

## **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 Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at 1400 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Councillor E. Watts – Chair

#### Council Representatives:-

Councillors R.J. Bowler, P.M. Bowmer, J.A. Clifton, D. McGregor, B.R. Murray-Carr, A.F. Tomlinson and A. Waring.

#### Unison Representatives:-

R. Frisby, P.J. Burrows and C. Hirst.

#### Unite Representatives:-

C. Dodsworth, G. Nussey and M. Hillsley.

#### Officers:-

W. Lumley (Chief Executive Officer), S.E.A. Sternberg (Solicitor to the Council), L. Keeling (Head of Human Resources and Payroll), L. Ball (Senior I.T. Projects Officer) and R. Leadbeater (Democratic Services Officer).

### **771. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor K. Bowman and S. Sambrooks (Unite).

### **772. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

### **773. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest submitted.

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### 774. MINUTES – 20<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2008

Moved by Councillor J.A. Clifton, seconded by Councillor A. Waring.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of a meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2008 be approved as a true record subject to the inclusion of Councillor P.M. Bowmer's apologies.

### 775. MINUTES – 7<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2009

Moved by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of a meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2009 be approved as a true record.

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that a letter had been received from UNISON Regional Office who had confirmed that checks on the pay agreement had been undertaken and this had now been referred to national level. A sign off date for the scheme had still to be confirmed.

UNITE representatives advised that a response was awaited from their regional office.

### 776. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2008

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report in respect of sickness absence/occupational health referral statistics from October to December 2008 with comparable figures for 2007.

The October to December quarter had seen a significant increase in the levels of short term sickness absence compared with the previous year. Heads of Service had been requested to provide feedback on the reasons which appeared to be largely in relation to an increase in cold and flu cases which had also been the case at a national level. This quarter had also seen an increase in the number of long term sickness cases which had proven difficult to resolve.

Questions were raised with regard to capability hearings and a response provided by the Head of Human Resources and Payroll.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr.

**RESOLVED** that the report be received.

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### 777. EMPLOYEE AWARD SCHEME

The Senior I.T. Projects Officer attended the meeting on behalf of the Change Motivators and presented the report in respect of a proposal to introduce an employee award scheme. This would constitute either a day's leave or a gift voucher and would be awarded on a quarterly basis.

The awards would be presented to staff for:

- delivering exceptional customer service
- performing actions above and beyond normal duties
- identifying service improvements
- promoting a positive image of the Council/service
- representing the Council/service outside normal duties or time
- doing voluntary work in the community in support of the corporate aims
- being pro-active in developing their own skills and knowledge for the benefit of the service.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by M. Hillsley.

**RECOMMENDED** to approve the introduction of an employee award scheme as outlined in the report.

(Council/Change Motivators)

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

Moved by E. Watts and seconded by Councillor D. McGregor.

**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.

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### **779. EXIT INTERVIEWS 1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER 2008 TO 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER 2008 EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 2**

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to advise Members of the number of employees leaving the authority between the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008.

A total of 4 employees had left the authority during this quarter which was a significant reduction on previous quarters and was likely due to the current job market.

No employees had returned their exit questionnaires therefore reasons for leaving were unknown.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr.  
**RESOLVED** that the report be received.

### **780. REDEPLOYMENT AND EARLY RETIREMENT POLICY INCORPORATING EMPLOYER DISCRETIONS UNDER VARIOUS LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME REGULATIONS EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4**

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report with recommendations to Council to adopt the new retirement and redeployment policy.

A full review of the policy had been undertaken in light of extensive changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme governing the provisions relating to ill health retirement and the impact of the Age Regulations. A further key change in the policy was the period of pay protection applicable where an employee accepted a lower grade of job as an alternative to redundancy or ill health retirement.

The new Ill Health Retirement regulations introduced would replace the former single tier provisions with a three tier system providing a different level of Ill Health benefit depending upon the degree on which the persons ability to obtain employment had been affected by their ill health.

A number of employer discretions had also been included in the policy.

Members' attention was drawn to the graphs included in the report indicating early retirement numbers and costs. It was added that the full impact of the ill health scheme changes would not become apparent until the policy had been in place for 3 years.

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The Head of Human Resources and Payroll responded to questions raised by Union representatives.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr.

**RECOMMENDED** that (1) the draft redeployment and early retirement policy be referred to Council and adopted,

(2) in compliance with the regulations on the exercise of discretionary powers a copy of the adopted policy be submitted to:

(I) Derbyshire County Council

(II) published.

(Council/Head of Human Resources and Payroll)

The meeting concluded at 1420 hours.