

## **EMPLOYER / TRADE UNION COMMITTEE**

**Monday, 8th March, 2021**

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

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

\*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

### 42 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Huw Bowen and Rob Wilkes.

### 43 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> February, 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

### 44 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising from the minutes that could not be covered elsewhere in the agenda.

### 45 **BUDGET UPDATE**

The Chief Finance Officer presented an update to the committee on the budget position of the council. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) had been approved by Council and also an increase to Council Tax, equivalent to a rise of £5 annually for a Band D property.

The deficits forecast at the last meeting remained the same although two new pressures had been identified;

- The Council's kerbside waste recycling contractor had gone into administration and so there would be a significant increase in costs due to a replacement service being provided.
- Rents and parking revenue received from Vicar Lane had decreased substantially reflecting the difficult conditions on the high street nationally. As a result of these pressures it was thought that the deficits may increase but it was not yet possible to predict by how much.

There had been no significant changes to the HRA budget or forecast.

Discussion took place around the savings identified in the MTFP from redundancies. The Leader confirmed that a commitment had been made to not implement compulsory redundancies for the next six months and reassured the committee that CBC was in a good position compared to other authorities.

## **RESOLVED –**

That the update be noted.

## **46 RESOURCES GROUP/COVID-19 UPDATE**

The Executive Director shared with the committee the notes and action points from the last meeting of the Resources Working Group. It was explained that the group carries out scenario planning looking in particular at staffing levels and the safety of staff and members of the public. Points were highlighted from the notes including the following;

- The re-opening of the leisure centres
- The re-opening of venues, including a possible extension of the use of the Winding Wheel as a vaccination centre until 22<sup>nd</sup> August
- The opening of the customer service staff
- The consideration of any legislative changes
- Communication with local resilience forums to inform decision making
- Monitoring vaccination and testing figures
- Future planning – what has been learnt and how can this be applied

A discussion took place around breaches in compliance and the Executive Director assured the committee that the vast majority of services were working within the standards and if any anomalies are

identified, the Resources Working Group responds quickly, takes action, learns from the experience and offers training. These incidents had usually been accidental.

It was confirmed that no further progress had been made with Derbyshire County Council in terms of procuring more vaccinations for staff members and that this route was now closed.

## **RESOLVED –**

That the update be noted.

## **47 ECONOMIC RECOVERY GROUP UPDATE**

The Executive Director presented an update from the Economic Recovery Group. The group had originally been set up in response to the COVID-19 pandemic but its work was becoming more and more strategic. It had authored an economic recovery and strategy plan built around seven key themes;

- Working with partners to increase start ups and encourage expansion of existing businesses
- Marketing
- Investment in infrastructure
- Strengthening the role of the Town Centre
- Supporting the growth of Chesterfield
- Improving the skills of the workforce
- Ensuring that local people are in a position to take advantage of growth

Activities that the group had undertaken included the following;

- Developed a plan for the use of RHSS funding
- Christmas in Chesterfield campaign
- Roll out of the Business Grant funding
- Rental support for commercial tenants
- Linking to the Local Resilience Forum economic recovery strategy and plan
- Working with partners
- Key projects such as Northern Gateway, the Pavements Shopping Centre and Revitalising the Heart of Chesterfield
- A revised events programme for the Town Centre

- Planning to allow businesses to re-open in a safe and effective manner

**RESOLVED –**

That the update be noted.

**48 DJCC FEEDBACK**

It was confirmed that a meeting had taken place with the Digital, HR and Customer Services Service Director and that a very detailed update had been provided. An initial meeting had taken place with the Service Director for Housing and meetings for the other service areas were all confirmed for the coming weeks.

A Trade Union representative commented that they were particularly pleased to note how much work had been undertaken with staff at the call centre.

**RESOLVED –**

That the update be noted.

**49 ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

The Executive Director presented an update on the Organisational Development Programme. It was confirmed that the Human Resources Manager had circulated the draft strategy amongst the trade unions and that the Executive Director was happy to answer any questions on it. Meeting with members would take place in the coming week. The importance of sharing the message of the strategy was highlighted due to some of the cultural outcomes that were hoping to be achieved.

It was indicated that approval would be required prior to the next stage of the process where engagement with staff would commence in detail.

**RESOLVED –**

That the update be noted.

**50 WORKFORCE UPDATE**

The Human Resources Manager advised the committee that there were 13 members of staff isolating at that time due to COVID-19, four of them based at OSD, eight at the Town Hall and one from Queen's Park Sports Centre. In total, since October there had been approximately 59 positive cases. 87 staff members undertook lateral flow tests during the previous week and none had positive results.

**RESOLVED –**

That the update be noted.

**51 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

A Unison representative thanked the council for signing up to their "Protect Our Jobs" campaign.

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

The next meeting of the committee would take place on Monday 19th April, 2021 at 9.30pm.

**53 LIVING WAGE 2021**

The Human Resources Manager presented a report to the committee on the Annual Increase in the National Living Wage for 2021. The report would be considered by the Employment and General Committee the following week as it was necessary to make a decision in the next few weeks in order to be able to implement any changes in April.

Four options were presented to the committee with a recommendation that the Council adopt option 2 listed in paragraph 3.4 of the officer's report.

It was clarified that CBC is not an accredited Living Wage employer but if there was a public sector pay freeze that the scale point 2 staff would be given the pay rise and this would be backdated accordingly.

**RESOLVED –**

That the report and the proposed recommendations be noted.