

## **EMPLOYER / TRADE UNION COMMITTEE**

**Monday, 11th January, 2021**

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

Councillor	J Innes	Councillor	Serjeant
Huw Bowen	Chief Executive	Kate Harley	HR
Ade McCormick	Exec. Director	Andrew Fowler	Unison
Helen Fox	Chief. Finance	Lesley Waller	Unison
	Officer	Liam Rich	UNITE
Maria Slack	Unison	Paula Stephens	UNITE
Tony Devereux	Unison		

\*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

### **22 APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Karen Knight.

### **23 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings that took place on 19<sup>th</sup> October 2020, 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 and 14<sup>th</sup> December 2020 were accepted as a true record.

### **24 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

Discussion took place around craft workers' pay and their expectation that they would receive additional pay in this month's payslip following the NJC pay agreement confirmed in August 2020.

The committee was advised that the NJC agreement did not apply to red book workers. However, the senior leadership team were aware that the colleagues concerned had been receiving average pay for over ten months. The Chief Executive had requested a paper on this subject, in order to understand the situation in full and to facilitate wider conversations with the Service Directors, portfolio holders and HR team. It was agreed that the key priorities were to issue communications to all staff affected prior to the forthcoming pay date and to set out a timetable of actions.

### **25 BUDGET UPDATE**

The Chief Finance Officer presented an update to the committee on the budget position of the council. The first draft of the budget was being refined, particularly in response to the third national lockdown and assumptions that had been made previously. It was expected that an update would be ready for circulation at the end of February.

**RESOLVED –**

That the update be noted.

**26 COVID-19 UPDATE**

The Executive Director presented to the committee an update on the Council's current response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee heard that the Resources Group had held an emergency meeting the previous week following the announcement of a third national lockdown. An e-bulletin was issued to managers highlighting key issues such as shielding, working from home, childcare difficulties and review of risk assessments. It was highlighted that all risk assessments should be updated to reflect the increased likelihood of COVID-19 cases due to the new strain.

The health and safety issues arising from non-essential housing repairs were considered in detail by the Resources Group and it was decided to pause these. Emergency and essential repairs would continue and each non-essential case would be assessed to determine whether, if delayed, things could escalate or cause a health and safety problem. The capital programme had been ceased, to be reviewed 1<sup>st</sup> April.

A question was asked regarding the supply of self-testing kits to local government workers and whether these would be supplied to front-line staff. The Executive Director agreed to obtain more information on this and circulate it to members of the committee.

**RESOLVED –**

That the committee note the update

**27 ARVATO/TUPE TRANSFER UPDATE**

The Human Resources Manager informed the committee that all negotiations regarding the transfer had been successfully concluded with the help of the trade unions. Welcome meetings would be conducted with staff during the coming week in order for the transfer to take effect 18<sup>th</sup> January.

**RESOLVED –**

The update was noted

## 28 **ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

The Executive Director gave an overview of the progress made on the Organisational Development Programme. It was advised that proposals would be shared with the committee in April. The current work being conducted by the Service Directors identifying any potential changes to structures and resources would be incorporated into the proposal.

The Leader welcomed the additional time to communicate with stakeholders and acknowledged that the plan was not focussed on restructure but rather the way the organisation works as a whole and its culture.

### **RESOLVED –**

The update was noted

## 29 **PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

Unison colleagues highlighted the need for open communications regarding all issues in order to maintain strong relationships between the officers and trade unions. It was noted that the inclusion of an additional representative in the Resources Group had been very positive.

The Human Resources Manager advised that if there were any specific issues they were always happy to discuss them. It was noted that there had been increased dialogue during the last year with officers making considerable efforts to support the Partnership Agreement.

The Leader of the Council noted this opportunity to strengthen relations and confirmed that conversations were underway with GMB in order to enable them to attend meetings.

## 30 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Human Resources Manager informed the committee that there had been lots of questions from staff regarding furlough options for childcare purposes. It was clarified that local authorities were only able to furlough staff in incoming generating roles and that if staff members were performing an essential role then the Council would still require them to work.

Human Resources had been working closely with managers to support staff that were struggling with child care and advised that staff should talk to their line managers in the first instance as it may be possible to authorise dependents leave in the short term until alternative arrangements can be made.

It was also clarified that, if the child of a member of staff was required to self-isolate, this was a different circumstance and as previously agreed up to 5 days of dependents leave could be authorised to assist.

The Chief Executive was asked whether the Winding Wheel would be used as a vaccination centre and this was confirmed.

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

The next meeting of the committee would take place on Monday 8 February, 2020 at 9.30pm.