

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
LOCAL JOINT PANEL HELD IN THE COUNCIL
CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD ON
WEDNESDAY 6 JUNE 2018, AT 2.30 PM

PRESENT: **Employer's Side**

Councillor Jan Goodeve (Chairman)
Councillors E Buckmaster, L Haysey and
L Radford

Staff Side (UNISON)

Ms J Bruce, Mr S Ellis and Mr A Stevenson
(Vice Chairman)

ALSO PRESENT:

Councillor P Ruffles

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Democratic Services Officer
Emily Cordwell	- Human Resources Officer
Vicki David	- Human Resources Officer
Kate Leeke	- Interim Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development

It was moved by Councillor L Haysey and seconded by Councillor L Radford that Councillor J Goodeve be appointed Chairman for the civic year 2018/19. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED and Councillor J Goodeve was appointed Chairman of the Local Joint Panel for the civic year 2018/19.

It was moved by Ms J Bruce and seconded by Mr S Ellis that Mr A Stevenson be appointed Vice Chairman for the civic year 2018/19. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED and Mr A Stevenson was appointed Vice Chairman of the Local Joint Panel for the civic year 2018/19.

RESOLVED – that (A) Councillor J Goodeve be appointed Chairman for 2018/19; and

(B) Mr A Stevenson, be appointed Vice Chairman for 2018/19.

2 APOLOGY

An apology for absence was submitted on behalf of Ms F Brown (UNISON).

3 MINUTES

It was moved by Councillor L Radford and seconded by Ms J Bruce that the Minutes of the meeting be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2018 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman commented that there were no reports from the Secretary to the Employer's side.

4 RESTRUCTURE CONSULTATION POLICY

The Secretary to the Staff Side (UNISON) submitted a report and provided Members with a summary of the report. He said that the Local Joint Panel should be a useful forum for staff and management to look at and air issues of concern.

The Secretary to the Staff Side expressed concern that some aspects of the Local Joint Panel's Powers and Duties had been changed without consultation and without the agreement of UNISON and that these had subsequently been agreed at Council on 16 May 2018. Councillor L Haysey commented that this was a totally different issue to the item under discussion and should be considered elsewhere on the agenda.

The Secretary to the Staff Side expressed concern that the proposed Restructure Consultation Policy (last considered by the Local Joint Panel in November 2017) had not been progressed and that staff were very concerned about the number of concurrent restructures which had taken place since 2016. He stated that staff felt that their views were being ignored and that this was affecting production and staff morale.

The Secretary to the Employer's Side explained that she accepted that there had been a lack of progress in relation to the report since the departure of the previous Head of Human Resources. She assured UNISON that staff were not being ignored and that it was her view that the Council should move forward positively with a policy to address Organisational Change.

The Secretary to the Employer's Side explained that she was committed to working in partnership with UNISON and expressed her concerns about the way in which papers had been presented to the Local Joint Panel. Additionally, she said that the comments shown in Essential Reference Paper "A" were not submitted by HR. She explained the current regular arrangements with UNISON to discuss issues.

The Secretary to the Employer's Side explained that she was currently looking into the issue of the LJP's changed powers and agreed to work with UNISON and bring this item back to the next LJP to update on progress. In response to the question of staff morale, she provided statistics on the positive results of the staff survey.

The Secretary to the Employer's Side reminded the Panel on what policies were currently in place to support individuals and business need. She explained that it was possible to carry out multiple consultations concurrently, adding that UNISON's report contained some factual inaccuracies and that the policy submitted seemed to be unfinished. The Secretary to the Employer's Side suggested that the Council should have an Organisational Change Policy which covered all aspects of organisational change. She accepted that no progress had been made to the report which had been submitted in November 2017 as

it was her belief following a meeting with UNISON this was not considered to be a priority.

Councillor E Buckmaster supported the view of encapsulating all policies under one document. He stated that, in his view, the purpose of the LJP was for all Panel Members to achieve a consensus having discussed and resolved issues prior to the LJP meeting.

The Secretary to the Staff Side sought and was provided with clarification in terms of a timescale for the consideration of a proposed organisational policy. The Secretary to the Employer's Side stressed the need for proper consultation rather than imposed timescales.

Councillor L Haysey commented that this was the beginning of a larger piece of work on a suite of papers so that all re-organisational issues were considered.

The Secretary to the Employer's Side confirmed that a draft Organisational Policy could be produced and a consultation period allowed, which, she estimated could happen by the end of the year. After consultation, it would then be brought back to LJP for consideration and discussion.

The Panel Chairman urged Members to move forward and to strive for excellence in managing the process. Councillor L Haysey felt that the policy as proposed could not be accepted because it needed further work. The Secretary to the Staff Side reiterated his concerns that there had been representations made to management since 2016 about the restructure process and he hoped that the LJP could agree a timetable as so much time had elapsed.

The Secretary to the Employer's Side acknowledged the Staff Side's frustration adding that going forward, any policy needed to be resilient for the future and existing policies reviewed and properly integrated.

It was moved by Councillor L Haysey and seconded by Councillor E Buckmaster that a fully integrated policy addressing organisational change be developed as a basis for consultation. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared LOST. Ms J Bruce asked that her abstention from voting be recorded.

It was moved by Mr A Stevenson and seconded by Mr S Ellis that the new restructure consultation policy as now submitted, be recommended for approval. After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, the motion was declared LOST.

The Panel noted that according to the revised constitution, in the absence of a majority the matter be referred to the Executive by way of mediation.

RESOLVED - that the Restructure Consultation Policy be referred to the Executive for mediation.

5 URGENT BUSINESS

The Panel Chairman agreed to accept an urgent item of business onto the agenda in order to facilitate the partnership working arrangements between the Staff and Employer's side.

The Secretary to the Staff Side expressed concern that the LJP's powers and duties had been changed and this had

been agreed at Annual Council on 16 May 2018 without consultation with the Staff Side. He explained that this had removed the power to refer matters to the Joint Secretaries when a recommendation could not be supported. The Secretary to the Staff Side said that the changes agreed were significant and he had strong reservations about these unapproved changes.

The Secretary to the Employer's Side explained that she had contacted the Head of Legal and Democratic Services as soon as the matter had been brought to her attention and this was currently under review. She hoped that the Employer's Side would continue to work in partnership with UNISON.

The Secretary to the Staff Side asked that a further issue be considered by the Panel as "Any Other Business" regarding issues within Pest Control. The Panel Chairman advised the Secretary to the Staff Side that there was no provision to raise items under "Any Other Business" and that a report should be prepared by the Secretary to the Staff Side for consideration at the next Local Joint Panel meeting in September 2018.

The Secretary to the Staff Side commented that this could not wait until September 2018. The LJP was advised that its constitution provided for either side to call another meeting of the Panel upon the receipt of a requisition signed by at least two members of either side.

The meeting closed at 3.20 pm

Chairman
Date