

EMPLOYER / TRADE UNION COMMITTEE

Monday, 14th December, 2020

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

Councillor	J Innes	Councillor	Serjeant
Huw Bowen	Chief Executive	Helen Fox	Chief Finance Officer
Ade McCormick	Exec. Director	Lesley Waller	Unison
Tony Devereux	Unison	Andy Fowler	Unison
Kate Harley	Human Resources		

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

12 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Maria Slack.

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.

13 **MINUTES**

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

14 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The Chief Executive gave an update to the committee on the workload pressures that were highlighted by trade unions in item 10 of the minutes of the last meeting. Eight Unison members had submitted comments on this issue, and it was the Chief Executive's intention to respond to Unison in writing. It was noted that the majority of the submissions indicated that staff felt that the Senior Leadership of the Council had responded soundly to the increased pressures brought about by the pandemic.

A new Mental Health First Aid Programme had been launched and the Employee Assistance Programme was in place to help support staff

wellbeing. Redeployment opportunities were being employed in order to distribute resources to those areas in greatest need. The Council continued to try and protect its workforce and the Chief Executive expressed gratitude that this issue had been raised by the Trade Unions. The Chair thanked the Unions for their ongoing support.

15 **BUDGET UPDATE**

The Chief Finance Officer gave an overview to the committee of the current budget position. It was explained that a summary of the budget position would be presented to the Cabinet the following day. A deficit of £165,000 was forecast for the year despite maximising all available funding from central government and savings made due to the closure of some premises.

A Savings Action Plan had been compiled for the coming year but it was accepted that there were a number of factors that could bring about revisions to the plan, such as the impact of COVID-19 on business rates, or available funding from Central Government. The Chief Finance Officer indicated that there was still work to be done to fulfil the legal obligation of providing a balanced budget.

16 **COVID-19 UPDATE**

The Executive Director updated the committee on the Council's current response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The organisation remained COVID secure and quality checks were being carried out in the spirit of continuous improvement. Key points were outlined as follows;

- The guidance around premises ventilation had been updated in light of the changing weather conditions.
- Redeployment scenarios had been developed in preparation for different tier classifications
- The Council was still working closely with the Local Resilience Forum regarding testing and vaccinations

A meeting with the unions would take place early in the new year to provide a more detailed update.

17 **ARVATO TUPE TRANSFER UPDATE**

The Human Resources Manager advised the committee that the final consultation meeting with Arvato would take place this week and that all

outstanding issues had been resolved. Work was underway on the induction programme and thanks to the co-operation of unions and staff the Council was ready to welcome colleagues in January.

Unison noted an increase in membership and commented on the smooth nature of the process.

18 CMT UPDATE

The Executive Director advised the committee that the new Service Director structure came into effect 1st December. Donna Reddish had been confirmed as the new Service Director – Corporate. The recruitment process for Service Director – Finance had commenced. The transfer of responsibilities was in progress and as part of the wider organisational development programme the next tier would be reviewed to ensure alignment and capacity was correct.

19 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The Executive Director updated the committee on the Organisational Development Programme (ODP). The committee heard that the Savings Action Plan and service restructure would all be drawn into the ODP to ensure that the Council is clear on its ambitions centred around the seven themes. A briefing session had been conducted with the senior politicians and the scrutiny chairs. A key focus was the health and resilience of the Council's workforce for the future.

Discussion took place around procurement and where it would fit in the new structure. It was confirmed that procurement would be a key element of financial and commercial activities and that a lot of work was being undertaken in that area. Union representatives were assured that more communication on this area would be forthcoming.

20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was noted by union colleagues that staff had been asked to complete stress risk assessments. This was welcomed and a question was asked regarding whether the results would be used to pinpoint specific areas where stress was an issue, particularly as a result of additional pressures caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Human Resources Manager agreed to ask managers for feedback.

The Chief Executive explained that managers had been encouraged to raise any issues and that the senior leadership were meeting weekly and considering these scenarios. Any intelligence was welcomed in order to alleviate the pressures wherever possible.

Both Unison representatives and Members expressed pride in CBC's response to the pandemic and the way the workforce had handled the multitude of changes that had been necessary.

The Human Resources Manager assured the committee that the Unions would be involved in any conversations with the Support Services staff regarding changes but at that time no formal plan had been established.

21 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting would take place on Monday 11th January 2021 at 9.30am.