

EMPLOYER / TRADE UNION COMMITTEE**Monday, 11th July, 2022**

Present:-

Councillor P Gilby (Chair)

Theresa	Service Director	Andrew Fowler	Unison
Channell	Finance	Lesley Waller	Unison
Huw Bowen	Chief Executive	Tony Devereux	Unison
Donna Reddish	Service Director	Trevor Barnett	Unite
	Corporate	Liam Rich	Unite

*Matters dealt with under the Delegation Scheme

21 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Serjeant, Gemma Masoud and Maria Slack.

22 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 13th June 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

23 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising from the minutes.

24 FINANCE UPDATE

The Service Director for Finance presented an update to the Committee on the latest financial position.

It was stated that the budget was set in February and the OD programme had been developed to support the gaps in the MTFP. This was constructed on the back of the pandemic when the impact on the demand for Council Services was unknown making it difficult to accurately project budgets. Other factors to consider included changes in central government and the current national fiscal economic position. For example, it was assumed that income would return to pre Covid levels with inflation around 3%. However, with inflation currently at 9% and expected to peak around 11%, in addition

to the Bank of England raising interest rates, the impact of this will be seen across CBC and businesses.

Provision had been made for the Living Wage rate being set at £9.90 per hour but there were potential additional cost impacts if there is the expected rise from the 2% increase.

It was also noted that the Council had continued to experience difficulties recruiting across all roles and service areas.

Producing a full cost outturn based on post Covid performance had proved difficult and the In Year position was said to be a challenge and that pressures being seen now would have significant impacts.

The draft MTFP was planned for December with the final MTFP position expected in February 23.

The MTFP had been set with expected local government funding and although this still remained uncertain, Government had promised more certainty with 2 Year Funding details to be confirmed for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

25 OD / HR UPDATE

This update was deferred to the next meeting due to absence.

26 SHE SYSTEM UPDATE

The Service Director for Corporate provided an update to the committee on the Health and Safety Software Access (SHE).

The purpose of the report was to update the committee on the information assurance concerns following a recent complaint made by a Tier 4 manager.

Following a subsequent investigation and review it was identified that permission levels for the SHE system were outdated. The Senior Information Risk Owner agreed that the concerns around information assurance were founded and that a system cleanse and review of permissions was required urgently. Permissions for managers across the authority had now been changed to reflect the advice including that permission to access information should only be granted when there is a justifiable reason. The current permission approach was detailed in full, showing permission levels, rules and rationale.

It was recommended and accepted that Trade Union colleagues were thanked for their work in improving accident and incident reporting, recording and investigation. That the revised hierarchy permission arrangements for the SHE system were retained and that further improvements were made for accident and incident reporting, recording and investigation, focusing on training for managers and the strengthening of policy, procedures and enforcement were prioritised.

The recommendations would improve the rates and quality of accident and incident reporting, recording and investigation, while ensuring information assurance requirements were met.

The member for Unison questioned the level of consultation and believed in this case this level of consultation was below the normal expected. The Service Director confirmed that whilst this could be an accepted learning point, the significant risk meant action had to be taken very quickly and this may have affected timely comms.

When the member for Unite asked if there would be a review of all incidents not reported on the SHE system, the Service Director confirmed that more incidents were now being reported, but it was unclear if that was due to increased reporting or increased cases.

Concern was also expressed by the member for Unison regarding managers not following the correct process for recording incidents and reporting to Unions. It was also asked if this would be deemed a disciplinary process. The Service Director stated that as per the recommendations the training of managers need to take place to reinforce and strengthen the policy and a discussion paper would be produced following the full Health & Safety Review currently ongoing.

The members for both Unison and Unite then raised further points including timescales for introducing this new policy, the need for full staff awareness and how to access Health & Safety policies, clarity on managers' roles when investigations were required and the need for a full review and re-introduction of all policies that used to be held on Aspire.

The Chief Executive stated that it was recognised in 2021 the need for a strategic review of Health & Safety and following recruitment of the Strategic Health, Safety and Risk Manager role a full Health & Safety review was underway.

It was also noted that all elements raised in the committee following the presentation would be reviewed with the Service Director and the Strategic Health, Safety and Risk Manager and incorporated into the review.

RESOLVED –

That the update and action be noted.

There was no feedback.

28 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chief Executive updated the committee on the recent appointment of the new Housing Director, Jane Davies.

The Chief Executive acknowledged the recent passing of Executive Director Ade McCormick. The thoughts and sympathies of everyone at CBC had been sent to his wife, daughters and the rest of his family.

RESOLVED –

That the update be noted.

29 DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the committee would take place on Monday 8th August 2022 at 9.30am.