



CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE PENALLTA HOUSE,
YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 26TH OCTOBER 2010 AT 2.00PM**

PRESENT:

A. Morton (UNISON) - Chairman

Councillors:

Miss. L. Ackerman, R. Davies, C. Hobbs, C.P. Mann, J.A. Pritchard, L.G. Whittle

Together with:

A. O'Sullivan (Chief Executive), N. Barnett (Deputy Chief Executive), G. Hardacre (Head of People Management and Development), K. Evans (Corporate HR Manager), T. Maher (Assistant Director - Planning and Strategy), L. Rogers (Organisational Development Manager), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

Trade Union Representatives

G. Enright (UNISON), P. Baldwin (UNISON), J. Roberts-Garcia (UNISON), S. Brassinne (UCATT), N. Funnell (GMB), G. Smith (UNITE), P. Jones (UNITE)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Bevan, R.W. Gough and A.J. Pritchard, S. Aspinall (Corporate Director - Education, Lifelong Learning and Leisure), A. Heaney (Corporate Director - Social Services), A. Woodman (Unison Regional Organiser), J. Shelton (UNISON), J. Poole (UCATT), N. Blundell (UCATT), K. Andrews (GMB), G. Osborne (GMB), B. May (TGWU), E. Ashton (UCAC) and L. Horrocks (NASUWT).

2. JUAN ROBERTS-GARCIA, ASSISTANT BRANCH SECRETARY (UNISON)

The Chairman welcomed Juan Roberts-Garcia to his first meeting of the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

4. MINUTES - 27TH JULY 2010

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 27th July 2010 (minute nos. 1 - 16 on page nos. 1 - 4).

MATTERS ARISING

5. Welsh Housing Quality Standard (minute no. 2)

A request was made that a Trade Union representative be permitted to sit on the Corporate Steering Group. The Deputy Chief Executive advised that the request would be considered at the first meeting of the Group.

6. Job Evaluation (minute no. 12)

An update was requested on the job evaluation exercise and it was noted that the process has almost been completed as appeals continue to be progressed.

MINUTES OF DIRECTORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

7. Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 14th July 2010

The minutes of the Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 14th July 2010 were received and noted.

An update was requested on the Meals on Wheels service (minute no. 3) and, in the absence of the Corporate Director - Social Services, the Deputy Chief Executive confirmed that he would seek the information and respond accordingly.

8. Directorate of the Environment Joint Consultative Committee - 21st July 2010

The minutes of the Directorate of the Environment Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 21st July 2010 were received and noted.

9. Chief Executives Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 8th September 2010

The minutes of the Chief Executives Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 8th September 2010 were received and noted.

It was noted that there was a typographical error in minute no. 3 (budget update) and it should read 'worst-case scenario £37m' and not '£27m' as recorded. With regards to the minute that relates to consultation/redundancy selections (minute no 4.2) it was clarified that the detail refers to the consultation process and not the decision making process.

10. CONSULTATION ON REPORTS

Reference was made to the proposals to meet budget cuts within corporate services and to the three reports (communications services, cashiering function and customer first strategy) which are currently the subject of consultation and which were initially detailed at the Chief

Executives Joint Consultative Committee on 8th September 2010.

It was confirmed that as part of the consultation process the views of the recognised Trade Unions had been sought as well as those of Members. It had been intended that all of the views expressed would be collated into a further report. However, at its meeting on 5th October 2010, the Members of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee stated that in order to allow a more informed debate, and to enable them to understand the views of others and potential consequences before coming to any conclusions, they would prefer to comment on the proposals at the end of the consultation process. Members had been advised of the initial consultation date with the Trade Unions and of the agreed reporting process and it had been pointed out at that time that it had been anticipated that Members would express their views early in the process and a report that took all consultee comments would be taken into consideration in any subsequent report. Irrespective of this information, the items had been deferred in order that a further report incorporating the views expressed by the recognised trade unions could be incorporated.

During the course of the debate reference was made to a newspaper article by the Unison Regional Organiser, Andrews Woodman, in relation to potential job losses. Mrs. Baldwin indicated that she would ensure he was made aware of the points that had been raised.

11. CONSULTATION BETWEEN TRADE UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Reference was made to an email circulated by Caerphilly Unison which had provided views on the debate at the meeting of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee on 5th October 2010. It was pointed out that as part of the medium term financial plan proposals and the severe financial constraints it is essential that all parties work together to try to achieve necessary efficiency saving. The size and scale of this challenge will require a significant change in strategy to ensure statutory services to the public can be protected and as such the Council will have to consider a range of strategies in order to achieve this. Reference was made to a number of workforce strategies for managing the impact of the plan which are currently out to consultation.

Mr. Enright advised that the email had been sent to advise staff of the proposals and the views expressed by Members. He referred to the process of consultation with the staff affected by the proposals and to the fact that it had been anticipated that the views of the recognised trade unions would be presented to the Members. The response from Unison, submitted four days prior to the meeting of the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee, had not been circulated at that time. As a result the Members had determined that the items be deferred for a further report detailing the views expressed by the Trade Unions. In order to clarify the misunderstanding as to the consultation/reporting process that was to be followed, it was reiterated that as part of the consultation process the views of the recognised Trade Unions had been sought along with those of the Members. It had been intended that all of the views expressed would be collated into a further report.

During the course of the debate it was reported that the medium term financial plan assumptions made earlier in the year had projected best case scenario as £27m, moderate £35m and worst £37m and that these figures would be revisited following receipt of the indicative allocation which is anticipated in November when more comprehensive plans will be able to be developed. It was anticipated however that further cuts in budgets would be required over the next few years and difficult decisions would have to be made as income levels continue to reduce whilst demand for services continues.

It was pointed out that there will be a requirement to reduce the workforce whilst retaining front line services and confirmed that service restructuring, rationalisation and natural wastage is key in this process in order to manage the transition and keep compulsory redundancies to a minimum. The Trade Union representatives confirmed that they would continue to work in partnership with Officers during this difficult period.

12. COLLABORATION UPDATE

The Chief Executive referred to the ongoing discussions of the Connecting South East Wales Board on collaborative opportunities within both education services and social services and the requirement for further information from external consultants prior to any decisions being taken. On a more local level, discussion continues on a range of initiatives and whether there are opportunities for collaborative working, particularly in the field of information technology.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13. Comprehensive Spending Review

The Deputy Chief Executive referred to the comprehensive spending review which was announced last week and confirmed that the provisional local government settlement will be announced by the Welsh Assembly Government on 17th November 2010, with the final budget announcement expected on 23rd November 2010. A detailed report will be presented to Council in February 2010. A formal request has been made that any announcement on the provisional settlement should incorporate details of grants which would be available.

14. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS - 2011

It was noted that the quarterly meetings for 2011 had been scheduled for 18th January, 26th April, 26th July and 5th October 2011. 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 18th January 2011 they were signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 3.00 p.m.