

NEREO

RESPONSE FOR THE CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE FROM COUNCILLOR ANN MCCOY

All Local Authorities in the region are members of NEREO.

I am Chair of NEREO and with the Chairs of all the other regions I am a member of the National Association of Regional Employers (NARE) and one of three regional Chairs on CEEP the European Employers Organisation.

Being a member of NARE and CEEP gives both Stockton and the Region a positive profile nationally.

Membership of NEREO is important as the Region through NEREO is recognised as a strong united voice by other organisations such as the LGA.

The LGA consults the regions before negotiating the wage claim with the unions and it is important that Stockton has a voice in these consultations.

Members are kept up to date and can respond to any proposals for relevant new or altered legislation.

Finance is a major issue for all Local Authorities. The Director Mick Brodie has made NEREO more efficient and increased the income, despite the savage cuts to Local Government reducing the amount of money they have to spend on training, by developing new opportunities such as DBS Accreditation and the Jobs Portal which has allowed NEREO to keep the Levy at the same level and give Authorities a 10% reduction for the last few years. That is something that not many organisations have managed to achieve while still offering the same services to Local Government.

In 2016 the Leaders and Mayors asked NEREO to do a Value For Money review. Meetings were arranged with officers and members of NEREO Executive in Stockton, Gateshead and Sunderland. I have attached the report from the Stockton meeting which you will see was conducted by Gary Cummings

NEREO issue performance reports to Local Authorities each year (which I have also attached), the report informs the Authority of the estimated savings it has made by being part of, and using the services, of NEREO. Also included is the attendance record of its Executive members. This is good practice and good governance.

NEREO is the only organisation in the region where members and union representatives come together. Although we don't always agree uniquely there have been a number of occasions when we have agreed to issue joint press statements on items of mutual concern, and have worked together on other projects.

I believe these joint meetings have led to good industrial relations.

It is my belief that it is in Stockton's best interest to remain a member of NEREO and retain that strong member voice.

Stakeholder Consultation: NEREO Executive Committee Members

24th January 2017

Attendees from NEREO Executive:

Clr A McCoy (Stockton)
Clr I Haszeldine (Darlington)
Clr S Harker (Darlington)
Clr B Brady (Middlesbrough)

Attendee from Director of Resources:

Garry Cummings

Governance

- General view was meeting worked well, value the joint Officer and Member discussions.
- Valued the shared learning from other Authorities.
- Meetings with Union representatives provided opportunity to have open discussions and this was very valuable – alternating Chair is useful.
- Allowed a regional view to feed into national negotiations and discussions.
- Meetings schedules and timescales were appropriate.
- Felt that the model was appropriate and it was for individual Members to ensure information shared within each Council.
- Should remain independent, host authority model could potentially risk the independence.

NEREO Services

- Services provided were good quality, e.g. training support, jobs portal, etc.
- Potentially a lack of clarity and understanding by Authorities of what is provided or use them enough.
- Very useful for independent input to organisational reviews and provide senior advice.
- Move to more consultancy is important to delivering the business plan. ensuring financial viability
- Clarity needed around what services are free and what are chargeable.

Value for Money

- General view was that the NEREO provided value for money.

Industrial Relations

- This is a very valuable aspect of the organisation.
- Also allows a strong voice in national negotiations and discussions.



Performance Statement : 2016/17

(1 April 2016 – 31 March 2017)

Local Authority : Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Consultancy Work:	0.5 days Potential saving against market norm – £225
Attendance at Training Courses:	9 Potential saving against market norm – £675
Information Requests:	3
Attendance at Executive Committee Meetings:	28 April 2016 – Cllr A McCoy and Cllr R Cook attended 16 December 2016 – Cllr A McCoy and Cllr R Cook attended
Authority represented at Network Meetings:	North East Strategic HR Forum Equalities and Diversity Scrutiny Officers Joint Scrutiny Members/Officers Health and Safety Lead Officers Member Development Officers Education / Children’s Services HR Group Health Integration
Recruitment Work:	Number of vacancies advertised - 564 Potential cost of advertising at average industry rates (£150 per advert) - £84,600 Current North East Jobs Subscription Fee - £9,480
Disclosure & Barring Service:	Applications processed – 1,123



Performance Statement : 2015/16 (1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016)

Local Authority : Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Consultancy Work:	16.5 days Potential saving against market norm – £7,387.50
Attendance at Training Courses:	3 Potential saving against market norm – £225
Information Requests:	6
Attendance at Executive Committee Meetings:	23 April 2015 – Cllr A McCoy attended, Cllr J Beall did not attend 20 October 2015 – Cllr A McCoy and Cllr R Cook attended 10 December 2015 – Cllr A McCoy attended, Cllr R Cook did not attend
Authority represented at Network Meetings:	North East Strategic HR Forum North East Development Forum Equalities and Diversity Scrutiny Officers Joint Scrutiny Members/Officers Health and Safety Lead Officers Member Development Officers Education / Children’s Services HR Group Public Health
Recruitment Work:	Number of vacancies advertised - 677 Potential cost of advertising at average industry rates (£150 per advert) - £101,550 Current North East Jobs Subscription Fee - £9,480
Disclosure & Barring Service:	Applications processed – 2 (via Xentrall)