

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
LOCAL JOINT PANEL HELD IN THE
COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS,
HERTFORD ON WEDNESDAY 7 JUNE 2017,
AT 2.30 PM

PRESENT: **Employer's Side**

Councillors, A Alder, E Buckmaster,
G McAndrew and L Radford

Staff Side (UNISON)

Andy Stevenson (Chairman), Mr S Ellis,

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillors P Boylan

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Emma Freeman	- Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development

1 **FAMILY FRIENDLY POLICY**

The Secretary to the Employer's Side submitted a report outlining changes to the Policy to reflect health and safety arrangements and minor amendments following legislative changes around shared parental leave and surrogacy leave.

In response to a query by Councillor A Alder regarding casual workers, private adoptions, and arrangements regarding adoption leave, the Secretary to the Employer's

Side explained legislative arrangements and referred Members to the report for the definition of casual workers.

The Panel recommended to Human Resources Committee, (subject to clarification by the Secretary to the Employer's Side via email regarding private adoption in relation to Statutory Adoption Leave), approval of the report, as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the revised Family Friendly Policy as now submitted, be approved, subject to clarification regarding private adoption in relation to Statutory Adoption leave.

2 HOME WORKING POLICY

The Secretary to the Employer's Side submitted a report on a revised Home Working Policy to reflect legislative changes and best practice. The Secretary to the Employer's Side provided a summary of the changes, including the ability to appeal home working arrangements.

In response to a query from Councillor A Alder regarding the number of staff actively working as home workers, the Secretary to the Employer's Side explained that of the (approximately) 350 staff, 50-60 staff were regular home workers (actual 66), and that 30-40 staff worked in Revenues and Benefits (actual 59).

Councillor A Alder expressed concern about feelings of isolation and the impact this might have on the wellbeing and mental health of staff. The Secretary to the Employer's Side provided a summary of the steps taken by the Head of Service to ensure that chat links, (1:1) training and communication with home workers were open and accessible on a daily basis.

The Secretary to the Employer's Side acknowledged the Council's Duty of Care to its staff which had prompted the

revision to the Policy, as now submitted.

The Panel recommended to Human Resources Committee, approval of the report, as now detailed.

RECOMMENDED – that the revised Home Working Policy, as now submitted, be approved.

3 **SAFEGUARDING POLICY**

The Secretary to the Employer’s Side submitted a report on a revised Safeguarding Policy. She provided a summary of the report.

Councillor P Boylan welcomed the Policy but expressed concern that two important pieces of legislation had not been reflected in the revised Policy, namely the absence of a legislative framework around safeguarding either for adults or children. He stated that since the last policy of 2014, there had been a number of significant changes:

- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 (which provided statutory guidance to inter-agency working and specific responsibilities for housing services and environmental health);
- and
- the Care Act 2015 (which provided statutory framework around safeguarding adults);
- Safeguarding Training for Councillors;
- Allegations against Staff and responsibilities (under the Children Act 2004) of early referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) at Hertfordshire County Council and so avoid any criticism for attempting to manage any allegations “in house”.

The Panel welcomed these views. Councillor G

McAndrew provided a summary of what other actions the Council had introduced from a safeguarding viewpoint and the Council's actions in relationship to partnership working to promote safeguards.

Councillor P Boylan referred to the responsibilities of Authorities in relation to domestic violence.

The Secretary to the Employer's Side assured Members that the Policy would be amended and circulated in advance of Human Resources Committee to reflect the legislative changes referred to above.

The Panel recommended to Human Resources Committee, approval of the report, as now amended .

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

4 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN

It was moved by Councillor G McAndrew and seconded by Councillor E Buckmaster that Mr A Stevenson (UNISON) be appointed as Chairman for the civic year 2017/18. After being put to the meeting Mr A Stevenson was appointed Chairman of the Local Joint Panel for the civic year 2017/18.

It was moved by Councillor E Buckmaster and seconded by Councillor G McAndrew that Councillor L Radford be appointed Vice Chairman for the civic year 2017/18. After being put to the meeting, Councillor L Radford was appointed Vice Chairman of the Local Joint Panel for the civic year 2017/18

RESOLVED – that Mr A Stevenson (UNISON) and Councillor L Radford be appointed Chairman and Vice Chairman respectively for the civic year 2017/18.

5 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Councillor L Haysey. It was noted that Councillor A Alder was substituting for Councillor L Haysey.

6 MINUTES

RESOLVED - that the Minutes of the meeting held on 30 November 2016 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

7 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman welcomed all Members and Officers to the meeting. It was noted that there were no reports from the Secretary to the Staff Side.

The meeting closed at 3.03 pm

Chairman
Date