

# West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative Panel

Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury councils

**West Suffolk**  
working together

**Minutes** of a meeting of the **West Suffolk Joint Staff Consultative** held on **Monday 25 July 2016** at **3.00 pm** in **GFR13, West Suffolk House**, Western Way, Bury St Edmunds IP33 3YU

<b>Present:</b>	<u>St Edmundsbury Borough Council</u> (Employers' Side)	<u>Forest Heath District Council</u> (Employers' Side)	<u>Staff Representatives</u> (Employees' Side)
	Cllr Carol Bull Cllr Bob Cockle Cllr Patricia Warby	Cllr Ruth Bowman Cllr Rona Burt Cllr Stephen Edwards	Lizzi Cocker Mark Johnson Jane Orton

**By Invitation:** Cllr Ian Houlder

## 27. Election of Chairman for 2016/2017

With the vote being unanimous, it was

### **RESOLVED:**

That Mark Johnson be elected Chairman for 2016/2017.

## 28. Election of Vice Chairman for 2016/2017

With the vote being unanimous, it was

### **RESOLVED:**

That Councillor Ruth Bowman be elected Vice-Chairman for 2016/2017.

## 29. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Clive Springett (St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Employers' Side) together with Claire McKenna and Julie Roberts (Staff Representatives – Employees' Side).

## 30. Substitutes

Councillor Carol Bull attended the meeting as substitute for Councillor Clive Springett (St Edmundsbury Borough Council – Employers' Side).

## 31. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2016 were received and noted.

## 32. **Human Resources Policies (Report No: JSP/JT/16/003)**

The Service Manager (Human Resources and Organisational Development) advised the Panel that Officers had been working on new policies and strategies for West Suffolk in accordance with current employment legislation. Policies and procedures were also written with ACAS best practice in mind.

Members were advised that the Workplace Wellbeing Strategy was the overarching strategy which encompassed the West Suffolk Authorities' commitment to the health and wellbeing of staff through a range of initiatives. The Mental Health at Work, Mentoring and Mediation policies underpinned the commitment and strengthened the approach to the wellbeing of staff and were stand-alone documents specific to their content.

Leadership Team and Unison had involvement in the development of the documents and Mark Johnson spoke in support on behalf of the union.

The Joint Staff Consultative Panel were being asked to approve the final versions of the documents and recommend approval onto both Authorities' Cabinet meetings in September 2016. Where minor statutory changes were made subsequently, in consultation with Unison, policies would be amended.

Following discussion on each of the attached documents the Officer explained that the Workplace Wellbeing Strategy linked to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter and had been deliberately given the same lifespan of three years (2016-2019), although it was hoped that this could be achieved in eighteen months.

Councillor Ruth Bowman applauded this linkage and asked if the Strategy could be amended to include a paragraph to outline its relationship with the Charter.

Councillor Bob Cockle moved that the documents be recommended to Cabinets for approval, inclusive of Councillor Bowman's additional paragraph, and this was duly seconded by Jane Orton.

With the vote being unanimous, it was

### **RESOLVED:**

That subject to the addition of a paragraph to the Workplace Wellbeing Strategy to explain the role of the Workplace Wellbeing Charter, the following West Suffolk Human Resources Policies, as contained in Appendices 1 to 4 respectively to Report No: JSP/JT/16/003, be approved:

- Workplace Wellbeing Strategy 2016-2019;
- Mental Health at Work Policy 2016;
- Mentoring Policy 2016; and
- Mediation Policy 2016.

33. **Workforce Data (Report No: JSP/JT/16/004)**

The Service Manager (Human Resources and Organisational Development) presented this report which set out the West Suffolk workforce data for the period up to 30 June 2016. The report also provided a comparison between the data as it stood now and with that reported to previous meetings of the Panel during 2015/2016.

The figures demonstrated a fairly static picture overall, with turnover having largely plateaued at a healthy level. The West Suffolk average sickness level of 6.81 days continued to be pleasingly far below the national average of 8.70 days.

The Panel were advised that a piece of work was planned to consider options to ensure the current West Suffolk payline and PDR process continued to be fit for purpose. Furthermore, Officers were working closely with neighbouring authorities on recruitment solutions such as the joint Suffolk-wide planning technician apprentice posts that had recently gone out to advert.

It was moved by Councillor Bob Cockle, duly seconded by Mark Johnson and with the vote being unanimous, it was

**RESOLVED:**

That the contents of the workforce data, attached as Appendix 1 to Report No JST/JT/16/004, be noted and supported.

The meeting concluded at 3.52 pm

**Signed by:**

**Chairman**

---