



CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY 29TH JANUARY 2013 AT 2.00PM

PRESENT:

G. Enright (UNISON) - Chairman
Councillor H.A. Andrews - Vice-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), G. Hardacre (Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development), L. Rogers (HR Service Manager - Strategy and Operations), L. Donovan (HR Service Manager - Customer Services), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

Trade Union Representatives

J. Roberts-Garcia (Unison), S. Brassinne (UCATT), N. Funnell (GMB) and K. Andrews (GMB)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received N. Blundell (UCATT), Mrs. J. Havard (NUT), B. May (TGWU) and P. Jones (NAHT)

1. CORPORATE DIRECTOR - SOCIAL SERVICES

It was noted that this was the last meeting of the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee that Mr. Heaney would be attending before he takes up his role as Director of Social Services, Children and Families at Welsh Government. The Committee wished him every success in his new role and acknowledged the significant and valuable contributions he has made during his years of service.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. **MINUTES - 23RD OCTOBER 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 (minute nos. 1 - 9 on page nos. 1 - 4).

MINUTES OF DIRECTORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES

4. **Education and Leisure Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 18th July 2012**

The minutes of the Education and Leisure Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 18th July 2012 were received and noted.

5. **Chief Executives Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 29th August and 15th October 2012**

The minutes of the Chief Executives Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 29th August and 15th October 2012 were received and noted.

6. **Operations Joint Consultative Committee - 10th October 2012 and 9th January 2013**

The minutes of the Operations Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 10th October 2012 and 9th January 2013 were received and noted.

7. **Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee - 5th November 2012**

The minutes of the Social Services Directorate Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 5th November 2012 were received and noted.

8. **PASSPORT PROGRAMME**

Mrs. L. Rogers (HR Service Manager – Strategy and Operations) gave a presentation on the Passport Programme (which is being run by the Council in conjunction with its partners) and, in explaining the reasons for the development of the programme, gave an overview of progress to date, the targets and the outcomes. It was noted that the scheme is based around a tiered approach to support young people with work experience, paid work based traineeships, traditional apprenticeships and a fourth tier to support graduate placements. Mrs. Rogers advised of the various tiers of the programme (tier 1 - work experience placements up to 8 weeks, where young people retain their benefits and have a travel and subsistence allowance, tier 2 - placements up to 6 months, tier 3 - apprenticeships/trainee opportunities (view of full time jobs) and tier 4 - Graduate entry). With the aid of a diagram she explained the programme model and how the diagnostics ensure that the scheme is the right scheme for the trainee and that the appropriate courses are selected.

With regards to funding it was noted that there are currently four key streams for funding. The Council has allocated a budget of £485,000 per year for apprenticeship and traineeship posts, a successful bid to Welsh Government has secured £372,000 of ESF funding (matched at source) a successful bid to Job Centre Plus has secured £120,000 of flexible Support Fund money and 200 Jobs Growth Wales funded placements have been secured with 50 to be filled by the end of March 2013 and 150 through 2013/14. 35 of the 50 placements have already been identified and recruitment to these placements will begin shortly.

It was noted that young people could be referred via a number of routes and those accessing the Programme are work ready or almost work ready. If a young person has significant barriers then they are referred to a different and more appropriate provision but that does not mean that they will not come back to the Programme at a later date. Reference was also made to how trainees could progress through the tiers or into employment and it was noted that the Passport Team will be delivering ongoing mentoring and support to the trainee and to the Manager they report to.

The Committee was pleased to note that the Council has been organising work placements for the last 18 months and so far 270 placements have been delivered across all 4 tiers and that trainees will have prior consideration for vacancies advertised as soon as they commence their placement. Further opportunities to extend the programme will be forthcoming as a result of WHQS and Social Care contracts with third party contractors whereby the expectation will be written into these contractors take on trainees and apprentices across those organisations supplying the Council.

A discussion ensued on the programme and particularly in relation to the funding arrangements and it was noted that £485,000 has been set aside in the draft budget for 2013/14 and that future funding would be considered as part of the medium term financial plan, although Cabinet have expressed their clear commitment to this Programme as part of the workforce strategy. The ESF funding is being used to support the structure and the Job Centre Plus funding supports salary, training and development costs. Special dispensation has been agreed in respect of the Jobs Growth Wales funded placements whereby trainees may move into different posts during or at the end of their placement, depending on where there is a vacancy.

Members were pleased to note that there has been positive discussion with a number of private sector companies who wish to engage in the programme at an early stage and were advised of the number of sources by which the programme is advertised (careers fairs, Communities first, Prevent etc.).

The Committee wished to place on record its appreciation to all of the staff that had been involved in the Programme and to thank them for their continued support and commitment as it moves forward.

The Deputy Minister for Skills, Jeff Cuffbert, will be launching the Passport Programme on 25th April 2013.

9. 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. It was accepted that the last two months have proven to be difficult and whilst a positive relationships exists between the parties and there are mechanisms in place to facilitate meaningful discussion and consultation it is necessary to ensure that consultation is undertaken at the earliest possible stage in order that issues can be resolved more quickly.

It was noted that the report on the draft budget proposals that sets out the council's financial aspirations over the next 12 months had been approved by Cabinet earlier on the day and as such a copy will be sent to the recognised Trade Unions as part of the consultation process. Any views expressed will be included within the report that is to be presentment to both Cabinet and Special Council on 27th February 2013.

10. COLLABORATION

The Chief Executive advised of the invitation for bids of project grants from the Regional Collaboration Fund and to proposals from the county borough that mental health, school transport, highways and transport and trading standards be taken forward. Bids are required to be submitted by 7th February 2013 for consideration by the partner authorities and those that are successful will be submitted to the Panel accordingly.

In relation to the Blaenau Gwent/Caerphilly Social Services Integration, the Corporate Director of Social Services advised that the business case is being prepared and it is anticipated that it will be finalised by the end of the week.

With regards to the Education Achievement Service, the Corporate Director of Education and Lifelong Learning advised that 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. It was noted that the Minister has commissioned an evaluation of the collaboration including the business case, budget and staff arrangements and has been requested to provide an overview of the process. Robert Hill has been appointed to undertake the review of the service and there will be full engagement with stakeholders.

The Deputy Chief Executive then referred to the collaborative arrangement for procurement with Merthyr Tydfil CBC and the move from an operational devolved activity to a strategically lead central function with standard operating practices.

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items raised under any other business

12. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the quarterly meetings for 2013 had been scheduled for 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 23rd April 2013 they were signed by the Chairman.

The meeting closed at 3pm