

## **EMPLOYER / TRADE UNION COMMITTEE**

**Monday, 21st September, 2020**

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby(Chair)

|               |         |               |                  |
|---------------|---------|---------------|------------------|
| Councillor    | J Innes | Ade McCormick | Exec Director    |
| Andrew Fowler | Unison  | Maria Slack   | Unison           |
| Kate Harley   | HR      | Huw Bowen     | Chief Executive  |
| Liam Rich     | UNITE   | Helen Fox     | Chief Accountant |

\*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

### 61 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Amanda Serjeant, Lesley Waller, Tony Devereux, Paula Stephens and Rob Wilkes.

### 62 **MINUTES**

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

### 63 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

An update was requested on the restructure of the Assistant Director roles. The Executive Director confirmed that an extended consultation period had taken place and further discussions were due to take place later that day. A report would be added to the Forward Plan during the coming week and consultation with the trade unions and their comments would be included in the report.

### 64 **BUDGET UPDATE**

The Chief Accountant advised the committee that they were now in receipt of the claim forms for loss of income at the venues. It was hoped that the size of the claim would be in the region of £2 million which would reduce the deficit down to approximately £1 million. An application would also be submitted to the new arts scheme and it was noted that further funds would possibly be available from the furlough scheme from January.

The budget update would be presented to Cabinet in October and the first budget review would be presented to Cabinet in December. The Chief Accountant added the caveat that these figures were on the basis that there would not be a second lockdown.

The Chair thanked the Chief Accountant and Deputy Chief Accountant for their hard work.

## **65 COVID-19 UPDATE**

The Executive Director presented an update to the committee on the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was explained that as information was received from government, guidelines and risk assessments were updated and cascaded throughout the organisation as appropriate.

The Corporate Management Team had been examining scenarios around key services should further restrictions be imposed. The Council continued to encourage staff to work from home wherever possible. The Resources group had maintained its collaborative working with the trade unions. Track and Trace systems were in place throughout the council.

Any breaches in COVID compliance within the Council or externally were being followed up appropriately. The use of face masks would be further strengthened. There was potential for walk in testing facilities to be implemented within the Borough.

The focus was on the mental health of staff and resilience of the organisation as a whole. A guest speaker was booked to attend the management seminar on the subject and this would be recorded and made available to all staff.

## **66 VISION DERBYSHIRE**

The Leader of the Council informed the committee of a project that the Leaders of the District Councils and the County Council in Derbyshire had been working on for 18 months known as Vision Derbyshire. It was hoped that this could be viable alternative to local government re-organisation and its aim was to improve outcomes for all the people of Derbyshire without structural reform.

The committee heard that there was a desire to improve the job satisfaction of workers through multi-agency working and to create efficiencies. The Leaders had written to the Secretary of State to move the idea forward and were doing their best to prevent any local government re-organisation in Derbyshire. It was felt that this was the best way forward. A communications plan was under construction and the Leader assured the committee that they would be informed of any changes.

It was acknowledged that the forthcoming white paper from the government may have an impact on this work but the Leader clarified that the government was looking to simplify their processes and that one voice for Derbyshire would help to achieve that. The Corporate Management Team were working hard alongside the Leader to ensure that the best result would be achieved for the people of Chesterfield.

#### **67 FLEXI-TIME POLICY**

The Human Resources Manager presented a report to the committee on a temporary change to the flexi-time policy. This was in response to the need for people to work from home and accurately record their hours of work.

The trade unions agreed that they were happy with the wording.

#### **RESOLVED –**

That the temporary changes to the policy be approved.

#### **68 CHRISTMAS CLOSING 2020-2021**

A poll was conducted on Aspire to decide the discretionary day for Christmas/New Year 2020/21. 55% of respondents expressed a preference for Thursday 24 December 2020. A proposal was put forward to accept this as the discretionary day.

#### **RESOLVED –**

That the discretionary day be agreed as Thursday 24th December 2020.

**69 UPDATE ON THE TOWN CENTRE AND MARKETS PROJECT**

The Executive Director confirmed to the committee that a tender had gone out for designs of the reconfiguration of the market place. The Council was looking for a consultancy service to prepare options and bids had been received. The options would be received in February 2021 and the normal governance process would be followed.

**70 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would take place on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October at 9.30am via Microsoft Teams.