

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
LOCAL JOINT PANEL HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON TUESDAY 3 SEPTEMBER
2013, AT 2.30 PM

PRESENT: **Employer's Side**

Councillors M Alexander, L Haysey,
A Jackson and J Thornton

Staff Side (UNISON)

Councillor Mr A Stevenson (Chairman)
J Francis

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor J Ranger

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Glenda Bennett	- Interim Head of People and Property
Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Adele Taylor	- Director of Finance and Support Services
Giovanna Azzopardi	- Human Resources Officer

6 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Steve Ellis (UNISON). It was noted that Jenny Francis was substituting for Steve Ellis.

7 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman stated that no reports had been submitted by the Secretary to the Staff Side.

9 GRIEVANCE POLICY

The Secretary to the Employer's Side submitted a report on setting out revisions to the Grievance Policy. She explained that updates to the policy had been necessitated by changes in legislation including the Equality Act 2010, the Employment Relations Act 1999 and the ACAS Code of Practice on handling Disciplinary and Grievances at Work. The revised policy, as now submitted, complied with these Acts as well as the National Joint Council (NJC) Green Book. The Secretary to the Employer's Side highlighted what changes had been made to the policy since its last revision and explained that the policy would be reviewed every three years or sooner and in line with legislation and not two as set out in the report.

In response to a query from Councillor L Haysey regarding a review of grievances, the Secretary to the Employer's Side confirmed that reviews did take place.

In response to a query from Councillor J Thornton regarding the use of recording devices during the grievance process, the Secretary to the Employer's Side stated that it was not recommended standard practice to record meetings, but she confirmed that it was possible to use recording devices as long as there was a voluntary agreement by all parties. She confirmed that Managers were aware of the Protected Acts where grievance issues were concerned and that training was readily available.

The Director of Finance and Support Services referred to other complementary Policies such as the “Whistle Blowing Policy”.

In response to a query from Councillor M Alexander, the Secretary to the Employer’s Side confirmed that the policy only applied to directly employed staff. She confirmed that in line with the Data Protection Act, only data relevant to the decision would be kept by the Council.

The Panel Chairman confirmed that the Staff Side had been involved in the revision process and that UNISON supported the revisions as detailed in the report now submitted.

The Policy, as amended, was supported by the Panel.

RECOMMENDED – that the revised Grievance Policy as amended, be approved.

The meeting closed at 2.55 pm

Chairman
Date