

Members/Trades Unions Joint Consultation & Safety Panel

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 21 August 2019, at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 4.30pm.

Present:

Employer's representatives: Councillors Cullinan, B Gifford, Heath and Wright.

Trades Unions' representatives: Mr Mulryan and Ms Outridge.

Also Present: Mr Carden (Building Manager & H&S Co-ordinator), Mrs Rolfe (Head of Health and Community Protection), Mr Aulak (HR Business Partner), Mrs Priestley (Senior HR Business Partner), Mrs Dolphin (HR Manager), Mrs Tuckwell (Committee Services Officer).

6. **Substitutes and Apologies**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Lynch and Mr Day.

Ms Outridge substituted for Mr Crump.

7. **Appointment of Chairmen**

Resolved that Councillor Wright be appointed as the Chairman for the Employer's representatives.

It was the Employer's representative's turn to chair the meeting.

8. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made.

9. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2019 were taken as read and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

10. **Corporate Health and Safety – Update**

The Panel considered a report from Health and Community Protection which summarised the Council's current position in relation to Corporate Health and Safety, including recommendations where applicable.

In answer to questions from Councillors, the Panel was advised that:

- In relation to Appendix 1, Ref. 3 - the deadline to train managers and supervisors was April 2021 because of the volume of training courses required;
- The Council was in the process of moving to a new assessment system, which is why some of the recommendations at page 5 had not yet been

completed. The Building Manager and Health & Safety Co-ordinator was due to receive some training the day after the meeting, do that he could then, in turn, provide training to others;

- The training was a three-day training followed by an exam at the end;
- Although there were a number of concerns flagged at the audit of William Walsgrove House which took place in March 2019, most of these had been rectified and moved to "active". Some of the smaller risks were ongoing, and it was important to acknowledge that some issues would always represent a risk due to the nature of the service;
- Work had been done with the Manager of William Walsgrove House and although there had been some issues to do with the health and safety of the staff members working there, these had now been resolved. Due to the kind of accommodation it provided, there would always be a level of risk but it was important that the proper controls were in place as much as reasonably possible, and the Unions' representative was satisfied with that;
- The Unions' representative had a great relationship with the Manager of William Walsgrove House, as well as with the officers working there. There was ongoing communication and the Unions' representative arranged a visit at the House.

Members asked to be provided with an update at the next meeting regarding the training for AssessNet.

Resolved that the updated position with regards to Health and Safety, be noted.

11. **People Strategy Update**

The Panel received an update from the Human Resources Manager on the progress made on the People Strategy Action Plan and associated areas as discussed at the Senior Management Team (SMT), the People Strategy Steering Group (PSSG) and submitted to Employment Committee. Appendix 1 to the report provided a review of the Apprenticeship Scheme and next steps.

In answer to questions from Councillors, the Human Resources Manager advised that:

- The forecasts that the Corporate Apprentice Fund would be underspent by circa £46,500 in 2019/20 was because this was newly-implemented system and in order for the Council not to discriminate on the grounds of age, it allowed additional budget for that. However, this had not been identified as a trend;
- Across the Council, the apprenticeship scheme was going well and apprentices were having a substantial impact on the areas they were concerned with;
- Members were reminded of the proposal to Employment Committee to amendments to NJC Employment Contracts in relation to continuous service, to reflect the National Conditions of Service.
- Before acting upon this, there would be a consultation process.

Resolved that

- (1) the report be noted;
- (2) the review of the Apprenticeship Scheme and next steps attached as Appendix 1 to the report, be noted;
- (3) the proposal to Employment Committee to approve the update to local employment conditions and amendments to NJC Employment Contracts in relation to continuous service, to reflect National Conditions of Service, be noted; and
- (4) the proposal to Employment Committee to approve the update to the Recruitment and Selection Policy so that the Chief Executive be authorised to establish fixed term posts for up to two years as long as funding is in place for the post, be noted.

12. **Gender Pay Gap Report**

The Panel received a report from Human Resources which set out the gender pay gap information relating to employees in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.

Members of the Panel were informed that:

- The report was brought forward earlier this year as requested by Members, in September rather than March;
- Although the Council was doing well in this area, it could not be complacent and should always be looking at what more could be done;
- Although officers were paid the same for the same job regardless of gender, the Council did have more men than women in higher-paid jobs;
- As the data was distributed earlier, other Council's Gender Pay Gap report had not yet been published and a comparison was therefore not applicable at this stage;
- It was crucial to get the best people possible for the job, regardless of their gender, as well as retaining our workforce as much as possible.

Members welcomed the new Human Resources Business Partner to the team.

Councillor Wright expressed his thanks for a very well-organised Expo, which he found very informative.

(The meeting ended at 5.03pm)

CHAIRMAN
20 November 2019