

## **UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

Minutes of a meeting of the Union/Employee Consultation Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room 1, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Tuesday, 18<sup>th</sup> March 2008 at 1400 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Council Representatives:-

Councillors K. Bowman, R.J. Bowler, P.M. Bowmer, J.A. Clifton, A.F. Tomlinson, A. Waring and E. Watts.

Unison Representatives:-

J. Ritchie – Chairman

R. Frisby and C. Shortland

Unite Representative:-

C. Dodsworth

Officer:-

S.E.A. Sternberg (Solicitor to the Council), L. Keeling (Head of Human Resources and Payroll), T. Robinson (Property and Estates Manager), L. Ball (Senior I.T. Projects Officer) and R. Leadbeater (Democratic Services Officer).

### **845. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B.R. Murray-Carr, R. Farnsworth (Unison) and S. Sambrooks (Unite).

### **846. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

### **847. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

## UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

### **848. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF A MEETING HELD ON THE 20<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2007**

Moved by Councillor K. Bowman, and seconded by Councillor P.M. Bowmer

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of a meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> November 2007 be approved as a true record subject to Councillor Clifton's initials being amended to J.A. on page 5.

### **849. REFERRED ITEM FROM EQUALITIES WORKING GROUP – INDUCTION LOOPS AT COUNCIL PREMISES**

The Property and Estates Manager gave a verbal update on the condition of the hearing loops within Sherwood Lodge. The meeting was advised that all loops had now been tested by a specialist third party company who were sub-contractors to Elyo. The maintenance contractors TIS had been instructed to rectify any problems found. The Property and Estates Manager advised that there was currently one remaining defective loop which would be attended to during the forthcoming week, otherwise all were working correctly. A member of staff with hearing difficulties had agreed to independently test all the loops.

A further issue had been raised by a member of staff with regard to the reception area. It had been noted that the loop system provided for customers with hearing difficulties but not the attendant staff. A further microphone could be added to the existing loop on the customer side to assist staff if required.

Members raised questions with regard to why a third party was brought in to test the loop system. The Property and Estates Manager advised that testing the system required specialist equipment and a third party would give a more objective opinion. TIS were contracted to undertake repairs as and when required but there was no existing maintenance agreement in place. An annual inspection of all the induction loops had now been put in place with Elyo to ensure they were operating correctly.

### **850. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985**

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson

**RESOLVED** that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the stated Paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act and it is not in the public interest for that to be revealed.

The Property and Estates Manager left the meeting.

## UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

### **851. EXIT INTERVIEWS 1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2007 TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2007 EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 2**

The Head of Human Resources presented the report to provide Members with a summary of primary reasons for employees leaving the authority for the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2007.

A summary of reasons for employees leaving the Authority was provided in the report.

The annual report would be provided to the next meeting.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton  
**RESOLVED** that the report be received.

### **852. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 2**

The Head of Human Resources presented the report to advise the meeting of Sickness Absence/Occupational Health Referral Statistics from October to December 2007/8 with comparative figures for the previous year.

Members were advised that there had been an increase in absence which was wholly attributable to long term sickness, however the authority was still on track to meet the 9.5 days per full time equivalent corporate target.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson  
**RESOLVED** that the report be received.

### **853. MOBILE PHONE POLICY EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 2**

The Senior I.T. Projects Officer presented the report and accompanying policy which had been drafted to formalise the existing guidance in respect of the use of mobile phones.

Some additional amendments made to the policy following its presentation to the Heads of Service meeting were advised by the Senior I.T Projects Officer.

- a) the removal of the Section 7 Risk Assessment
- b) the Glossary of Terms was changed from capital to lower case letters.

Amendments made to the policy as a result of the review of the Equality Impact Assessments were:

## UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

**Equipment Requests** 'The ICT Training and Support Officer will take account of the recommendations of the Health and Safety Officer with regard to purchase of mobile devices with reasonable modifications for less able users such as large keys etc'.

**Responsibility of Implementing the Policy** 'Ensure that employees who may have difficulty with understanding a written policy or do not have English as their first language receive this information in a different format suitable for their needs'.

In response to questions from Members the Head of Human Resources and Payroll confirmed that there was a separate policy in respect of mobile phone use which included that disciplinary action would be taken against those employees using mobile phones whilst driving. Dismissal would be subject to the findings of any investigation undertaken. It was confirmed that to date, there had been no instances of disciplinary action arising from mobile phone use whilst driving.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson

**RECOMMENDED** that (1) the report be received,

(2) the use of Mobile Phone Policy be referred to Council for approval.

(Council/Senior I.T. Projects Officer)

### **854. INTERNET AND EMAIL MONITORING EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4**

The Senior I.T. Projects Officer presented the report to advise Members that the existing use of Internet and Email Policy had been updated to make the statement on monitoring of internet and email more explicit for the benefit of employees. Staff would also be advised of the changes made to the policy via the weekly bulletin.

In response to questions from Members the Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that access was granted to Heads of Service by a member of the Senior Management Team to monitor suspected abuse of internet and e-mail.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton

**RECOMMENDED** that (1) the report be received,

(2) the use of the Internet and Email Policy be referred to Council for approval.

(Council/Senior I.T. Projects Officer)

The Senior I.T. Projects Officer left the meeting.

## UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

### **855. REVIEW OF INTERNAL SECONDMENT POLICY EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4**

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to advise Members that the Internal Secondment Policy had been reviewed in accordance with the Policy Review Timetable.

Two additional paragraphs in respect of equalities issues were added to the policy, which were tabled for information by the Head of Human Resources and Payroll.

‘Where a disabled employee applies for a secondment the host department will be responsible for ensuring any required adaptations are made to working practices/equipment. Where the secondee has existing equipment this would transfer with the employee where possible, eg specially adapted chairs and risk straps.

Where an employee has agreed special arrangements for religious observance eg. prayer breaks it would be the responsibility of the secondee to agree these with their new manager’.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor K. Bowman  
**RECOMMENDED** that (1) the report be received,

(2) the internal Secondment Policy be referred to Council for approval.

(Council/Head of Human Resources and Payroll)

### **856. DRAFT GRADING REVIEW PROCEDURE EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4**

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report and Grading Review Procedure which had been agreed at the Joint Steering Group in December 2007 and subsequently by Senior Management Team in February 2008.

The procedure would be used to deal with the evaluation of new posts and amendments to existing posts following the implementation of the pay and grading review.

Union Members raised concerns with regard to the policy being implemented prior to the outcome of the consistency group reviews currently being undertaken.

The Solicitor to the Council and Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that the implementation of the policy would have no implications on the existing consistency checks. Following further discussion it was agreed to amend the recommendation in the report.

## UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton

**RESOLVED** that (1) the report be received,

(2) subject to the outcome of the consistency group checks the Grading Review Procedure be accepted in principle with both the Unions and Management sides having the option to refer the procedure back to Union/Employee Consultation Committee for further discussion should this be deemed necessary.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll)

### **857. INVESTORS IN PEOPLE ACCREDITATION UPDATE – FEBRUARY 2008 EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4**

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to update Members on the work carried out in respect of the Investors in People Accreditation.

The Training and Development Policy had been approved and the Appraisals Policy would be completed shortly. A central training budget had now been put in place.

Members were advised of the proposed timetable, it was expected that the final accreditation would take place during the first two weeks of July 2008.

Moved by Councillor J.A. Clifton, seconded by Councillor E. Watts

**RESOLVED** that the report be received.

The meeting concluded at 1428 hours.