

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee of the Bolsover District Council held as a Virtual Meeting on Thursday, 11 February 2021 at 10:00.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Chris McKinney (Unison Representative) in the Chair

Councillors Derek Adams, Maxine Dixon, Mary Dooley and Tom Kirkham.

Kevin Shillitto (UNISON) and Liz Robinson (UNISON).

Officers:- , Sara Gordon (Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager), Tom Scott (Governance Officer), and Hannah Douthwaite (Democratic Services Assistant).

UECC7- APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 20/21

No apologies for absence were received.

UECC8- URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS 20/21

There was no urgent business to be considered at the meeting.

UECC9- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST 20/21

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

UECC10- MINUTES 20/21

Moved by Chris McKinney and seconded by Councillor Mary Dooley
RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee held on 17th September 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

UECC11- SICKNESS ABSENCE QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2020) 20/21

The Human Resources & Organisational Development Manager presented the Sickness Absence Report for Quarter 3 (October 2020 – December 2020) and advised that the average number of days lost per employee in this quarter was 1.14. This resulted in the projected outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee to be 5.32 days for the full year.

Table four in the report detailed the top three service areas per quarter for absence and table five detailed the service areas with the lowest sickness absence for the quarter in comparison to previous years. The main three reasons for absence were shown in table six with Covid-19 symptoms being the third most common reason having not made the top three in previous quarters.

Quarter three is the lowest quarter for sickness absence reported over the last 4 financial years, possible factors for the reduction in average days lost included the increased capacity and availability for employees to work from home and also limited interaction with others both inside and out of work due to lockdown and associated restrictions.

Members noted that it had been a particularly challenging time for employees yet they had risen to all challenges thrown at them and continued to work effectively and had kept all essential services operating.

A question was raised surrounding the take up of the mental health awareness training. The HR and Organisational Development Manager advised that over 100 employees had signed up to attend the training and it would be run quarterly for any new starters and as a refresher for any other employees who wished to attend.

Due to the lockdown restrictions there was limited social interaction between staff so frequent team meetings and 121's were essential to check in on employees and address any concerns with managers / senior members of the team.

Moved by Councillor Maxine Dixon and seconded by Councillor Mary Dooley.
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

UECC12- GENDER PAY GAP 2019/2020 20/21

The HR and Organisational Development Manager presented the Gender Pay Gap report for 2019/20. It was noted that the gender pay gap did not indicate any pay equity issue or an imbalance in the Council's pay structures and policies. The report only looked at the average earnings between male and female employees.

Table four of the report illustrated the proportion of men and women in the four different quartile bands which show that the Council has a higher proportion of men in the upper pay quartile and upper middle pay quartile however, the Council's pay gap was well below the National Pay Gap average of 15.5%. The report also compared the data with other Local Authorities mean and median hourly rates.

Members discussed the factors that influenced the gender pay gap such as women being more likely to take on family responsibilities, career breaks and also stereotypes, culture

and societal norms which influenced the types of roles men and women were attracted to undertake.

A question was raised regarding the number of employees that were employed by the Council and what the percentage split was between male and female. It was confirmed there were 508 employed staff, 251 male and 257 female so almost a 50% split.

The Chair asked if the Council knew whether the good policies that have been brought in work or have made a difference to the gender pay gap, and asked if any research had been done to understand this. The HR and Organisational Development Manager advised that the staff survey covers this in general terms but further research would be required to understand the impact of specific policies. The HR and Organisational Development Manager advised that she would look into this to see what evidence the Council currently has and what further information could be captured.

Councillor Tom Kirkham left the meeting.

Members thanked the HR and Organisational Development Manager for the detail and breakdowns included in the report and the way in which employees were supported by the HR team.

The HR and Organisation Development Manager reported that she would work with the Communications team to ensure that all information was up to date on the website and no information was missing.

Moved by Chris McKinney and seconded by Councillor Derek Adams
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10:40 hours.