



CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 18TH JANUARY 2011 AT 2.00PM

PRESENT:

A. Morton (UNISON) - Chairman
Councillor A.J. Pritchard - Vice Chairman

Councillors:

Miss. L. Ackerman, P.J. Bevan, 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), S. Aspinall (Corporate Director - Education, Lifelong Learning and Leisure), A. Heaney (Corporate Director - Social Services), G. Hardacre (Head of Human Resources), K. Evans (Corporate HR Manager), L. Rogers (Organisational Development Manager), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

Trade Union Representatives

J. Shelton (UNISON), J. Roberts-Garcia (UNISON), J. Poole (UCATT), N. Funnell (GMB), L. Horrocks (NASUWT), B. May (TGWU)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R.W. Gough, A. Woodman (Unison Regional Organiser), G. Enright (UNISON), N. Blundell (UCATT) and S. Brassinne (UCATT).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2. MINUTES - 26TH OCTOBER 2010

RESOLVED that subject to the third paragraph in minute no. 10, consultation on reports, being amended to read Andrew rather than Andrews, the following minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman:-

Minutes of the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 26th October 2010 (minute nos. 1 - 14 on page nos. 1 - 4).

MATTERS ARISING

3. MINUTES OF DIRECTORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 1st November 2010

The minutes of the Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 1st November 2010 were received and noted.

4. Directorate of the Environment Joint Consultative Committee - 25th November 2010

The minutes of the Directorate of the Environment Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 25th November 2010 were received and noted.

It was noted that in future the title of the Directorate of the Environment Joint Consultative Committee meetings would be Operations Joint Consultative Committee.

5. DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS - 1ST APRIL 2011/2014

The Deputy Chief Executive highlighted the content of the report which, as approved by Cabinet on 11th January 2011, now forms the basis for consultation. He advised that arrangements are in hand for political groups and trade union representatives to discuss and comment on its content (the consultation period ending on 4th February 2011). It was reported that it is now anticipated that it will 9th February 2011 (rather than 4th February as originally planned) when the final local government settlement will be announced and that there would be a Special meeting of Council on 24th February 2011 to debate and approve the budget.

Mr. Barnett advised that the draft budget proposals forecast that savings of £17.4m are required to be made over the next three years. However, with the changes that have already been made as part of the medium term plan process, and others which are planned over the three year period, £12.3m of these savings has already been identified and this leaves a further £5m to be found by 2014.

The Committee were advised that in view of careful planning and management of the budgets the majority of the savings have been achieved to date without the need for redundancies. It has also been possible to redeploy all colleagues affected by changes to the way in which services are delivered and that this is an approach that will be maintained.

Mr. Barnett confirmed that the forward planning has been achieved as a result of the co-operation of all parties and it is intended to encourage ideas from across the entire workforce on how we can make the resources work harder and give better value. In the current economic climate it was acknowledged however that further cuts in budgets would be required over the next few years and difficult decisions would have to be made to ensure that front line services are retained.

The Trade Union representatives confirmed that they would continue to work in partnership with Officers during this difficult period and would offer their comments on the content of the report within the given timescale. Mr. Barnett offered to attend their meeting to discuss and debate the report and Mr. Morton indicated that he would need to seek guidance from the Union Executive to determine if this was required at this stage.

In noting the amount of work that has already been undertaken as part of the medium term financial plan Members commended the role of both Officers and Trade Union representatives in engaging in this process to enable such savings to be made.

6. CONSULTATION BETWEEN TRADE UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT

Mr. G. Hardacre (Head of Human Resources) referred to ongoing consultation with building maintenance craft workers to move them to a salary base and confirmed that of the 181 individual letters which had been sent to the staff concerned, 177 have accepted the new salary arrangements, 1 has rejected the proposal and 3 have yet to respond. There are a further 21 employees who were not included in the initial process and they will also be contacted. The 12 vehicle maintenance and park staff will also be included in further negotiations which are to be held next week.

Reference was made to the discussion at the previous meeting in relation to the Wales Housing Quality Standard Corporate Steering Group and the Deputy Chief Executive advised that there would be engagement with the Trade Unions throughout the process. Briefing sessions have been arranged for staff towards the end of the month and separate sessions would be held for both the Trade Unions and Members.

7. COLLABORATION

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 solid business cases to be in place prior to any commitment being given.

With regards to the SEWIC collaboration on social services reference was made to the progress on adult placements, ongoing work on the shared lives initiative and discussions on the telecare programme. It was noted that the Corporate Director - Social Services had been appointed as Lead Director on the greater use of assistive technology to support people in their own homes. Mr. Heaney advised that the Gwent Frailty programme (collaboration between the five local authorities of the Gwent region, the Aneurin Bevan Health Board and local voluntary sector organisations) is reaching its conclusion with a report to be presented to Cabinet on 25th January 2011 seeking endorsement to transform the way in which services are provided for the frail and to promote different models of care which focus on the needs of the individual.

The Central South Education Directors (with the county borough forming part of a South Wales central collaboration with Bridgend, Vale of Glamorgan, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr Tydfil) are also discussing the scope of collaborative working within education, specifically in the first instance in relation to school improvement. There is initially a requirement to agree a process to develop a project plan and determine what will be delivered through the consortium.

It was noted that 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. There are a number of successful collaborative working arrangements already in place (Prosiect Gwyrdd/ food waste/regional transport consortium).

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

8. Retirement Andrew Morton and Jill Shelton (Unison)

The Vice-Chairman advised the Committee that both Andrew Morton (after 36 years service) and Jill Shelton were shortly to retire from the Council's employment and that this was the last meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee they would attend.

Those present paid tribute to Andrew and Jill for the role they had undertaken during their period of office, both as union representatives and Officers of the county borough, and they were wished every success and happiness for the future.

9. Inclement Weather

The Cabinet Member for Public Services and Housing referred to the recent periods of inclement weather and commented that the delivery of all frontline services within the borough had been outstanding and wished to place on record her appreciation to staff for their tremendous teamwork and dedication.

The Leader and other Members present also paid tribute to those who had been able to attend their workplace and commented on their dedication in ensuring they fulfilled their own role (and other roles as the circumstances required) in such conditions which enabled key services to be maintained. They asked that their gratitude be cascaded throughout the workforce.

10. Operation Santa

The Chief Executive wished to place on record his appreciation to all those involved in Operation Santa and referred to the efforts of all staff in every department involved in the week leading up to Christmas to overcome the snow problems and get the presents sorted and delivered. The dedication of the staff had enabled over 2500 gifts and 100 food hampers to be delivered to over 650 children and young people across the county borough.

11. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS - 26TH APRIL, 26TH JULY AND 25TH OCTOBER 2011

It was noted that the quarterly meetings for 2011 had been scheduled for 26th April, 26th July and 25th 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 26th April 2011 they were signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 2.30pm