

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 Wednesday 23rd February, 2011 at 1100 hours.

PRESENT:-

Councillor E. Watts - Chair

Council Representatives:-

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

Unison Representatives:-

G. Buxton, P. Burrows, R. Farnsworth, R. Frisby, C. Gilfillan, W. Hatton, J. Hendy and C. Hirst.

Unite Representatives:-

C. Dodsworth and S. Sambrooks.

Officers:-

W. Lumley (Chief Executive Officer), L. Keeling (Head of Human Resources & Payroll) and A. Bluff (Democratic Services Officer).

Also in attendance at the meeting was Councillor J.E. Bennett observing.

845. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

846. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

847. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute No.	Member	Level of Interest
851	Councillor A. Waring	Personal and Prejudicial

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

848. MINUTES – 15th NOVEMBER 2010

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll reported that the Managing Sickness Absence Policy and Procedure had been presented to Council in January 2011. The introduction of changes to the policy would take place on 1st April 2011 with the 12 month review being 1st April 2012.

Moved by C. Hirst, seconded by Councillor E. Watts

RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee held on 15th November 2010 be approved as a correct Record and the comments noted.

849. PUBLIC SECTOR APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAMME UPDATE; OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2010

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented a report which gave details of the Public Sector Apprenticeship Programme.

Some of the figures had changed since the report was written and the Head of Human Resources and Payroll gave a verbal update to the meeting with regard to these.

The number of apprentices employed in the 16 to 18 year age group was 15; this brought the project to its total number of apprentices in place for that age group.

In the 18 year plus age group, 60 apprentices had been recruited and 45 remained on programme. Fourteen apprentices had left the programme for various reasons and one apprentice had left to set up in business, receiving a grant from the Princes Trust to do so.

An evaluation of the apprenticeship event held on 15th December 2010 had been undertaken and this was available from the Apprenticeship Co-ordinator. A survey of apprentices was also currently in progress and was being undertaken by an external consultant, further details were included in the report.

Further to a question raised by Unison, the Head of Human Resources and Payroll confirmed that the Consultant was at no cost to the Authority.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by C. Dodsworth

RESOLVED that the report be received.

(Head of Human Resources & Payroll)

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

850. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS – OCTOBER TO DECEMBER 2010

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented a report which gave details of the sickness absence/occupational health referral statistics for the period October to December 2010.

The sickness absence outturn figure for October to December 2010 was 2.01 days per full time employee compared to 1.76 days per full time employee for the same quarter in 2009. The target for October to December 2010 was 2.10 days per full time employee.

A full breakdown of short term and long term sickness absence by department was included in the report. Details of reasons for long term sickness absence were also provided in the report.

The meeting's attention was drawn to the table in the report regarding 'outcome of occupational health referrals'; it was noted that the dates should read 2010 and 2009, and not 2009 and 2008.

Further to a question raised by Unison, the Head of Human Resources and Payroll confirmed that sickness absence for Apprentices was managed in the same way as for Council employees, with exception to Apprentices working at the Royal Hospital, which was coded differently due to the Hospital's infection control policy. The Head of Human Resources and Payroll added that good attendance was also being emphasised and how this was important for future employers.

Moved by C. Hirst, seconded by Councillor E. Watts

RESOLVED that the report be received.

(Head of Human Resources & Payroll)

Councillor Waring declared a Personal and Prejudicial interest in the following item and left the meeting.

851. BUDGET SAVINGS

Further to the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review announcements and extent of budget reductions, the Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented a report which gave details of proposals for budget savings in relation to the Authority's lease car scheme, the facility to apply for car loans, a review of the Essential/Casual car user scheme and a pay freeze for 2011/12.

These budget saving proposals had been put to the trade unions for consultation purposes at the Management Team/Trade Union Liaison meeting in January 2011.

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

With regard to the Essential/Casual Car User Scheme proposal, a full equality impact assessment had been conducted and no equalities issues had been identified.

Informal consultation had also been carried out and alternative suggestions put forward by staff, details of which had been circulated to both sides at the pre-meeting. In short this showed that 7 out of 263 non trade union employees had responded. Concerns had been expressed regarding the change to terms and conditions. Alternative proposals related to increasing income or all employees taking a pay cut, to avoid having to remove the essential user allowance.

Unison representatives raised concern regarding the extent of consultation carried out, especially with non union staff, and suggested that the report be deferred pending further consultation.

Lengthy discussion took place.

Moved by Councillor E. Watts, seconded by C. Hirst

RESOLVED that the consultation period be extended to 31st March 2011, and that the budget savings report, along with the consultation feedback be considered at the next meeting of UECC on 20 April 2011.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll)

Councillor Waring returned to the meeting.

852. 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 may 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.

853. DRAFT CORPORATE REFERENCES POLICY EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 4

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented a report which gave details of a review undertaken to the Corporate References Policy to take into account changes since the implementation of the new Pay Agreement and lessons learned since the last review in 2007. Key changes made to the Policy were highlighted in the report.

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Consultation on the revised procedure had taken place with Senior Management Team, Extended Management Team and Heads of Service outside Extended Management Team and suggested amendments taken on board.

It had also been suggested as part of the consultation process that an annual reminder be issued to the HR team regarding the Policy.

Moved by C. Hirst, seconded by Councillor E. Watts
RESOLVED that the report be received,

RECOMMENDED that the Corporate References Policy be referred to Council for approval.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll/ Head of Democratic Services)

854. DRAFT PROBATION PROCEDURE EXEMPT PARAGRAPH 4

The Head of Human Resources and Payroll presented a report to consult with committee members on amendments made to the Probation Procedure following consultation with management. These amendments were identified as tracked changes in the Procedure which was attached to the report and also included two new standard letters.

Consultation on the revised procedure had taken place with Senior Management Team, Extended Management Team and Heads of Service outside Extended Management Team and suggested amendments taken on board.

Moved by C. Hirst, seconded by Councillor J.A. Clifton
RESOLVED that the Procedure for the Management and Operation of Probationary Periods be adopted.

(Head of Human Resources and Payroll)

The meeting concluded at 1150 hours.