



CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 23RD OCTOBER 2012 AT 2.00PM

PRESENT:

G. Enright (UNISON) - Chairman

Councillors:

D.T. Hardacre, Mrs. C. Forehead, K. James, G. Jones, Mrs. R. Passmore, D.V. Poole, K.V. Reynolds, T.J. Williams, R. Woodyatt

Together with:

A. O'Sullivan (Chief Executive), N. Barnett (Deputy Chief Executive), S. Aspinall (Corporate Director - Education and Lifelong Learning), A. Heaney (Corporate Director - Social Services), L. Rogers (Organisational Development Manager), L. Donovan (HR Service Manager - Customer Services), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

Trade Union Representatives

G. Smith (UNITE), D.A. Williams (UNITE), S. Brassinne (UCATT), N. Funnell (GMB), K. Andrews (GMB), Mrs. J. Havard (NUT)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor H.A. Andrews, G. Hardacre (Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development), J. Roberts-Garcia (Unison), N. Blundell (UCATT) and B. May (TGWU).

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

2. MINUTES - 24TH JULY 2012

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 24th July 2012 (minute nos. 1 - 15 on page nos. 1 - 4)

MINUTES OF DIRECTORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

3. Operations Joint Consultative Committee - 11th July and 10th October 2012

The minutes of the Operations Joint Consultative Committee meetings held on 11th July and 10th October 2012 were received and noted.

Arising from the minutes and with regards to inoculations to safeguard employees against risk associated with needle-stick injuries, it was noted that it has been agreed that this would be provided in house and that arrangements are in hand for the programme to be rolled out.

In relation to the provision of an 'eye wash' within First Aid kits, Mr. Brassinne expressed concern that staff had been advised that in the event that there was no eye wash available they could use tap water. It was clarified that it was intended that this would only be the case if it was not possible to quickly access the first aid kit.

4. Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 6th August 2012

The minutes of the Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 6th August 2012 were received and noted.

Arising from the minutes and with regards to the Blaenau Gwent/Caerphilly Social Services Integration, the Corporate Director for Social Services gave an update on the current position and referred to the number of stakeholder events that had taken place with both the voluntary and independent sectors. This collaboration would continue to be a standard item on the directorate JCC agenda and there would be ongoing meetings with Trade Unions representatives to discuss the integration of business support functions and the collaboration and integration across adults and children's services.

5. Chief Executives Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 30th May and 2nd July 2012

The minutes of the Chief Executives Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 30th May and 2nd July 2012 were received and noted. There were no matters arising.

6. PARTNERSHIP AND MANAGING CHANGE AGENDA

Mr. Barnett referred to the Partnership and Managing Change Agenda which is an Agreement of the Workforce Partnership Council and will be annually reviewed by the Council to ensure it is up-to-date, remains fit for purpose and is operating effectively. It is an Agreement regarding the process by which the social partners (employers and trades unions) work in partnership to manage change as a fundamental part of how we improve the delivery of public services in Wales. It captures the ethos of the Welsh Government's Working Together for Wales - A Strategic Framework for the Public Service Workforce in Wales, agreed by Cabinet in March 2012, as part of how we establish One Public Service in Wales.

Members considered the briefing as appended to the report (which had been agreed by the Joint Council for Wales) and were advised that the next meeting of the WLGA Co-ordinating Committee was scheduled for 30th October 2012 and any comments on its content would be presented at that time. In that the county borough have for some time been working in partnership with the Trade Unions it is seen as a formalisation of existing arrangements and a partnership of the agreement of a shared vision.

Those present supported the principles and endorsed its content.

7. CONSULTATION BETWEEN TRADE UNIONS AND MANAGEMENT

It was noted that this was a standard agenda item following previous concerns over the lack of consultation between Unions 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.

The Chief Executive referred to the positive relationship that exists between the parties and to the mechanisms in place to facilitate discussion and consultation. This was endorsed by the representatives present. He highlighted a number of positive results as a consequence of this relationship and referred specifically to the Council's commitment in delivering the living wage and the implementation of the apprenticeship initiative.

The Trade Union representatives welcomed the opportunity for further consultation and confirmed that they would continue to work in partnership. They stated that they were pleased with the level of consultation that has been undertaken to date and would continue to participate in the process as the various collaborations progress.

8. COLLABORATION

The Chief Executive gave an overview of the existing collaborative arrangements in place (including Procurement, IT, health and safety, Prosiect Gwyrdd and the Heads of the Valleys Consortium). He made specific reference to the progress being made on the Prosiect Gwyrdd initiative which is now approaching its final phase.

Mr. Barnett was pleased to announce that a European social fund grant of £350K has been awarded to support the passport programme to ensure its sustainability over the next few years. He then referred to the provisional local government settlement announced on 16th October 2012 which gives details of the revenue and capital funding for 2013/14 (including indicative allocations where they have been announced). He advised that the budget setting process encompasses all the resources used by the Council to achieve its strategies and collaboration remains a key part of this strategy.

Mr. Barnett confirmed that a revised medium term financial plan is in the process of being prepared as part of the consultation process and challenging savings targets will have to be set. He referred to the careful planning and management of the budgets to date and commended the role of both officers and Trade Union representatives in engaging in the process. The Trade Union representatives confirmed that they would continue to work with Officers during this difficult process and welcomed the opportunity for open dialogue.

With regards to the Education Achievement Service the Corporate Director of Education and Lifelong Learning advised that the organisation is utilising existing accommodation in Tredomen and Newport. Throughout the process there had been consultation with all key stakeholders including staff and Trade Unions and as a result the staffing transfers had gone smoothly although recruiting is still ongoing and it is anticipated that a full compliment will be achieved over the next few weeks. The organisation is working to common practices and procedures and in accordance with the protocols agreed for its operation.

The Minister has commissioned ESIS to undertake an evaluation of the collaboration including the business case, budget and staff arrangements and has been requested to provide an overview of the process. It is anticipated that the report will be available in December and an update will be given at the next meeting.

The Corporate Director of Social Services advised that the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services had published the summary of responses to the consultation on the Social Services (Wales) Bill which took place in the spring and early summer. It was felt that the original working title of the Bill did not encapsulate the full range of partners and provisions that are included in its proposals and as such has been re-titled the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Bill. Mr. Heaney anticipated that there would be a lot of transformation discussion required prior to its introduction and was looking forward to working with the Trade Unions during the development of the delivery plan.

9. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS - 2013

It was noted that the quarterly meetings for 2013 had been scheduled for 29th January, 23rd April, 23rd July and 22nd October 2013. 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 29th January 2013 they were signed by the Chairman.

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The meeting closed at 3pm