

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

JOINT STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

**MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DISTRICT COUNCIL OFFICES, GERNON
ROAD, LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY
ON WEDNESDAY, 19TH DECEMBER, 2018 AT 3.00 PM**

MINUTES

Present: *Councillors Councillor Sarah Dingley (Chairman), Lisa Nash, Lynda Needham and Martin Stears-Handscomb*

In Attendance: *Kerry Shorrocks (Corporate Human Resources Manager), Rebecca Webb (Human Resources Operations Manager), David Carr (UNISON), Christina Corr (Staff Consultation Forum), Debbie Ealand (UNISON), Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews (UNISON), Dee Levett (UNISON) and Claire Morgan (Staff Consultation Forum)*

10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Audio Recording – Start of Item – 3 second

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Bernard Lovewell (Vice-Chairman).

11 MINUTES - 26 SEPTEMBER 2018

Audio Recording – Start of Item – 8 seconds

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Committee held on 26 September 2018 were approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chairman.

12 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

Audio Recording – Start of Item – 26 seconds

There was no other business notified.

13 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Audio Recording – Start of Item – 29 seconds

- (1) The Chairman announced that Members of the public and the press may use their devices to film/photograph, or do a sound recording of the meeting, but she asked them to not use flash and to disable any beeps or other sound notifications that emitted from their devices. In addition, the Chairman had arranged for the sound at this particular meeting to be recorded;
- (2) The Chairman reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question;
- (3) The Chairman asked that, for the benefit of any members of the public present at the meeting, Officers announce their name and their designation to the meeting when invited to speak.

14 STAFF CONSULTATION FORUM

Audio Recording – Start of Item – 1 minute 9 seconds

The Corporate Human Resources Manager presented the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Meeting and drew attention to the following:

20 September 2018

This meeting had been called to consider restructures in the Legal and Community Team and the Strategic Planning and Enterprise Team.

A lot of restructure work had take place since the Senior Management Restructure.

Councillor Martin Stears-Handscomb expressed concern regarding the role of the Scrutiny Officer and the potential conflict when the role is absorbed into Committee Services.

4 October 2018

The following issues had been discussed:

- The operation of the SCF.
- IT projects and issues
- Staff queries

Members expressed some concern at the distance of the fire assembly points from the building, particularly for those staff who were disabled.

Members felt that a fire drill should be held during a Committee meeting and that Members should be more informed about the fire evacuation procedures.

7 November 2018

This meeting considered a restructure within the Regulatory Service.

Members noted that some additional staff salaries were being funded by expected increased Planning fees and queried what would happen if the planned additional income was not forthcoming.

Consultation was being undertaken regarding planned amendment to expenses for staff with the result of the consultation expected in January 2019.

An audit regarding overtime payments had been undertaken.

Members queried whether Committee Services could claim overtime for evening meetings and whether they were encouraged to take any TOIL they had accumulated,

The Corporate Human Resources Manager confirmed that Committee Staff either claimed overtime or took TOIL.

Members queried whether there were enough reps attending the SCF.

The Corporate Human Resources Manager confirmed that there were 7 reps covering the 6 floors of DCO.

IT WAS AGREED: That the Minutes of the Staff Consultation Forums held on 20 September 2018, 4 October 2018 and the Draft Minutes of 7 November 2018 be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Joint Staff Consultative Committee to consider any issues addressed by the Staff Consultation Forum.

15 PEOPLE STRATEGY UPDATE - INFORMATION NOTE

Audio Recording of Meeting – Start of Item – 25 Minutes 8 Seconds

The Corporate Human Resources Manager presented the Information Note entitled People Strategy Update and drew attention to the following:

Recruitment

- It had been a busy year with recruitment and restructure changes.
- There had been a rise in staff turnover of approximately 3 percent, this was however consistent with other shire districts.

Apprentices

- There were many new apprentices throughout the organisation.
- The Housing Team were funding apprentices in their team.
- There had been a number of months in this financial year without any apprentices. The unspent budget would be used to take on an additional apprentice.
- Two new higher apprentices would be starting in Human Resources.
- NHDC performed well compared to other authorities in respect of apprentices.

Equalities

- Equality data was collected and published every year
- An equal pay review had been undertaken which concluded that there were no significant inequalities with people being paid a fair rate for doing jobs of the same value.
- NHDC had considered the Gender Pay Gap last year. There had been an increase in the number of females in the upper middle and upper quartiles

Pay

- There had been another 2 year pay deal that meant that most staff would receive a 2 percent pay increase, with larger increases for the lower paid.
- The Pay Policy Statement had been updated following the Senior Management Restructure and was stating on the next Statement which was due to be presented to Council in February 2019.
- The contract with Serco for the payroll service had been extended for one year, but was now coming to an end and work was being undertaken to source a new provider.

In response to a question, the Corporate Human Resources Manager advised that the staffing of an in-house service had proved very difficult in the past therefore they were looking at outsourced payroll services.

Staff Benefits

- HR had been looking at the contracts for the Employee Assistance Programme.
- There were several micro benefits schemes. Childcare Vouchers had been discontinued and the Salary Sacrifice Car Scheme had been discontinued following consultation with staff.

Learning and Development

New values and behaviours have been developed and promoted to staff.

RPR

Work was being undertaken to migrate the RPR onto Growzone, the learning management system.

Absence

- There had been a large amount of long term sick cases this year.
- There had been a drop in the amount of absence for November.
- Flu vaccinations were offered to staff on an annual basis and there was a high take up rate.

Audits

There were various audits undertaken throughout the year including{

- Payroll
- Overtime
- Apprentice Levy

Performance Measures

- A high proportion of RPRs were returned within timescales
- Turnover – as discussed earlier
- Absence – this was considered over a rolling 12 month period

IT WAS AGREED: That the Information Note entitled People Strategy Update be noted.

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Committee to consider the People Strategy Update.

16 STRATEGIC FORUM DISCUSSION TOPIC

Audio Recording – Start of Item – 44 minutes 45 seconds

The Corporate Human Resources Manager and Human Resources Operations Manager presented the report entitled Strategic Forum Discussion regarding Online Recruitment and Shortlisting.

The following Members participated in the debate and asked questions::

- Councillor Martin Stears-Handscomb
- Councillor Lynda Needham

In response to questions the Human Resource Operations Manager advised that, where necessary, various options such as trade journals and websites were used to advertise vacancies.

If someone advised that they had a disability then reasonable adjustments would be made to enable people to access vacancies.

IT WAS AGREED: That the Strategic Forum discussion paper on Online Recruitment and Shortlisting be noted.

Wednesday, 19th December, 2018

REASON FOR DECISION: To enable the Committee to consider the paper on Online Recruitment.

17 SUGGESTED DISCUSSION TOPICS

Audio Recording – Start of Item – 55 minutes 30 seconds

Members considered which subjects should be discussed at future meetings and agreed the following:

IT WAS AGREED: That the discussion topics for the meetings would be as follows:

- (i) 27 March 2019 – Learning and Development
- (ii) June 2019 – Occupational Health

The meeting closed at 3.57 pm

Chairman