quickly.

It was accepted that issues are now focussed through the individual directorate joint consultative committees and as such can be dealt with more quickly and in a more meaningful way.

## **11. MAKING THE CONNECTIONS/SHARED SERVICES**

Mr. Rosser made reference to the report which had been considered at Council on 28th April 2009 which had sought views on the proposals provided by the South East Wales Shared Services Project for the design of shared services for human resources, payroll and training services. In view of the content of the report and details presented at the meeting, Council had decided not to participate in the project but instead open dialogue through the Welsh Local Government Association to explore opportunities afforded through the proposals to collaborate on human resources, payroll and training services with other authorities.

Mr. Rosser then referred to his attendance at a recent meeting of the Connecting South East Wales Board and highlighted the key issues discussed at that time. He confirmed that the main debate had been on the role of the Board and its priorities for the future in dealing with severe financial issues and its relationship with the Welsh Assembly Government. An update had also been given on a range of social services collaborative projects.

## **12. BUDGETARY ISSUES**

Mr. Rosser referred to the report which had been presented to Cabinet in July which had highlighted the severe financial constraints and the significant challenge in achieving the required savings and efficiencies. The current recession is already having an impact on local government finances as income levels continue to reduce whilst demand for many services continues. It is predicted that this situation will become worse in the coming years.

He confirmed that whilst the county borough continues to stay within budget and find efficiency savings the magnitude of the savings required in future years will require even more radical strategies, if there is to be minimal impact on "critical" services to the public. Inevitably, however, there will be no getting away from the fact that services will need to be reprioritized, reduced or even withdrawn in some instances in order to protect critical services.

It was noted that in order to assist in this process a Budget Advisory Group has been established and is considering strategies to tackle the problem and will bring financial proposals as part of the budget strategy discussions for Members' consideration later in the year. As part of this process the Group will be inviting the recognised Trade Unions to meetings to discuss future proposals and strategies.

Mr. Rosser reassured those present that there is a robust financial process in place whereby budget monitoring reports are presented to Corporate Management Team on a regular basis. Corporate Management Team are also taking an active role in vetting applications for vacancies with those approved being subject to internal advertisement only in the first instance. A number of appointments have also been made from the redeployment pool.

It was accepted by both sides that there will be a requirement to reduce the workforce whilst retaining front line services and confirmed that service restructuring, rationalisation and natural wastage will be key in this process in order to manage the transition and keep compulsory redundancies to a minimum. He confirmed that Officers will continue to work with the representatives during this difficult period.

The Union representative welcomed the opportunity to be part of the process.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **13. Request for Special Leave/Bereavement Leave**

A Trade Union representative referred to issues that had been brought to his attention whereby separate requests for special carers leave and bereavement leave had been refused and sought clarification on the policy and the way in which it is applied. SR indicated that he had had the opportunity to review both cases and in the circumstances supported the decision taken by the Manager. He confirmed that as part of the general review of policies and procedures currently being undertaken, this policy will also be reviewed to ensure there are no inconsistencies. As part of that process the Trade Unions will be consulted on its content and the representatives will have the opportunity to comment further at that time.

#### **14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING - 20TH OCTOBER 2009**

It was noted that the next quarterly meeting has been scheduled for 20th October 2009. Special meetings would be convened as and when required.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 20th October 2009 they were signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 3.00 pm