

WEST SUFFOLK JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE PANEL

MONDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2013

3.00 PM - 4.00 PM

Members Present

<u>Forest Heath District Council</u> (Employers' Side)	<u>St Edmundsbury Borough Council</u> (Employers' Side)	<u>Staff Representatives</u> (Employees' Side)
Councillor S J Edwards Councillor W Hirst Councillor G Jaggard	Councillor R Cockle Councillor Mrs S Mildmay-White Councillor Mrs P Warby	V Austin L Cocker H Cook D Goss M Johnson S Rackham

Also in attendance

W Canham, HR Business Partner
 K Points, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development
 D Long, Committee Administrator

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor T Simmons (Forest Heath District Council - Employers' Side), Councillors Mrs A Rushen and C Springett (St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Employers' Side) and J Orton – staff representative. An apology for lateness was also received from S Rackham (staff representative).

Substitutes

Councillor W Hirst attended the meeting as substitute for Councillor T Simmons (Forest Heath District Council – Employers' Side). Councillor Mrs P Warby attended the meeting for Councillor C Springett and Mrs S Mildmay-White attended the meeting as a temporary substitute for Councillor Mrs A Rushen (St Edmundsbury Borough Council Employers' Side). D Goss attended the meeting for J Orton (staff representative).

SCHEDULE OF RECOMMENDATIONS

	ITEMS OF BUSINESS	RECOMMENDATION
019	<u>ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR 2013/2014</u> Councillor G Jaggard (Employers' Side) was elected as Chairman of the Panel for 2013/2014.	RESOLVED

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020	<p><u>APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN FOR 2013/2014</u></p> <p>Mr H Cook (Employees' Side) was appointed as Vice Chairman of the Panel for 2013/2014.</p>	RESOLVED
021	<p><u>SCHEDULE OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 13 MAY 2013</u></p> <p>The schedule of recommendations from the meeting held on 13 May 2013 were received and noted. Arising thereon:</p> <p>(a) <u>New Pay and Reward Strategy: Update and Rollout (Minute Number 014)</u></p> <p>The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development gave a further update and advised that work on a new Performance Appraisal Scheme was yet to be commenced but it was anticipated that work would start in November 2013, after the next staff survey.</p> <p>(b) <u>Apprenticeships (Minute Number 015(c))</u></p> <p>It was agreed that at an appropriate time following completion of the shared service staffing arrangements, publicity should be given to the success of the Councils' Apprenticeship Scheme. It was acknowledged that publicity was given to apprenticeships when the Councils' had won the Sarah Swayne Regional Employers' Award, earlier this year.</p>	<p>NOTED</p> <p>NOTED</p>
022	<p><u>JOINT GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE (REPORT NO JSP13/004)</u></p> <p>The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development presented Report No JSP13/004, which contained as an Appendix, a proposed new Joint Grievance Policy and Procedure. The proposed new policy was in accordance with current legislation, specifically the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992, and the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures. Existing policies and procedures had been reviewed with UNISON, with a view to ensuring that issues raised by employees, could be dealt with a fair and timely way. The Panel were informed that only two grievances had been the subject of hearings within the last 15 months and all others had been resolved informally by managers.</p>	

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	The proposed new Joint Policy Grievance Policy and Procedure was supported for approval.	RECOMMENDED
023	<p><u>JOINT APPEAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE (REPORT NO JSP13/005)</u></p> <p>The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development presented Report No JSP13/005, which contained as an Appendix, a proposed new Joint Appeal Policy and Procedure. The new policy was in accordance with current legislation and the ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures. Existing policies had been reviewed with UNISON with a view to ensuring that managers had a sound and effective single policy for dealing with employee appeals.</p> <p>The Joint Policy gave details of the composition of the Panel, which would include two members of the Council's Joint Leadership Team. Members of the Panel would be independent of the case and, if possible, at a higher level of authority than the original disciplinary panel.</p> <p>Staff representatives indicated that initially they had concerns about a loss of independence in the composition of the Panel, as elected Members would no longer be involved. However, they were satisfied that impartiality of the Panel would be maintained by the selection of officers to serve on the Panel who were unconnected with the case to be heard.</p> <p>UNISON would like a flowchart to be added to the Policy.</p> <p>The proposed new Joint Appeal Policy and Procedure was supported for approval.</p> <p><i>(Councillor Cockle requested that his vote against the recommendation be recorded).</i></p>	RECOMMENDED
024	<p><u>SHARED SERVICES (VERBAL)</u></p> <p>The Staff representatives referred to the situation that the shared services staff re-structuring was now reaching a conclusion and pointed out that with shared staffing structures the workforce was reducing. The staff side therefore wished, following on from the mechanics of restructuring, to have a discussion about its effects on the staff.</p> <p>There could not be an expectation that officers would</p>	

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	<p>spend set proportions of their working time at respective offices or in respective areas; the working patterns of staff would be dependent on the requirements of service delivery.</p> <p>The Employers' side acknowledged this situation and referred to a prospective Member Development Session which it was intended to give Councillors understanding and guidance on the new staffing structures and how they would operate. This session was understood to be taking place in October but it was felt that the dates should be postponed until November when restructuring was concluded. It was also felt that information as to the final form of the Councils' staff organisation by references to post titles and holders was needed.</p> <p>It was also agreed that shared services should be an agenda item for the Panel's meeting until such time as the process was complete.</p>	RESOLVED
025	<p><u>THE ROLE OF THE WEST SUFFOLK JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE PANEL (VERBAL)</u></p> <p>The Chairman advised that he had requested this item be discussed, as it appeared to him, that the Panel's role was unclear and he had expected it to be available for matters to be arbitrated or negotiated upon.</p> <p>It was suggested, in response, that much of the preliminary discussion and negotiation about issues took place between UNISON and HR prior to Panel meetings, so as to seek agreement in partnership with Unions where possible. In addition, the discussion about shared services had taken place at the Shared Services Steering Group who had the remit of overseeing this process and two periods of formal 45 days consultation with Unions had taken place this year. The Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development explained the close working with Unison that had taken place with weekly meetings between herself and the Branch Secretary, and further meetings with the Co-chairmen being held regularly. Nonetheless, this Panel had been involved in the on-going review of joint HR policies. The Panel also had Terms of Reference in place. Furthermore the Panel had approved the Single Pay and Reward Strategy earlier this year. Members wishing to raise specific issues could request items in respect of these be included on the agenda for Panel meetings.</p>	

	ITEMS OF BUSINESS	RECOMMENDATION
026	<u>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u> It was agreed that the next meeting of the Panel would be held on Thursday 16 January 2014 at 3.00 pm at the Forest Heath District Council Offices, Mildenhall.	RESOLVED