

EMPLOYER / TRADE UNION COMMITTEE

Monday, 16th November, 2020

Present:-

Councillor Serjeant (Chair)

Councillors	J Innes	Huw Bowen	Chief Executive
Ade McCormick	Exec. Director	Helen Fox	Chief Finance Officer
Kate Harley	Human Resources	Maria Slack	Unison
Lesley Waller	Unison	Tony Devereux	Unison

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tricia Gilby, Andrew Fowler and Paula Stephens.

As no representatives of UNITE or GMB were present, the meeting was determined to be inquorate. The notes provided are for information only and any items requiring decisions were deferred to the next meeting to be considered by the committee.

2 MINUTES

The minutes were noted and deferred to the next meeting of the committee for approval.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

4 BUDGET UPDATE

The Chief Finance Officer gave a brief overview of the Council's budget position and referred to the budget update presented to Cabinet in the previous week. A budget review was underway with a robust check and challenge process to maximise any potential savings.

The Chair thanked all the Finance Team for their hard work.

5 COVID 19 UPDATE

The Executive Director gave an update on the Council's response to the COVID-19 pandemic and highlighted the following points;

- All premise and service risk assessments had been reviewed and signed off in light of the most recent national lockdown
- Staff classified as clinically extremely vulnerable were working from home or remaining at home if that was not possible
- All clinically vulnerable staff had an individual risk assessment
- DSE risk assessments were under way for all staff and arrangements made for any additional equipment to be supplied
- The Chief Executive had addressed the manager's seminar and highlighted the need for continuous learning and an emphasis on continued compliance
- The Resources group were undertaking scenario planning in order to be best prepared for post lockdown restrictions

The Human Resources manager gave an update on the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases and staff isolating at that time.

6 CMT RESTRUCTURE UPDATE

The Executive Director updated the committee on the progress of the CMT restructure. The changes to the service areas and reporting structure would come into effect from 1st December and staff had been briefed accordingly. A meeting to discuss these arrangements with trade union colleagues had been scheduled. The recruitment process for both the Finance and the Corporate roles was under way.

7 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Executive Director gave an overview of the progress made on Organisational Development. The importance of the review, in conjunction with the CMT restructure was highlighted to the committee. Proposals were being developed that would be shared with the committee in February 2021.

8 FURLOUGH/AVERAGE PAY

The Human Resources Manager explained to the committee that a report on the furlough of staff and average pay had been prepared for the meeting but due to new guidance received regarding the furlough of venues staff, this was under review. The terms of the recently awarded arts grant impacted the Council's ability to furlough some members of staff. It was advised that the majority of staff furloughed at this time would be from the leisure services.

The situation was evolving and therefore different options for staff were being considered including retraining and redeployment. Any furlough arrangements would be reviewed on a monthly basis.

9 RESOURCELINK DEVELOPMENTS

The Human Resources Manager informed the committee of a project that had been ongoing to upgrade the Resourcelink software system used by Human Resources and Payroll. The hosting of the system had been moved to the cloud and specialist had been recruited to help maximise its benefits.

A new module had been purchased which would enable leave management and sickness absences to be carried out digitally increasing the efficiency of these processes and reducing the potential for human error.

This work had been carried out as part of the ICT improvement programme and would also assist in the smooth transition of Arvato staff members back to the Council. There was potential to introduce further modules at a later date.

Discussions had taken place with the resources team whose workload would be impacted by the changes and an additional meeting had been scheduled to update the staff on the progress.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Concerns were raised by a trade union representative over the workload of some managers within the organisation and the prolonged pressures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Officers assured the committee that they had been made aware of capacity issues and that prioritisation was being discussed by SLT to address immediate and long term needs.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the relentless nature of the challenges faced by all staff at this time. The intelligence from the trade unions was welcomed and would be used to help inform the constant reprioritisation that was taking place in response to ever changing circumstances.

11 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the committee would take place on Monday 14 December, 2020 at 9.30am.