

Local Joint Consultative Panel

A meeting of Local Joint Consultative Panel was held on Monday, 13th September, 2010.

Present: Cllr Terry Laing (Acting Chair), Cllr Jim Beall, Cllr Ken Lupton, Cllr Roy Rix, J Stockill (UNISON)

Officers: J McCann, C Willows (DNS); D MacDonald, Mrs D McGuire (R); Mrs T Harrison (LD)

Also in attendance: No other persons were present

Apologies: Mrs J Asquith (UNITE), Cllr D Coleman, Cllr Mrs J O'Donnell, Mrs R Turton (UNISON); A Woodmass (UNISON); A Christon (GMB-Internal)

LJC 11/10 **Declarations of Interest**

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

LJC 12/10 **Minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2010**

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2010.

CONCLUDED that the minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2010 be agreed as a correct record.

LJC 13/10 **Health and Safety**

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

The Panel were also provided with details of Health and Safety training for the same time period.

The Panel were advised of the Better Health at Work Award which had been developed to give recognition to workplaces in the North East. The Health and Safety Manager advised that the Well-being service was on target to achieve the criteria for the silver award.

The report provided information on the Health Promotion Events which were planned for 2010.

The Panel were advised that the council's Well-being Advisor had qualified as an approved instructor with Mental Health England. Officers advised that Mental Health First Aid Courses had taken place and more were planned.

It was noted that the Health and Well-being Service was not supported by a funded budget, all of the resources were provided at no cost. It was also noted that a considerable amount of professional resources were available, and had been utilised to good effect from the Stockton NHS (PCT) and other agencies.

A Union Officer commented that if a budget were to be provided, this could assist in further improving the Service.

The Health and Safety Manager informed the Group that, as requested, all Elected Members had been reminded of the resources available to them via the Health and Well & Being Service, on the 2nd Sept 2010. Members and Trade Union Representatives commended the work and benefits provided to the workforce, and Members by the Service.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

LJC
14/10 **Single Status Update**

The Panel were provided with details regarding salary protection including the reasons for protection and statistical information including number of employees in and out of protection, the gender split and the expected financial impact on employees who would receive a salary drop at the end of the three year protection period on 1st April 2011.

Officers advised that of the 973 employees given salary protection, 64% were expected to be out of protection by 31st March 2011.

Concern was raised regarding the impact on employees in the current economic climate, especially those whose loss would be over £3,000 on 1st April 2011.

A Member observed that if pay awards had been given the number of employees in detriment at the end of the 3 year period would have been less as would the financial loss for those who would take a drop in salary on 1st April 2011.

A Member requested that consideration be given to extending the protection period, however they were reminded by officers of equality issues.

The Panel noted that a letter would be sent to all employees in detriment in October and requested that advice and information be included in the letter directing employees to the Citizen's Advice Bureau.

CONCLUDED that the report be noted.

LJC
15/10 **Agency Workers**

Further to a request from the Panel, officers provided information on the savings achieved by the framework agreement between Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council and Darlington Council.

The Head of Direct Services advised the Panel on the current position of agency staff within his service.

The Panel were provided with a breakdown of the services and the reasons for the use of agency staff as followed:

Refuse - Covering sickness absence
Street Cleansing - Mainly seasonal

Recycling - Covering holidays
Green Waste - Seasonal

The largest number of agency staff were used in grounds maintenance but it was believed that the number would reduce in 2011.

The Panel were advised that ten agency staff had gone from Highways due to the reduction of Local Transport Plan funding which would be further reduced.

The Panel were advised that the number of agency staff varied from week to week due to sickness and holiday cover.

Discussion took place regarding the 10% of agency staff which had been used by Stockton Council for over two years. It was observed that economics was a major factor due to the fact that if the agency worker did not turn up, they did not get paid, therefore there was no extra cost to the Council.

The Panel hoped that agency workers who had applied for permanent posts but were unsuccessful due to a lack of interview skills could be trained in these skills.

The Panel were happy that agencies were required to tender for work with the Council.

CONCLUDED that:

1. The report be noted.
2. The item remain on the agenda.

LJC
16/10

Trade Union Liaison Group Minutes

CONCLUDED that the minutes be noted.