

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

AGENDA

Monday 5th June 2017 at 1300 hours in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne

Item No.		Page No.(s)
	PART 1 – OPEN ITEMS	
1.	To receive apologies for absence, if any.	
2.	Election of Chairman (Union side).	
3.	To note any urgent items of business which the Chairman has consented to being considered under the provisions of Section 100(B) 4 (b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4.	Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of: a) any business on the agenda b) any urgent additional items to be considered c) any matters arising out of those items and, if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time.	
5.	Minutes of a meeting held on 9 th March 2017.	3 to 7
6.	Sickness Absence/Occupational Health Statistics 2016/17 (as detailed in the Minutes from the Safety Committee meeting held on 27 th April 2017).	To Follow
7.	Employee Celebration Awards.	8 to 11

UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Union/Employee Consultation Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, the Arc, Clowne, on Thursday 9th March 2017 at 1100 hours.

PRESENT:-

Council Representatives:- Councillors Mrs P.M. Bowmer, M.J. Dooley, A. Joesbury, K. Reid and K.F. Walker.

Unison Representatives:- K. Shillitto and J. Clayton.

Unite Representatives:- No representatives present.

Officers; D. Swaine, (Chief Executive Officer), S. Barker (Assistant Director HR and Payroll), P. Wilmot (HR Business Partner), A. Bluff (Governance Officer) and L. Robinson (Governance Assistant, (shadowing)).

Councillor A.M. Syrett in the Chair

0733. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

0734. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Moved by K. Shillitto and seconded by Councillor K. Reid

RESOLVED that J. Clayton be appointed as vice chair of Union/Employee Consultation Committee.

0735. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

0736. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

0737. MINUTES – 8TH JUNE 2016

Moved by Councillor K. Reid and seconded by Councillor A. Joesbury

RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Union/Employee Consultation Committee meeting held on 8th June 2016 be approved as a correct record.

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0738. EARLY VOLUNTARY RELEASE POLICY

Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director – HR & Payroll which sought approval to introduce an Early Voluntary Release Policy.

Although there was no requirement for the Council to have an enhanced redundancy scheme for either compulsory or voluntary redundancies, the introduction and use of voluntary early release would maximise the flexibility of workforce planning and mitigate the necessity for compulsory redundancies in future, though this could not be guaranteed in the current financial climate.

There were a number of circumstances where early voluntary release may be under consideration for an employee; these could relate to the individual situation of an employee if it enabled flexibility for change, or be through the result of employer-led organisational change.

Each application would need to be decided taking into account all considerations and be based on sound business reasons and affordability in both the short and long term.

The policy would not replace the existing compulsory redundancy scheme that was currently in place.

A Unison representative welcomed the policy and stated that Unison was happy with the scheme put forward; however, Unison would always want to ensure that any redundancies, including voluntary release, were a last resort once the Council had carried out all possible alternatives.

Moved by Councillor K. Reid and seconded by Councillor A. Joesbury
RECOMMENDED that Council approve the Early Voluntary Release Policy.

(Assistant Director – HR and Payroll/Governance Manager)

0739. SICKNESS ABSENCE AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS 2015/16

Committee considered the sickness absence and occupational health statistics for the April to December 2016 period.

It had recently been agreed with the Chair of Safety Committee and the Unions to provide the sickness absence and occupational health statistics to UECC by way of the Safety Committee minutes as an alternative to the regular formal report which was also reproduced for the Quarterly Performance meetings. The Safety Committee minutes also noted Members and Unions' queries regarding the statistics and the responses provided at the meetings.

Committee were asked to note that any matters relating to the Sickness Absence Policy for consideration would continue to be presented to UECC.

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett and seconded by Councillor M.J. Dooley
RESOLVED that the sickness absence and occupational health statistics for the April to December 2016 period be noted.

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0740. EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING SURVEY 2016

Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director – HR & Payroll which informed the meeting of the results of an Employee Health and Wellbeing survey undertaken at both councils.

This was the first time that either council had undertaken a specific health and wellbeing survey for employees and the survey had been designed with assistance from Public Health.

The survey had received a 31% response rate which was satisfactory and enabled each council to make decisions on the development of Health and Wellbeing initiatives.

As part of the survey, employees were asked if they would also like to volunteer to be a Health and Wellbeing Champion. This had produced a joint group of 'Champions' made up of employees across both councils.

A joint action plan for the January 2017 to December 2017 period was attached as an appendix to the report with some specific actions for Bolsover. The Action Plan had been endorsed by the Strategic Alliance Management Team.

A Unison representative referred to the results from the survey and the points made regarding the physical environment at the Arc and what could be put in place to alleviate issues.

Further to a discussion, the Deputy Leader and Chief Executive Officer noted that the Council's Accommodation Working Group were currently looking at work areas for staff as well as car parking and heating etc and this was the right group to debate these sorts of issues. An accommodation strategy was being developed which would look at best use of the Arc site long term, including remote working, less desks, staff availability to work elsewhere etc.

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett and seconded by Councillor M.J. Dooley

RESOLVED that 1) the content of the report and the results of the Employee Health and Wellbeing Survey be noted,

2) Union/Employee Consultation Committee supports the initiatives outlined on the Action Plan for 2017.

(Assistant Director – HR & Payroll)

0741. EQUALITIES INFORMATION FOR YEAR ENDING MARCH 2016

Committee considered a report of the Assistant Director – HR & Payroll which provided information on equality data in relation to the Council's workforce and recruitment practices for the period April 2015 to March 2016.

An appendix attached to the report provided a comprehensive summary of equalities data collected and published by the Council on an annual basis; this related to gender, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or belief. The Council also monitored information with regard to recruitment and selection, training and staff turnover, which was also included in the appendix.

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The report noted that during the financial year 2015/16 there had been no formal disciplinary action taken, no formal grievances (including harassment and bullying) raised and no dismissals.

A Unison representative queried if there was any training in place for Managers to make sure they were aware of disabled staff needs in the workforce. The Assistant Director – HR & Payroll replied that she would look to organise some refresher training for Managers regarding reasonable adjustments for staff with disabilities and report back to the next meeting.

Committee was further advised that equalities data for the year ending March 2017 would also be presented to the next meeting of UECC.

Moved by K. Shillitto and seconded by Councillor A. Joesbury

RESOLVED that the 1) the Equality Information Summary be noted,

2) the equalities data for the year ending March 2017, be presented to the next meeting.

(Assistant Director – HR & Payroll)

0742. APPRENTICESHIPS 2017 ONWARDS – PRESENTATION

Committee considered a presentation provided by the HR Business Partner in relation to the new apprenticeships levy.

The Government had announced a new apprenticeship levy in the Summer Budget of 2015 and wanted to significantly increase the quantity and quality of apprenticeships in England in order to reach 3 million starts in 2020.

The apprenticeship reforms would start to impact on the Council from April 2017 through the requirement to pay an apprenticeship levy of 0.5% of the pay bill and meet a minimum of 2.3% apprenticeship starts annually based on employee headcount. For Bolsover, the employee headcount was 502 so the apprenticeship target was 12.

The presentation set out the criteria and details for apprenticeship starts, retraining and apprenticeship career progression etc.

The council had established a working group which included HR, the Partnership Team, Economic Development, Finance and Procurement.

Service managers and senior managers would be asked to review their sections establishment to identify existing staff training needs and potential skills gaps, which could be converted into apprenticeships. For example, those areas with an ageing workforce where existing employees could be developed to fill those gaps; and also to ensure that any restructure/review reports considered apprenticeship options as standard.

Bolsover's traineeship/apprenticeship scheme was currently funded through residual Working Neighbourhood Funding. Plans were in place to recruit 8-10 trainees later this year and then 5/6 apprenticeship opportunities would be made available in 2017. This could be timed so that apprentices recruited counted towards the Council's target.

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There would be extra support for apprentices for any additional learning etc. If a levy paying employer exhausted the funds in their digital account, the Government would meet 90% of the additional apprenticeship training and assessment costs with the employer contributing 10%.

Committee were asked to note that after an 18 month period, any unused levy would be removed and placed into a digital account. The Council could still use the levy but if it were still unused after a 24 month period, the levy would expire and the Council would lose the money completely. This would also apply to any top-ups in the Council's account. Levy fund which had expired would keep its value and be reallocated to committed employers through the top-up to their accounts.

A Unison representative queried if local government would have a single framework for apprentices or if different frameworks would apply depending on what the apprentices' role was; he also queried what safeguards would be in place so that a vacant post at scale 6 would not be filled by an apprentice carrying out scale 6 duties on the living wage

The HR Business Partner replied that although there was no specific local government framework, the new standards that were being introduced were being developed/lead by occupational groups, for example, engineering, computer technology and environmental health etc. The Government had organised a Trailblazer programme which had developed the first 150 occupational groups to encourage other employers to come forward to help develop the standards. With regard to the safeguards in relation to scale 6 posts or other vacant posts being filled by apprentices, this would be covered in the standard and the confines of their job description and contract.

The Unison representative further queried if the Council's working group would include any union involvement in any proposals before they were implemented. It was confirmed that the trade unions would be involved in any new policies and strategies put forward.

In response to a query from the Deputy Leader, the HR Business Partner advised the meeting that the lead HR officer for apprenticeships would be marketing the Council's employment opportunities and the prospect of apprenticeships at careers events.

Moved by Councillor A.M. Syrett and seconded by Councillor M.J. Dooley
RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

The meeting concluded at 1151 hours.

Bolsover District Council

Union/Employee Consultation Committee

5 June 2017

Employee Celebration Awards

Report of the Joint Assistant Director – HR & Payroll

This report is public

Purpose of the Report

- To consult the Committee on proposed changes to the Employee Celebration Awards.

1 Report Details

- 1.1 The current system of quarterly employee awards at the Council was becoming administratively burdensome and had been in place sometime. Therefore a review was appropriate.
- 1.2 Rather than continue with quarterly awards, it was suggested to Cabinet that we might consider having an annual awards ceremony with more awards and make this more of an “event”. Cabinet were supportive of making a change.
- 1.3 A working group was formed including elected members, union officials and HR. The group have met and at Appendix A is the proposal for employee awards at BDC in future.

2 Conclusions and Reasons for Recommendation

- 2.1 It is felt that an annual awards ceremony with additional awards available would be more appropriate given the administrative burden quarterly awards places on the certain employees.
- 2.2 Nominations will be requested at an appropriate point prior to the Awards ceremony.
- 2.3 It is believed that making the awards ceremony an annual event and social in nature, this will improve staff morale and demonstrate our commitment to recognising employees in a positive and more public way.

3 Consultation and Equality Impact

- 3.1 Consultation has already taken place in terms of a joint working group but putting the proposal to this Committee is for the purpose of consultation.

3.2 There are no specific equality issues arising from the report and all equality issues will be considered in terms of the award ceremony, nomination process etc.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 The option of continuing with the current practice was considered but rejected on the grounds of the administrative burden it creates. Also, the current practice is very “low key” and does not always publicly recognise those employees who have gone above and beyond in their duties.

5 Implications

5.1 Finance and Risk Implications

The cost of the awards are set out in the proposal.

5.2 Legal Implications including Data Protection

None specifically.

5.3 Human Resources Implications

Covered within the report.

6 Recommendations

6.1 That the Union/Employee Consultation Committee endorses the changes to the Employee Awards Scheme.

7 Decision Information

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	Transforming our Organisation

8 Document Information

Appendix No	Title
A	Employee Celebration Awards
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author: Stephanie Barker	Contact Number: 2237

EMPLOYEE CELEBRATION AWARDS

Consultation has taken place with the Employee Celebration Awards Working Group comprising of Trade Unions (Unison Rep, Unite chose not to attend), Councillors, (Cllr Murray-Carr, Cllr Reid) and HR. It is being proposed that Bolsover District Council will hold an annual Employee Celebration Awards ceremony which will replace the quarterly Employee Awards.

This event will take place in the Council Chamber at The Arc and the first event is scheduled for **6 December 2017**.

Details

The Employee Celebration Awards will involve the following:

- Awards Ceremony is hosted by Chief Executive and Leader of the Council
- Presentations to award winners are made by SAMT
- Event starts with a buffet and drinks
- Branding of the Employee Celebration Awards to be facilitated by Communications
- Nominations to be requested in various categories with a Judging Panel agreeing the top three shortlisted nominations in each category
- Judging Panel : Leader, Chief Executive, Trade Union and HR Representative
- Award categories:

Achiever of the Year	This category will reward an outstanding individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the Council.
Community Champion	This award is presented to an individual or team that has worked alongside the community to improve a neighbourhood and the quality of life for residents.
Frontline Star	This category is for an individual working on the front line who delivers excellent services and is an outstanding ambassador for the Council.
SAMT Award	This award is presented to an individual or team identified by SAMT
Support Star	This category is for an individual working in a support office role who has delivered excellent service in support of one of more of the Council's Corporate Aims.
Top Manager	This category will reward a manager or supervisor who has generated a sense of teamwork, getting people to work to their full potential.

Top Team	This category rewards a team that has excelled in their field in support of one or more of the Council's Corporate Aims.
Unsung Hero	This category is for an individual or team that has worked behind the scenes and delivered great results in support of one or more of the Council's Corporate Aims.

- Awards:
 - Framed Certificate for everyone shortlisted
 - An additional day's annual leave for the Winner for one year

Long Service Award

It is proposed that employees who reach their 25 year's service at the Council during the course of the year are invited to attend the event to receive their long service award and certificate, ideally from their Joint Assistant Director. This would replace the award being presented either by the Manager or posted to the individual on the date at which they reach 25 years' service. The current award is £125 in Bonus Bonds and this remains the same.

Employees reaching their 30, 35 or 40 years service will continue to receive a congratulations and thank you letter from the Chief Executive.

Retirement Award

Any employee who has retired within the preceding year with more than 5 years service is invited to the event to receive an award dependant on the number of years they have worked at the Council.

- Suggested value of the award:
 - Five but less than ten years £10.00
 - Ten but less than fifteen years £20.00
 - Fifteen but less than twenty years £30.00
 - Twenty but less than twenty five years £40.00
 - Twenty five but less than thirty years £50.00
 - Thirty but less than thirty five years £60.00
 - Thirty five but less than forty years £70.00
 - Forty years or more £80.00

Suggested Running Order (Timings are approximate)

Buffet served in Committee Room 1 30 mins

Guests proceed to Council Chamber for Ceremony

- Welcome by Chief Executive and Leader 5 mins
- Presentation of Long Service and Retirement 20-30 mins
- Presentation of Awards 60 mins