

## **Local Joint Consultative Panel**

A meeting of Local Joint Consultative Panel was held on Monday, 21st June, 2010.

**Present:** Mrs J Asquith (UNITE)(Chair); Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr David Coleman, Cllr Mick Eddy, Cllr Terry Laing, Cllr Mrs Jean O'Donnell, Cllr Roy Rix, J Stockill (UNISON); D Clarke-Barnes (UNISON); A Christon (GMB)

**Officers:** Mrs J Danks, D MacDonald, Mrs J Spittle (R); Mrs S Reay (Xentrall); Mrs T Harrison (LD)

**Also in attendance:** No other persons were present

**Apologies:** Cllr Ken Lupton

### **LJC 1/10 Appointment of Chair for the Municipal Year 2010/11**

RESOLVED that J Asquith (UNITE) be appointed Chairman of the Local Joint Consultative Panel for the Municipal Year 2010/11.

### **LJC 2/10 Appointment of Vice Chair for the Municipal Year 2010/11**

RESOLVED that Councillor Terry Laing be appointed Vice Chairman of the Local Joint Consultative Panel for the Municipal Year 2010/11.

### **LJC 3/10 Declarations of Interest**

Cllrs Beall and Rix declared personal prejudicial interests in the item entitled 'Single Status' due to the fact that their partners were employed by Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council.

### **LJC 4/10 Minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2010**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 15th March 2010.

CONCLUDED that the minutes be agreed as a correct record upon the following amendments:

Councillor Beall's declaration should read he was the Chair of Rosebrook School Governors.

Apprenticeship should read Apprenticeship in the title of the related item.

In the last sentence of the Single Status report it should read affected not affect.

### **LJC 5/10 Health and Safety Report**

The Panel were provided with accident and assault statistics reported to Health and Safety via the formal notification procedure from 1st March – 31st May 2010, including notification of incidents reported to the Health and Safety Executive.

The Panel were also provided with details of Health and Safety training

delivered from 1st March – 31st May 2010, the number of well-being referrals received and a Health and Well-being update.

Further to the Panel's request, an additional breakdown of Services' referrals to the Health and Well-being team for the year 2009/2010 was provided.

Members requested details of the Health and Well-being facilities and the means to access the Service. The Health and Safety Manager agreed to issue members with details on the Service provision.

CONCLUDED that:

1. The report be noted.
2. The Health and Safety Manager will provide details of the Health and Well-being facilities and the means to access the Service.

**LJC  
6/10**

### **Single Status**

The Panel were advised that all but one of the appeals had been completed.

The appeals resulted in 32.4% of employees being awarded a pay increase, 63.8% remained the same and 3% received a reduction in grade. The grade increases had been due either to further information having been provided, a significant change to the job or the original evaluation being incorrect.

The Head of Human Resources would provide details on those employees who were still in salary detriment at the next meeting.

The Panel queried whether the period of protection would be extended and were advised that any extension could give rise to legal challenge in the form of further equal pay claims.

CONCLUDED that:

1. The report be noted.
2. The Head of Human Resources would report the number of employees still in detriment at the next meeting.

**LJC  
7/10**

### **Apprenticeship Schemes**

Discussion took place regarding the number of looked after children who had apprenticeships.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

**LJC  
8/10**

### **Agency Workers**

Due to a misunderstanding the Head of Direct Services was unable to attend the meeting. He would be invited to the meeting on 13th September, 2010.

Following the concerns raised at the previous meeting regarding agency

workers within Xentrall, the Xentrall Shared Services Manager reported that 13 agency workers were currently covering vacant posts. However, in the following two year period there would be further reductions in staffing levels to meet the business case. The use of agency workers was intended to reduce the impact of possible redundancies to permanent staff.

The Head of Human Resources provided the Panel with statistical information regarding agency workers within each service group. Further to the Panels request, agency workers would be a regular item on the agenda to help the Panel identify any trends. The panel were also provided with information on the savings which had been achieved through the framework agreement with Darlington Borough Council.

Members noted that Development and Neighbourhood Services figures in respect of the number of agency workers increased in March to September; however the figures appeared to be similar to previous years.

Members queried the comparison figures in Development and Neighbourhood Services between employees and the number of agency workers.

The Panel observed that half of the manual workers in Direct Services were agency workers and queried why they could not be made permanent.

Officers advised that savings could be made employing agency workers but where possible the Council tried to give agency staff permanent contracts.

CONCLUDED that:

1. The report be noted.
2. The Head of Direct Services will be invited to the next meeting in September to answer questions regarding the use of agency workers in his service.

**LJC  
9/10**

### **Local Government Finance Update**

The Panel were provided with a financial update.

Some efficiencies for the current year had already been realised following the removal of resource allocations from Recruitment Advertising, Car Allowances, Agency Contracts and an ICT Hardware E-Auction.

The Panel was advised that assumptions around Council Tax and Government grants for 2011/12 and 2012/13 had, had to be made.

The Director of Resources advised that it was essential that the efficiencies from the Efficiency Improvement and Transformation reviews were realised.

Discussion took place on the methods proposed to reduce spending and the savings required.

Panel Members discussed the potential for service cuts and the consequent reduction in customer satisfaction.

The Panel also noted that cutting services could result in loss of staff.

Discussion took place regarding employees who wished to work beyond the retirement age. The Panel Members were advised that the current policy existed to encourage younger people into Council employment as the average age of employees were over 40. If people stayed in jobs there would not be jobs for younger people. However, the panel were informed the Government had advised that the retirement age would be put back but it had not been confirmed when it would take place.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

**LJC  
10/10**

**Trade Union Liaison Minutes**

The Trade Union Liaison minutes were given to Panel Members for information purposes.

CONCLUDED that the minutes be noted.