

MINUTES OF A METING OF THE  
LOCAL JOINT PANEL HELD IN ROOM  
27, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON  
FRIDAY, 30 JANUARY 2004 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Employer's Side

Councillor M G Carver (Chairman) H G S Banks,  
N C Poulton and M Wood.

Staff Side (UNISON)

Robert Ball, Fiona Brown, Jane Sharp, Andy  
Stevenson, Mike Osmotherley.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Simon Drinkwater	- Assistant Director (Law and Control)
Bernard Perry	- Assistant Director (Human Resources)
Lorraine Blackburn	- Committee Secretary

ACTION

11 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Keith Neat,  
Chris Cooper and Peter Otway.

RESOLVED ITEMS

12 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 24  
September 2003 be confirmed as a correct record and  
signed by the Chairman.

13 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman commented that the meeting had been urgently convened at the Staff Side's request to consider the issue of on and off street parking enforcement and the consultation process.

14 HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE - 6 OCTOBER AND 3 DECEMBER 2003

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6 October 2003 -

Bernard Perry commented that the Health and Safety Policy Review final report had been prepared.

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meetings of the Health and Safety Committee held on 6 October and 3 December, 2003 be received.

15 PARKING ENFORCEMENT - BEST VALUE CODE OF PRACTICE ON WORKFORCE MATTERS

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Jane Sharp (Staff Side) commented on the need to call an urgent meeting of the Local Joint Panel in the light of articles which had appeared in the press which suggested that a decision had been made by the Council in relation to the privatisation of parking enforcement. Concern was expressed about the lack of consultation with UNISON and staff. She drew attention to ODPM Circular 03/2003 Annexes C and D which emphasised the need to involve staff and trade unions in procurement decisions and the need to include the Code of Practice on Workforce matters on new contracts or re-tenders for services before any such decisions were taken.

It was noted that a report to the Executive recommended that this service be externalised. It further went on to outline the advantages and disadvantages of doing so. It did not outline the advantages of keeping the services "in house" Clarification was sought from the Staff Side as to

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how the decision had been arrived at without consultation with UNISON or staff. She referred to the appendices attached to the report and the need to consult.

Assurances were sought from the Employer's Side that there would be immediate full consultation and staff involvement in the process.

The Assistant Director (Human Resources) empathised with the concerns expressed by staff side on the issue of consultation but commented that the Council had not yet made a decision. He gave assurances that staff and UNISON would be consulted and the Code of Practice complied with. It was noted that the Council had a Procurement Strategy Group and UNISON would have a seat on that Group

The Assistant Director (Law and Control) further confirmed that the Council had a Procurement Policy albeit this required review in the light of Best Value practice and required input from the Procurement Strategy Group. By virtue of a seat on the Procurement Strategy Group, UNISON would have input to the development of the Policy. He gave assurances that the Council would comply with the Circular and code of practice.

In terms of the current position in relation to the tendering process, the Employer's Side confirmed that nothing had been signed. Further, no specifications for the work had yet been drawn up. As a first step in the process, it was noted that Consultants would be asked to draw up a specification of work.

The Chairman assured the Staff Side that as a first stage, an "in principle" decision had been taken for the Council to address the issue of "on street" parking and decriminalisation. The second stage would involve, full consultation with UNISON and staff, resulting in a report setting out recommendations. Of particular note, was the fact that any scheme would require the approval of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

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Concern was expressed that the Staff Side had not been consulted at the option appraisal stage as required by the Code. The Employer's Side confirmed that the Council was not at that stage yet as a decision had only been taken to look at options. The point was made that a specification needed to be drawn up by Consultants concerning the issue of off and on street parking and this had not yet been done. Until that had been done, no meaningful decisions could be made.

It was noted that new equipment had been bought for the car parks. Staff Side were advised that this decision had been taken in the light of the fact that the equipment currently in use was old. It was stressed that it had not been bought for the "on" street proposal.

The Chairman commented that the only decision which had been taken was an "in principle" one to move forward on the issue of "on" street and pick up that service which would not be carried out by the Police from April 2004. On street parking would only be taken on if it could be self financing, and would not be taken on, on a loss making basis. He assured the Staff Side that UNISON and staff would be consulted in order to produce a brief and tendering documents. He welcomed the input from the staff, many of whom had been with the Council since 1987.

The Chairman sought assurance from the Assistant Director (Human Resources) that UNISON and staff would be involved in the consultation process and that a mechanism for consultation be developed. The Assistant Director (Human Resources) commented on the establishment of a Corporate Procurement Strategy Group which would provide the mechanism for consultation. As a first step, he agreed to convene a meeting with UNISON and the Head of Direct Services to further the process.

AHR

RESOLVED - that (A) East Herts Employers engage in full consultation with staff and UNISON on the tendering exercise in relation to the provision of on

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and off street Parking Enforcement, and

(B) East Herts Employers enter into negotiations with the Staff Side on the role of staff and the Union on the development of a corporate procurement policy.

### 16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Committee agreed that the next meeting should be held mid March at Bishop's Stortford.

The meeting closed at 3.35 pm