

EMPLOYER / TRADE UNION COMMITTEE

Monday, 13th January, 2020

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

Andrew Fowler	UNISON	Councillor	Serjeant
Councillor	J Innes	Huw Bowen	Chief Executive
Paula Stevens	UNITE	Rob Wilkes	UNITE
Tony Devereux	UNISON	Dean Clarke	GMB
Richard Staniforth	Finance	Ade McCormick	Executive Director
Sandy Gillham-	Human		
Hardy	Resources		

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

1 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest received.

2 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Maria Slack and Lesley Waller.

3 **MINUTES OF THE EMPLOYER TRADE UNION COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 NOVEMBER, 2019**

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

4 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Paragraph 13 outlined an update by the Chief Executive on the recruitment process for a new Director of Finance and Resources. The committee heard that since the last meeting, the post of Assistant Director of Commercial Services had also become vacant. Conversations around options were ongoing and an opportunity had arisen to make changes in the Corporate Management Team with a view to achieving a more fit for purpose structure. Salary benchmarking was underway alongside

discussions with all involved parties and a report would be prepared for the Joint Cabinet and Employment and General Committee once this had been completed.

The Chief Executive assured the committee that once sufficient information was available, conversations would take place with all those affected by any proposed changes.

5 EMPLOYER TRADE UNION COMMITTEE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The Executive Director presented to the committee an update on the new Partnership Agreement. Two amendment requests had been received since the official signing. These had been circulated to Union representatives and no concerns had been raised.

The Human Resources Business Partner highlighted the proposed changes as follows;

- Paragraph 37 – increase the number of conference days for UNITE to four, in line with GMB
- Paragraph 47 – remove the final line of text; *Individual trade unions may also give notice to withdraw from the agreement, in which case they will cease to be recognised by the council.*

All involved parties confirmed that they were happy to go ahead with the changes and a copy of the amended agreement was signed by the Chief Executive, Leader and representatives from GMB, UNISON and UNITE.

6 ELECTION OF A VICE-CHAIR

Andrew Fowler, of UNISON was nominated to be vice-chair of the committee. This was agreed unanimously.

7 JOB EVALUATION POLICY

The Human Resources Business Partner presented the new Job Evaluation Policy to the committee. The Unions had been consulted on the contents of the policy throughout its development and compromises made accordingly.

The committee approved the policy.

8 **APPRENTICESHIPS**

A union representative raised a concern regarding apprenticeships and the possibility that an apprentice could reach the final stages of their training and then be deemed unsuitable for long-term employment with minimal notice. The HR Business Partner assured the committee that this would not happen as the apprentices were appraised regularly by both their tutor, against the apprenticeship framework and by their line manager in line with the council's policies and procedures. The committee was reminded that apprentices were subject to the same probationary period as other council employees.

The Executive Director added that apprentices are appointed in two circumstances;

1. Appointments made against an existing vacancy
2. When a service area has sufficient resource available to appoint an apprentice as a supernumerary post.

The second option should be clearly identified at the recruitment stage. The Leader assured the committee that apprentices are supported throughout their training and the HR Business Partner confirmed that help applying for alternative jobs was available.

9 **HEPATITIS B VACCINATIONS**

A query was raised regarding issues recently encountered by members of staff when requesting Hepatitis B vaccinations from the council's Occupational Health provider.

The HR Business Partner advised that there had been a national shortage of the vaccine over the last 18 to 24 months. This was the reason for the delay. However, the situation had since been resolved and the vaccine was once again widely available. The established programme of vaccinations had been recommenced.

The Leader of the Council asked that the guidance for staff regarding vaccinations be re-issued.

10 **BUDGET UPDATE**

The Deputy Chief Accountant updated members on the development of the General Fund Revenue Budget Summary for 2020/21 and future years.

The latest revised budget for 2019/20 showed a projected surplus of £75k. The Acting Chief Finance Officer advised that, in advance of the final budget for 2019/20 being agreed by full Council on 26 February, 2020, work would be undertaken between Cabinet Members and the Corporate Management Team to continue to identify further savings and income generation proposals.

The Leader of the Council advised that public consultations were taking place on the budgets and these had been well attended by members of the public.

The Chief Executive explained to the committee that the Council has a legal responsibility to set a budget and evidence that it can balance the books. There were plans in place to discuss options with the cabinet at a forthcoming away day. The committee was assured that the Council was well provisioned in terms of its reserves and that the Housing Revenue Account was in a very strong position.

11 **MEETING DATES AND TIMES**

The next meeting of the committee will take place on Monday 10 February, 2020 at 9.30am in Committee Room 2 at the Town Hall, Rose Hill, Chesterfield S40 1LP.

It was agreed that in the next civic year, the first Monday of the month would be avoided to help with committee members' availability.