

EMPLOYER / TRADE UNION COMMITTEE**Monday, 14th February, 2022**

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

Gemma Masoud	Head of OD	Councillor	Serjeant
Theresa	Service Director	Councillor	J Innes
Channell	Finance	Tony Devereux	Unison
Huw Bowen	Chief Executive	Maria Slack	Unison
		Liam Rich	Unite

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

99 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Ade McCormick, Andrew Fowler and Lesley Waller.

100 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 17th January 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

101 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

102 EQUALITIES GROUP

The member for Unison shared details of the plan to set up an Equalities Group to look at equalities across all areas of CBC. The initial meeting was planned to take place w/c 14 February so more details will be shared in future committees.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

103 FINANCE UPDATE

The Service Director for Finance presented an update to the committee on the MTFP report which was due to be issued this week.

It was noted that it had been a challenging year with the effects of the pandemic and the uncertainty around government funding affecting long term planning.

Budgets had been presented to Cabinet with Local Government Financial Settlement published in December 2021 and the Final Financial Settlement published in February 2022.

The government had shared that from 2023/24 the Funding Regime was expected to change. These changes should have been introduced in 2019 but were delayed by Brexit and then Covid19. Consultation was expected to take place in spring 2022 with changes to business rates anticipated.

There had been no changes to the full breakdown of new savings proposals and associated savings from 2022/23 to 2025/26 which were presented in December 2021.

The General Fund was balanced for year 1 (2022/23) and year 2 (2023/24), with a small deficit of £61k for year 3 (2024/25) and £453k deficit in year 4 (2025/26).

The headlines of the MTFP General Fund recommendations were an appropriate Council Tax level increase of 1.99% or £5.00 whichever equated to the highest.

The OD strategy, to bring in £800k by 2025/26 was not included in the MTFP as robust business cases needed to be developed to ensure savings can be delivered. It was noted that there would be additional costs to support delivery of this program.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) was balanced against the 30 year business plan and included the cost of the Housing reshape and there was a £3.4m working fund over the term of the business plan.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

104 HR POLICY PAPER - BANK HOLIDAY UPDATE 2022

The Head of OD presented a report to the committee to confirm the bank holidays in England for 2022. The report confirmed that normally there were 8 bank holidays in England each calendar year. In 2022 an extra bank holiday had been awarded to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee.

The 9 bank holidays for 2022 had been confirmed as;

January 3 – New Year's Day

April 15 – Good Friday
April 18 – Easter Monday

May 2 – Mayday

June 2 – Spring Bank
June 3 – Platinum Jubilee bank holiday (extra day)

August 29 – Summer bank holiday

December 26 – Xmas Day
December 27 – Boxing Day

It was recommended that the bank holidays approved by government were applied across the Council.

RESOLVED –

That the recommendation be approved.

105 HR POLICY PAPER - LEAVE CARRY FORWARD

The Head of OD presented a report to the committee to review the temporary carry forward of additional leave.

In the agreed leave policy employees could request to carry forward up to five annual leave days (pro rata for part timers) from one leave year to the next subject to Service Director approval and the days are to be taken within three months of the start of the new annual leave year.

At the start of the first lockdown in March 2020 it became apparent that employees were having their holidays abroad cancelled for an indefinite period and travelling for a holiday in the UK was not permitted. To that end the normal rules were varied so that the maximum annual leave that could be carried forward was temporarily amended to ten days with Service Director approval.

Restrictions on holidays had now been eased, both in-country and for those wishing to travel abroad so it was timely to remove the temporary changes which were put in place.

It was recognised that employees did need time to use the annual leave they may have carried forward before we revert to policy.

It was recommended that the temporary amendment to carry forward up to ten days annual leave was removed from 1 April 2022 and the Leave policy guidelines of up to five days carry forward of annual leave be applied as normal practice.

RESOLVED –

That the recommendation be approved.

106 HR AND OD (INCL RESOURCES) UPDATE

The Head of OD presented an update to the committee from HR and OD which included confirmation that the Council had achieved a Gold award for the recent IIP.

Headlines from the staff surveys included 90.1% agreed that they shared the organisation's values, 88.5% agreed that their role enabled them to work with others and "enabling collaboration" was a top 5 theme, 87% agreed that they were trusted to make decisions and 86.5% agreed that the organisation had clear values. It was also noted that staff had commented that leaders and managers had motivated them to deliver throughout all of the challenges of the pandemic and felt well informed.

HR updates showed that 31 staff, from across a broad mix of work areas had now gone through mental awareness training and various awareness programs were also planned throughout 2022.

Communications and engagement campaigns were to be delivered via Aspire, briefing notes to support managers in discussing with teams, manager bulletins and social media campaigns. The services available to staff were highlighted as Occupational Health counselling services, Employee Assistance programme and access to Mental Health First Aiders.

Covid case rates were said to be declining very swiftly, after a very challenging December and January, with just 7 cases reported between the 1st and 11th February 2022.

Next steps for OD were further recruitment for the Project Management Office Manager role following a recent resignation, members of the OD team were to be reassigned to support the delivery of the business grants to the community and the upcoming project launch of Tenants self serve onto My Chesterfield, with Go Live planned following year end 2022.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

107 DJCC FEEDBACK

There was no feedback from DJCC.

108 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The member for Unison asked a question regarding the Levelling Up fund and how it would affect CBC.

The Chief Executive agreed an action to share a short presentation in next month's committee summarising the government white paper around Levelling Up and what that would mean for Chesterfield.

RESOLVED –

That the action be noted.

109 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the committee would take place on Monday 14th March 2022 at 9.30am.