

Local Joint Consultative Panel

A meeting of Local Joint Consultative Panel was held on Monday, 25th September, 2006.

Present: Cllr Mrs J Beaumont, Cllr D Coleman, Cllr R Rix; Mr A Christon (GMB), Mr J Stockill, Mr P Johnson (UNISON), Mr P Surtees (UCU)

Officers: Mrs D McGuire, Mrs J Danks, Mr D McDonald (RES); Mr M Henderson, Miss S Johnson (LD)

Also in attendance: No other persons present

Apologies: Cllr D T Brown, Cllr M Cherrett, Cllr K Dixon, Cllr K Lupton, Mr D Ross (UNISON), Mr D Kitching (TGWU), Mr P Weston (AMICUS)(UCAAT), Mr J Cosgrove (UCAAT)

1 Appointment of Chairman

RESOLVED that Mr J Stockill be appointed Chairman of the Local Joint Consultative Panel for the municipal year 2006/2007.

2 Appointment of Vice Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor D Coleman be appointed Vice Chairman of the Local Joint Consultative Panel for the municipal year 2006/2007.

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 20th December 2005

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th December 2005 were agreed as a correct record.

4 Matters Arising

Scheme of Delegation (Restructure, Reviews) - The panel noted that discussions on this issue were ongoing.

Future Meeting Dates - The panel requested that meetings be set for the next 12 months.

AGREED that dates for the next 12 months would be set.

5 Agency, Casual, Sub-Contract Workers within Stockton Borough Council – verbal update

The Panel was provided with a summary of agency, casual and sub-contract workers employed across the authority. Services where such workers were employed included Care for your Area, Housing Benefits and the Concierge Service. It was explained that staff were generally employed in services for short periods for a number of reasons, including seasonal work, cover for short term absences, maternity cover etc. However, it was accepted that some individuals had been employed on this basis for 2 – 3 years.

The panel was informed that a review of agency, casual and sub-contact workers was to be carried out in one area of the authority. The panel agreed that

they would like to see the review rolled out across all departments. It was noted that this was unlikely to happen Council wide in the short term, but was certainly a long term aim.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.

6 The Stockton/Darlington Partnership

The Panel was provided with an overview on the Stockton/Darlington Partnership.

It was explained that Gershon and the CPA processes were driving local authorities into considering alternative methods of service delivery including partnership working. A feasibility study had been completed and areas for possible partnership working had been identified. Reference was made to potential benefits and it was noted that Design & Print, Transactional Finance, Transactional HR (including Payroll) and ICT had been highlighted as areas that could contribute the most to efficiency gains.

The Panel noted that lots of work was on going between officers of Stockton and Darlington and a number of obstacles still needed to be overcome. A key component of the work being undertaken related to identifying a vehicle that would provide effective governance arrangements.

It was anticipated that a report on this issue would be taken to Cabinet in the New Year.

CONCLUDED that the information be noted.

7 Early Retirement Issues

Members of the Panel discussed Early Retirement issues and, in particular:-

- staff taking early retirement and subsequently returning to the Council, in a similar role, as a consultant.
- Recent reductions in the number of Heads of Service.
- Staff leaving the Council outside of any review.

CONCLUDED that further information be presented at a future meeting.

8 Health and Safety Statistics

The Panel was provided with Accident and Assault statistics which had been reported to the Health and Safety Unit for the periods 1st October 2005 to 31st December 2005, 1st January 2006 to 31st March 2006 and 1st April 2006 to 30th June 2006. Details of the Health and Safety Training Courses were provided for the same periods.

Members of the Panel requested that statistics for agency staff be included in future reports. Members agreed that managers would need to be made aware of this in order to record the information correctly.

AGREED that:-

1. The information be noted.
2. Statistics for agency staff be included in future reports.

9 Single Status Update

The Officer provided an update to the Panel on the position of Single Status. Information was provided on the current position of Job Evaluation and Single Status.

CONCULDED that the information be noted.

10 Work Programme - to identify possible issues for future discussion

The Panel discussed producing a work programme to highlight topics for discussion at future meetings.

AGREED that a work programme would be produced with all suggested items forwarded to the Secretary.