



CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE – 26TH APRIL 2011

SUBJECT: BRIEFING REPORT TO CORPORATE JCC - JOINT COUNCIL FOR WALES - MONDAY, 4TH APRIL 2011

REPORT BY: HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Joint Council for Wales is the consultative body between all 22 Local Authority Employers in Wales and their recognised Trade Unions. The Joint Council meets currently on a six monthly basis at a neutral venue in the middle of Wales. At the most recent meeting in Llandrindod Wells on 4th April, 2011, a request was made for Joint Council for Wales minutes and key issues to be presented to individual Authority's Corporate Consultative mechanisms, hence this briefing note being brought forward to Corporate JCC.

2. FEEDBACK ON THE MEETING

- 2.1 Please see attached as Appendix 2 the Joint Council for Wales Agenda and the relevant Minutes (Appendix 3) of the previous meeting. Also attached are two additional documents -
- The draft Joint Council for Wales Joint Statement on Domestic Abuse (Appendix 4); and
 - A Briefing Paper on The Welfare Reform Bill 2011 and its Implications on Housing Benefits and Local Authority Services (Appendix 5).

The above documents are provided for Members' attention and noting.

3. KEY ITEMS OF NOTE TO BE BROUGHT TO JCC ATTENTION

3.1 Item 6 - Domestic Abuse in the Workplace Policy Protocol

Please see attached the Domestic Abuse Joint Statement and the relevant Policy for your attention. This document has been the subject of extensive consultation with all partners and has been through the WLGA framework for adoption. In terms of Caerphilly, Caerphilly already had an existing Domestic Abuse Policy in place that is totally consistent with the measures laid down. It was also agreed at the meeting that the request for a similar policy in relation to mental health in the workplace be considered and a Task & Finish Group will be arranged with Members of Authorities and Trade Unions to take this work forward.

3.2 Item 7 - Career Transition Unit

It was noted that the Welsh Assembly's Government cross public sector Career Transition Scheme has now been established. We at Caerphilly have already been in contact with the Career Transition Unit and have already established links for any staff, who in the future, may require career transition support as a result of redundancy.

3.3 Item 10 - Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

The Trade Unions have requested that the Joint Council agree a statement supporting the Local Government Pension Scheme and the expression of the real fears that any increase in employee contributions could jeopardise the viability of the scheme (see Appendix 1). This is in direct response to the feedback received from Government in the recent Comprehensive Spending Review and the outputs of the Hutton Review, which has been accepted by Government as a basis for consultation in the Autumn. Please see attached the relevant wording that was presented by the Trade Unions as a statement, which has also been provided to the Local Government Association, as well as the WLGA for adoption across the sector. Agreement was reached at the Joint Council for this to be re-admitted to the Executive Committee of the Joint Council for Wales, which will now meet on 12th May 2011, with a view to taking forward a statement on the Joint Councils behalf. All constituent Authorities were asked to canvass internal approval mechanisms to enable a joint statement to be developed at the earliest possible opportunity.

3.4 Item 12 - Pay 2011/2012

The Trade Unions had made a request for a "*Wales approach*" to the payment of the £250.00 increase for those employees earning under £21,000. A unanimous decision was taken by the Employers not accede to this request, which leaves Neath/Port Talbot County Council as the only Authority in Wales that has made this payment. Members should be aware, however, that Neath/Port Talbot's agreement to fund the £250.00 increase was also linked to their proposals for pay cuts for all staff. The position therefore in terms of Neath/Port Talbot is very misleading in relation to the £250.00, as this has been paid after a 1% - 2% cut in salary applied.

3.5 Item 13 - Impact of Universal Credits Policy on Housing Benefits Services

A paper was produced as joint agenda item 13 at the request of the Trade Unions in relation to the Universal Credits proposals outlined by Government. It was agreed that further work would need to be done with regards to the employment implications for this project and the Joint Council will look at this again in the Autumn.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Members are asked to note this report and its associated attachments.
- 4.2 Specific consideration be given to the Authority's support of a Joint Trade Union Employers' Statement issued through the Joint Council for Wales in relation to the Local Government Pension Scheme and the output from the Hutton Review. The Authority's view would be fed into the JCW executive process.

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Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Draft Motion of Pensions Statement
- Appendix 2 Agenda
- Appendix 3 Minutes
- Appendix 4 Domestic Abuse
- Appendix 5 Briefing Paper