

UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Union/Employee Consultation Committee of Bolsover District Council held in Committee Room 1, Sherwood Lodge, Bolsover, on Friday, 6th November 2009 at 1100 hours.

PRESENT:-

C. Hirst (Chair – Unison)

Council Representatives:-

Councillors P.M. Bowmer, J.A. Clifton, H. Gilmour, D. McGregor, B.R. Murray-Carr, A.F. Tomlinson, K.F. Walker, A. Waring and E. Watts.

Unison Representatives:-

R. Frisby and J. Hendy.

Unite Representatives:-

S. Sambrook.

Officers:-

W. Lumley (Chief Executive Officer), L. Keeling (Head of Human Resources and Payroll) and R. Leadbeater (Democratic Services Officer).

455. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor J.E. Bennett, P. Burrows (Unison) and C. Dodsworth (Unite).

456. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

457. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute No.	Councillor	Level of Interest
465	A.F. Tomlinson	Personal and Prejudicial
465	A. Waring	Personal and Prejudicial

458. MINUTES – 29TH JULY 2009

Moved by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Union/Employee Consultation Committee held on 29th July 2009 be approved as a true record.

459. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair consented to a change in the order of business due to Councillors' declarations of interest. The final two items would be taken in reverse order to that stated on the agenda.

Moved by Councillor A.F. Tomlinson, seconded by Councillor A. Waring
RESOLVED that the Order of Business be changed.

460. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS – APRIL TO JUNE 2009

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to advise Members of the sickness absence/occupational health statistics for April to June 2009 with comparable prior year figures. The outturn for April to June 2009 was 2.14 days per full time equivalent which was significantly higher than the same period last year at 1.81 days but almost within the target of 2.13 days.

A significant increase in long term sickness absence was reported with three more cases in 2009 than in 2008. All of the cases referred to Occupational Health had now been resolved, however a further 18 long term sickness absence cases had arisen between July and September. Short term absence had reduced for this period which would be reported to the next meeting. A full breakdown of long and short term absence by department was provided for Members' information.

UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Members raised questions with regard to hand/arm vibration testing. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that employees affected were very few and were affected at a low level. The tests were implemented to help identify measures to be put in place to ensure the condition was not worsened. In response to further questioning, the Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that the Authority could legally refuse employment to an applicant under Health and Safety law, who had been diagnosed above a certain level of hand arm vibration if this affected their ability to do the job, or could potentially worsen their condition.

The Health and Safety Officer would be requested to provide further details of the acceptable levels to Councillor D. McGregor.

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

461. PUBLIC SECTOR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME UPDATE – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2009

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to advise Members on the current status of the Apprenticeship Programme. It had been agreed by Council on 12th August to create 75 apprenticeships across the public sector within the Authority's boundaries. These would last for 18 months and provide apprentices with the opportunity to gain an NVQ 2 qualification in their chosen area.

A total of 15 unemployed 16 to 18 year olds would be placed within the Council in three phases in January and September 2010 and January 2011. Public sector partner organisations would recruit two intakes of 18 to 24 year olds totalling 40 apprenticeships and a further 20 in the 25 plus age group would be employed from designated unemployment hotspots in April and October 2010.

Mike Gibson had commenced as the Apprenticeship Co-ordinator on 15th October 2009 and Andrea McNeill had been appointed as Apprenticeship Officer on 5th November.

Regular updates would be provided to the Committee on the progress of the programme.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that the report be received.

UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

462. THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

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

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.

463. EXIT INTERVIEWS – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2009 EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 2

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to provide a summary of employees leaving the Authority for Members' information.

A total of 14 employees had left the Authority from April to September 2009, 5 of whom had returned a completed exit questionnaire.

Members raised questions with regard to monitoring of employee responses. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll responded that this was carried out by Human Resources and any detrimental comments were followed up with the department.

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

RESOLVED that the report be received.

464. DRAFT PAY AGREEMENT FOR JNC CRAFT WORKERS EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the draft pay agreement for JNC craft workers. Craft workers' posts had not been considered through the initial job evaluation process alongside green book employees and this had left the Authority vulnerable to equal pay claims. It was proposed to introduce the new pay agreement for JNC craft workers to address disparities between the two and bring both into line with 1984 Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value Regulations.

UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Consultations had been carried out with UNITE representatives who had met with affected employees and had agreed to proceed with implementation of the draft pay agreement.

Members were advised that during initial discussions, Unison representatives had indicated that they did not have any members affected by the craft workers' agreement. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll had since been advised that 1 Unison Member was in fact covered by the current JNC pay and conditions.

The Chair asked whether a deferment of the item was possible. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that employees affected by the draft agreement would require 90 days notice of the change. Should the draft pay agreement be deferred to the February meeting, the agreement could not be implemented from 1st April 2010.

Following discussions, Unison representatives requested a short adjournment to discuss the implications.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor B.R. Murray-Carr
RESOLVED that the meeting be adjourned.

464. DRAFT PAY AGREEMENT FOR JNC CRAFT WORKERS CONT'D EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4

After the meeting reconvened, Members were advised by the Head of Human Resources and Payroll that Unison were satisfied that sufficient consultation had been carried out to enable them to proceed with ratification of the agreement. The initial consultation exercise carried out between the unions and the Authority had included all union and non union members and had given all affected employees the opportunity to respond.

Unite confirmed that they had been advised by their area representatives to proceed with the agreement. A total of 56 Unite members had been consulted with 43 responding, 33 yes and 10 no.

Further to questions, Unison representatives confirmed that they would sign the draft pay agreement after it had been considered by their regional representative for equal pay issues.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by Councillor B. R. Murray-Carr
RECOMMENDED that (1) the report be received;

UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

(2) Council approve the Draft Pay Agreement for JNC Craft Workers.

(3) Council agree the implementation date for the Pay Agreement for JNC Craft Workers to be 1st April 2010.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll)

Councillors A.F. Tomlinson and A. Waring left the meeting after having declared a personal and prejudicial interest.

465. PAY AND GRADING IMPLEMENTATION PLAN UPDATE – JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2009 EXEMPT – PARAGRAPH 4

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented the report to update Members on the Pay and Grading Implementation Plan, including completion of certain milestones since the report was submitted.

Members were advised of an amendment to the implementation plan in respect of the resolution of valid equal pay claims. This having been amended from June 2010 to June 2011 due to the extent of work involved.

It was confirmed that outstanding appeals would be concluded by next week with a meeting taking place on 13th November to carry out the remaining consistency checks.

A Member raised questions with regard to monitoring of flexible working. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll advised that this was monitored by Managers whose role it was to ensure that any flexible working was agreed in accordance with the needs of the service.

Moved by Councillor B. R. Murray-Carr, seconded by Councillor E. Watts.
RECOMMENDED that (1) the report be received;

(2) Council approve the revised Pay and Grading Implementation Plan.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll)

The meeting concluded at 1135 hours.