

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

LOCAL JOINT PANEL – 18 JUNE 2008

REPORT BY THE SECRETARY OF THE STAFF SIDE

8(A) WORKING ARRANGEMENTS - CONSULTATION

WARD(S) AFFECTED: NONE

'D' RECOMMENDATION –that (A) the report be noted;

(B) staff be fully involved and consulted throughout the whole of the implementation process of the working arrangements review;

(C) that staff be informed of the content of Council reports on working arrangements before they are made public on the Council's website.

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1.0 Purpose/Summary of Report

1.1 To make panel members aware of the views of staff on working arrangements and to debate issues of concern.

2.0 Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/Objectives

2.1 Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.

3.0 Background

3.1 A meeting of the Executive on 27 May 2008 included an item on the agenda about the review of working arrangements, with a set of recommendations subsequently agreed.

The Staff Side had not been consulted about the content of the report, although the Chief Executive sent an email to all staff a day after the report was published on the internet outlining the main issues contained in the report.

UNISON raised some concerns and sent a response to Council Members to make them aware of views expressed by many staff,

since there had been no opportunity prior to this to discuss the issues with officers.

#### 4.0 Report

4.1 Attached at Appendix 'A' (Pages 8.4 - 8.7) is a copy of UNISON's response for consideration by Panel Members. Although, all the recommendations in the Executive report were agreed, the Staff Side feel it is important to be given a chance to express their views and those of other employees, albeit somewhat late in the day. The review of working arrangements impacts on all staff and it is important to remember that although the Council is rightly focusing on improving services to customers, this cannot be achieved without a committed, well-motivated and skilled workforce.

4.2 Ironically the following statement under the heading 'Consultation' in the Executive report: "*Staff views are sought by means of a user group and the project team.*" did not apply in this particular instance. The report and its recommendations were not mentioned at any of these meetings.

4.3 The Staff Side would like clarification of the significance of paragraph 5.2: "*Further consultation would take place on any option to be recommended before a decision to implement is taken. The Local Joint Committee would be consulted.*" UNISON understood that the decision to implement the recommendations had already been taken by the Executive!

#### 5.0 Consultation

5.1 Meetings have taken place but certain information withheld.

#### 6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 None

#### 7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 No final details provided yet.

#### 8.0 Human Resource Implications

8.1 All East Herts employees affected.

## 9.0 Risk Management Implications

9.1 Unknown.

### Background Papers

None

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