

## **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 21<sup>st</sup> June 2018 at 1100 hours.

### **PRESENT:-**

Council Representatives:-

Councillor K. Reid in the Chair

Councillors Mrs P. M. Bowmer, A. Joesbury and D. McGregor.

Unison Representatives:- C. McKinney, K. Shillitto and L. Cheong.

Unite Representatives:- No representatives present.

Officers:- L. Hickin (Strategic Director – People), D. Clarke (Head of Finance and Resources), S. Gordon (Human Resources and OD Manager) and A. Bluff (Governance Officer).

### **0083. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors A.M. Syrett and M.J. Dooley.

### **0084. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

The Chair consented to four urgent items of business to be considered;

1. Appointment of Vice Chair
2. Pay Policy Statement

Two Unison verbal reports;

3. Determination of Staff Pay
4. Apprenticeship Pay Rates.

### **0085. URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS - APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**

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

**RESOLVED** that C. McKinney (Unison) be elected as Vice Chair of the Committee for the ensuing year.

## UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

### 0086. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

### 0087. MINUTES – 6<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2018

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

**RESOLVED** that the Minutes of a Union/Employee Consultation Committee held on 6<sup>th</sup> March 2018 be approved as a true record.

### 0088. URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS - PAY POLICY STATEMENT

Committee considered a report in relation to the Council's Pay Policy Statement which had been reviewed for 2018/19.

Under the Localism Act 2011, relevant authorities were required to prepare a pay policy statement for each financial year.

The statement must set out an authority's approach to a range of issues relating to the pay of its workforce, particularly its chief officers and its lowest paid employees. It must also be published on the authority's website and in any other manner that the authority feels appropriate – this was to make it accessible to citizens and enable local taxpayers to take an informed view of whether local decisions on all aspects of remuneration were fair and made the best use of public funds.

Committee was invited to make any comments or observations on the reviewed Pay Policy Statement prior to it being presented to Council for approval.

A Unison representative requested clarification of section 4.2.3 of the document and also section 5.4 under Definition of Lowest-paid Employees regarding Apprenticeship Scheme pay grades and also at 7.6 (7.6.3) under Car Allowances, if the salaries of joint chief officers included the car allowance they were paid depending on which car user scheme they were in.

The Chair advised the meeting that at 4.2.2, the figures would be as follows;

Grade	Incremental Points	Chief Officer £
12	37	47,583
12	38	48,549
12	39	49,513

The Chair further advised the meeting that the Apprenticeship Scheme pay grades would be discussed later on the agenda. The Human Resources and OD Manager confirmed that car allowance payments were not included in the chief officers' salaries.

## UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

A Unison representative referred to section 4.2.4.1 of the document and queried the pay multiple for the Apprenticeship Scheme. The Human Resources and OD Manager agreed to clarify this and report back to Unison.

Moved by K. Shillitto and seconded by Councillor D. McGregor

**RECOMMENDED** that the Council be recommended to adopt the revised Pay Policy Statement and approve the policy for publication.

(Human Resources and OD Manager)

### **0089. SICKNESS ABSENCE/OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH STATISTICS – JANUARY 2018 TO MARCH 2018**

Committee considered a report in relation to sickness absence statistics for the fourth quarter of 2017/18 with comparative data for 2016/17.

The sickness absence outturn figure for the fourth quarter period of 2017/18 (January 2018 to March 2018) was 2.8 days (compared to 3.14 days in 2016/17). A breakdown of the quarterly figures for both years was included in the report for Committee's information.

There were 18 long term sickness absence cases during the fourth quarter of which 15 cases had been resolved and three cases remained ongoing.

The services with the highest absence were Housing, Customer Services and Revenues & Benefits. Committee was asked to note that sickness absence had decreased in Streetscene Services.

During the year (2017/18) there was a general trend where sickness absence had increased during the winter months in comparison to the summer months, however, sickness absence had decreased in 2017/18 compared to 2016/17.

The sickness absence outturn figure for the 2017/18 period was 9.30 days against a target of 8.5 days (compared to 10.85 days in 2016/17).

Further analysis of sickness absence was being carried out to identify trends and patterns.

The Human Resources and OD Manager advised the meeting that a new occupational health provider had been procured which would enable the Council to provide improved support to employees in relation to their health and wellbeing and attendance at work. Hobson Health would commence from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018 and would carry out on site clinics with a dedicated nurse.

Unison representatives and Members welcomed the report.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor and seconded by Councillor P. Bowmer  
**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

## UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

### 0090. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORK STREAMS

Committee considered a verbal report in relation to organisational development work streams.

The Human Resources and OD Manager noted that much work was being carried out across the Council in relation to organisational development activity and queried if Committee wished to receive reports on a six monthly basis regarding this.

A Unison representative welcomed the report and requested that future planned work streams also be included in the reports.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor and seconded by C. McKinney

**RESOLVED** that (1) the verbal report be noted,

(2) future planned work streams be included in the reports.

(Human Resources and OD Manager)

### 0091. URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS - DETERMINATION OF STAFF PAY

A Unison representative raised Unison's concern, which had arisen over the decision-making process which determined how the national pay award for 2018 should be applied to Bolsover District Council rates of pay. Unison appreciated that there were arguments for and against different interpretations of the pay award, however, Unison believed that an important decision between consistency with the national approach on the one hand, or choosing to alleviate the impact of recent years of austerity on staff on the other, should have been decided by Elected Members.

In order to ensure that all such decisions in future were dealt with by Elected Members, Unison wished to propose the following motion to the Committee;

- a. *UECC agrees that future decisions regarding remuneration of staff (including the establishment of new pay scales to take effect in April 2019) should be decided by Elected Members at full Council, following agreement at UECC. Such decisions should not be taken under delegated powers, and*
- b. *UECC recommends to Standards Committee and Council that the Constitution be amended to reflect this as a matter of urgency".*

This matter was considered urgent by Unison because waiting for a later meeting of UECC could jeopardise the Constitution being updated in time for 2019 pay scales to be decided.

The Chair and the Strategic Director – People, confirmed to Committee that Unison's concerns had been raised at the UECC management side pre meeting where it was agreed that further discussions between management and the unions would take place.

## UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

The Unison representative agreed to withdraw the motion subject to the outcome of the discussions, however, if an agreement could not be reached in relation to the rate of pay from 2019, then the motion would be put forward to the next meeting of UECC.

The Chair assured the Committee that if an agreement could not be reached then this issue would be considered at the next UECC meeting.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor and seconded by Councillor Mrs P.M. Bowmer

**RESOLVED** that if an agreement was not reached from discussions held between management and the unions before the next meeting of UECC in relation to the rate of pay from 2019, then Unison's motion would be put to the next meeting of UECC.

(Unison)

### 0092. URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS - APPRENTICESHIP PAY RATES

A Unison representative drew Committee's attention to the minutes of the last meeting where it was agreed by Members and Unison that UECC supported the Apprenticeship Strategy subject to the Living Wage being applied to apprentices. However, it had come to Unison's attention that the Council was currently recruiting two apprenticeship posts at minimum wage only and this was contrary to what was agreed.

Unison sought to reach an agreement that all apprenticeships would be recruited at Foundation Living Wage with immediate effect.

Another Unison representative noted that the Council could not claim to be a Living Wage employer if apprentices were paid the national minimum wage.

This matter was considered urgent by Unison because the apprenticeship posts were already advertised.

The Human Resources and OD Manager confirmed that Unison's query was in relation to new apprenticeships. She noted that as the Strategy was a joint strategy with North East Derbyshire District Council, the issue would need to be raised at North East also.

Both councils had agreed to pay apprentices the national minimum wage based on their age, so the rationale originally put in place at Bolsover would need querying to see if that had evolved and changed. Further, the bottom of the spinal column points were being eroded with the increase of the minimum wage and the living wage. The Human Resources and OD Manager was mindful that there were some employees who were toward the bottom of the pay scales and an assessment of duties and responsibilities would need to be undertaken. This was because paying people on the same pay with limited knowledge and maybe no experience, in comparison to someone who has full experience, knowledge and skills, could cause issues and concerns from members of staff. It had become more complicated with the suggestion of looking at paying the living wage but a full assessment would need to be undertaken which could not be looked at in isolation. Budgets would also need to be looked at.

The posts currently advertised were linked to funding through the Partnership Team so there were some restrictions on those posts. The Human Resources and OD Manager

## UNION/EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

agreed to present a report to Committee once an assessment had been undertaken. Committee was asked to note that the JCG equivalent meeting at North East Derbyshire District Council had been cancelled and the Human Resources and OD Manager had not been able to seek their views. Ideally, for both Councils, it would be beneficial to have the same principals in place regarding apprenticeships as there were some apprentices that undertook the same roles.

The Chair requested that the Human Resources and OD Manager worked with the Unions on the assessment.

The Unison representative commented that if decisions were made to change the rates of pay for apprentices then those that were recruited on the lower scales would then affectively see a pay rise once that it had been agreed. The minutes from the last meeting were not necessarily reflective of the difficulties which arose from that and it was a complication that had not been foreseen when it was discussed at the previous meeting.

The Chair requested that further to the Human Resources and OD Manager making enquiries to try to resolve the anomalies raised, the item be brought back to UECC for further discussion

The HR and OD Manager commented that the first full year of the Apprenticeship Levy funding had just passed and it had proven successful across both councils. There were apprentices that wished to apply for established job roles and those were there was a demand for particular work activities to continue. It was recognised that posts and service demands had evolved. Therefore, if an individual was undertaking full duties and responsibilities, it was ensured that their pay and Job Evaluation were an accurate reflection of this.

The Chair noted that Members had previously stated that if the Council was taking on apprentices, they were hopeful that there would be a job outcome for them.

Moved by Councillor D. McGregor and seconded by K. Shillitto

**RESOLVED** that the HR and OD Manager undertakes an assessment of the position across both councils and reports back to UECC as soon as possible.

The meeting concluded at 1135 hours.