



CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON
TUESDAY 26TH APRIL 2011 AT 2.00PM**

PRESENT:

Councillor A.J. Pritchard - Vice Chairman - Presiding

Councillors:

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

Together with:

A. O'Sullivan (Chief Executive), S. Aspinall (Corporate Director - Education, Lifelong Learning and Leisure), G. Hardacre (Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development), L. Rogers (Organisational Development Manager), D. Street (Assistant Director - Adult Services), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

Trade Union Representatives

G. Enright (UNISON), M. Reed (GMB)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Bevan, R. Davies, N. Barnett (Deputy Chief Executive), A. Heaney (Corporate Director - Social Services), L. Donovan (HR Service Manager, Customer Services) and N. Funnell (GMB).

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 they would make a nomination prior to the next meeting.

4. MINUTES - 18TH JANUARY 2011

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 18th January 2011 (minute nos. 1 - 11 on page nos. 1 - 4).

MATTERS ARISING

5. Building Maintenance Craft Workers (minute no. 7)

It was noted that the work with building maintenance craft workers to move to a salary base has now been completed. Members wished to place on record their appreciation to those that had participated in the scheme.

MINUTES OF DIRECTORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

6. Education and Leisure Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 20th October 2011

The minutes of the Education and Leisure Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 20th October 2011 were received and noted.

With regards to redundancy/retirement options (minute no. 6) it was noted that applications had been considered and approved by the Pensions Compensation Sub-Committee held earlier in the month for an early access to non-actuarially reduced pension benefits under the Teachers Pension Scheme for 23 teaching staff at nine schools across the county borough. The Committee wished to place on record their appreciation to Officers, Governors and Heads in recognition of the amount of work they have undertaken in bringing the report forward for consideration and avoiding the need for redundancies.

7. Operations Joint Consultative Committee - 12th January 2011

The minutes of the Operations Joint Consultative Committee held on 12th January 2011 were received and noted.

8. Chief Executives Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 8th December 2010, 27th January and 1st March 2011

The minutes of the Chief Executives Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 8th December 2010, 27th January and 1st March 2011 were received and noted.

With regards to (minute no. 7 dated 27th January 2011), changing car allowance to HMRC rate, it was noted that discussions are still ongoing with the Trade Unions as there are a number of issues that remain to be clarified.

Whilst considering the minutes, reference was also made to the managing attendance procedure and to the downward trend of sickness/absence figures. In noting that 4,095 council employees have had no sickness over the past twelve months it was confirmed that a letter had been sent, to those staff, via their pay slip, commending them on their dedication and commitment.

Reference was also made to the feedback that had been received on consultation reports (minute no. 5 dated 1st March 2011) and Mr. Enright advised that there were certain inaccuracies in the content which he had raised at the subsequent meeting of the Chief Executive Directorate Joint Consultative Committee on 13th April 2011 and would be reflected in the minutes of that meeting.

9. Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee – 23rd March 2011

The minutes of the Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 23rd March 2011 were received and noted.

10. CONSULTATION BETWEEN TRADE UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT

It was confirmed that consultation between the Trade Unions and management is generally undertaken through the directorate joint consultative committee process although accepted that there is a requirement to work together and ensure that consultation is undertaken at the earliest possible stage in order that issues can be resolved more quickly.

11. JOINT COUNCIL FOR WALES - MONDAY, 4TH APRIL, 2011

The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development referred to the meeting of the Joint Council for Wales on 4th April 2011 and advised that it had been requested at that time that the key issues that had been discussed be presented through individual Authority's Corporate Consultative mechanisms.

Consideration was given to the agenda, the minutes of the previous meeting, the draft Joint Council for Wales Joint Statement on Domestic Abuse and the briefing papers on The Welfare Reform Bill 2011 and its Implications on Housing Benefits and Local Authority Services which had been appended to the covering report.

Members noted the Domestic Abuse in the Workplace Policy Protocol, which has been the subject of extensive consultation and adopted by the Welsh Local Government Association and were advised that the approved policy of the county borough is consistent with the measures laid down. A policy in relation to mental health in the workplace is to be taken forward in consultation with Members and Trade Unions.

With regards to the other issues raised it was noted that a cross public sector Career Transition Scheme has now been established, a statement supporting the Local Government Pension Scheme and the expression of the concerns that any increase in employee contributions could jeopardise the viability of the scheme had been produced and employers had not acceded to the request from the trade unions of the payment of the £250.00 increase for those employees earning under £21,000.

A paper produced at the request of the Trade Unions in relation to the Universal Credits proposals outlined by the Government had been deferred to enable further work on the implications for the project and the Joint Council would consider a further report in the autumn.

Mr. Hardacre responded to a number of queries raised during the course of the debate and the Committee noted the content of the report and the accompanying documentation, specifically the support of the county borough 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.

12. COLLABORATION

The Chief Executive referred to the ongoing discussions on a number of collaborative projects including the Gwent Frailty Project (collaboration between the five local authorities of the Gwent region, the Aneurin Bevan Health Board and local voluntary sector organisations), the South Wales Central Education Collaboration (with Bridgend, Vale of Glamorgan, Rhondda Cynon Taff, Merthyr Tydfil). With regards to the latter, whilst this is a general issue for all education support services, it is proposed that the joint working will focus initially on school improvement services but will be extended in due course to other areas of activity, for example, additional learning needs, governor support. The exact nature of the school improvement collaborative venture would be agreed following the completion of the detailed business case and options appraisal.

It was confirmed that on a more local level discussion continues on a range of initiatives, particularly in the field of information technology, health and safety activities and social services.

Reference was also made to a number of successful collaborative working arrangements already in place (Prosiekt Gwydd/food waste/regional transport consortium and it was confirmed that every opportunity for collaborative working would be explored.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13. International Workers Memorial Day on the 28th April 2011

Mr. Enright sought clarification on the decision taken by CMT not to hold one minute's silence and fly the flags at half-mast for International Workers Memorial Day on the 28th April 2011. He advised that the purpose of the event is to remember those members and workers injured, made ill, or killed by their work and strengthen the campaign for safe and healthy work.

The Chief Executive explain that the only occasion that this occurs is for Remembrance Day and that there are a number of other days of remembrance recognised in other ways during the course of the year and that this application had only recently come been presented. It was confirmed that it would be possible to send a tick-a-tape to all staff and for displays, stalls or notice boards to be arranged in reception to mark the day, although such a request would be considered for future years.

14. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS - 26TH JULY AND 25TH OCTOBER 2011.

It was noted that the quarterly meetings for 2011 had been scheduled for 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 July 2011 they were signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 2.40pm