

DRAFT

JOINT STAFF COMMITTEE

Monday 28 January 2002

PRESENT:-

EMPLOYER'S SIDE – Councillors BOWKER, MARSH, MARSDEN (Chairman), PARSONS, Mrs POOLEY and TUNWELL.

STAFF SIDE – Mr P COCKS, Mr R CROWHURST, Miss M ELSEN (Deputy Chairman) and Mrs P SHEARER.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: - Mr M RAY (Chief Executive), Mrs S McHUGH (Director of Finance and Corporate Services), Mr N KINNISH (Director of Planning, Regeneration and Amenities), Mr N FULLER (Director of Housing, Health and Community Finance), Miss A ROBINS (Employee Relations Advisor) and Mr M CAIRA (Support Services Manager, Tourism and Leisure).

(Apologies for absence were reported from Mrs J Blackwell and Mrs C Patterson-Snell).

11. MINUTES. The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2001 were submitted and approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

12. 2002/2003 BUDGET. The Committee considered the report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services updating the position on the 2002/03 budget which was submitted and agreed by Cabinet on 5 December 2001. Cabinet would be considering final proposals for the budget at its meeting on 6 February and make recommendations to Council on 27 February 2002. The Committee was advised that final confirmation of the level of government grant for 2002/02 had not yet been received. With regard to certain savings proposals and implications for staff, it was noted that the Employment Stability Procedure had been implemented and that Directors were currently reviewing emerging vacancies to assess their suitability as redeployment opportunities.

UNISON raised concerns regarding the consultation procedure during the budget process and the need for an effective procedure to ensure that staff were kept fully informed and involved in discussions. The Staff Side discussed some of the difficulties faced in this situation and reported that some staff affected had expressed concern that a final decision had yet to be made.

UNISON's concerns had been raised with the Chief Executive and Members were advised that following discussions with CMT and UNISON on the timing of consultation it had been agreed to look at future arrangements.

Councillor Marsden indicated that consultation with staff at the earliest opportunity was important. He reiterated the requirement for the budget proposals to be submitted to Full Council for decision.

NOTED.

13. ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY. The Director of Finance and Corporate Services reported on the accommodation strategy and that a series of presentations had been made to all staff on the proposed changes. These sessions were the first stage in the consultation process and staff had been invited to submit comments through their Manager by the end of February. It was reported that the initial concerns raised by staff at the sessions had related mainly to car parking and staff safety/security. Councillor Marsden advised that although the detailed arrangements had yet to be considered, staff would be given the best possible protection in the most vulnerable working areas.

The Staff Side indicated that they had not received any feedback from staff as yet but proposals in respect of staff safety were their primary concern.

NOTED.

14. INVESTORS IN PEOPLE. The Chief Executive updated the Committee regarding progress in respect of the assessment for Investors In People recently completed by an organisation recruited by the Learning and Skills Council. The assessment had involved interviews with over 60 staff selected by the organisation including a member of the UNISON Branch Executive and some Members of the Council. The Council was being assessed against the Investors in People standards, which covered Commitment, Planning, Action and Evaluation. Initial feedback indicated that there was plenty of evidence to provide accreditation to the standards relating to Commitment, Planning and Action with some very positive feedback about the organisation and the way it was managed.

Some further evidence would need to be provided on the evaluation of training against service objectives on a divisional basis, and similarly from Corporate Management Team against the corporate plan aims. This further assessment would be carried out in three months time. When this was satisfied, a recommendation for full accreditation against the standards would go to an assessment panel.

The Chief Executive reported that information had been circulated to Heads of Service and those staff interviewed and that the key findings would be disseminated to staff in the near future.

NOTED.

15. HEALTH AND SAFETY ITEMS.

(a) The Staff Side reported that there were no outstanding issues of concern to raise.

(b) The Committee received accident statistics for the period October 2001 to December 2001. The Committee commented on the number of incidents reported and that this continued to be an area of concern. Members agreed on the importance of instigating the appropriate measures for all such incidents.

NOTED.

16. FUTURE MEETINGS.

(a) The meetings for the remainder of the 2001/2002 Municipal Year were agreed as follows:

Tuesday 19 February 2002 and Tuesday 2 April 2002 at 1.00 p.m.

(b) The following dates for the Municipal Year 2002/2003 were noted as follows:

22 May; 17 July; 11 September; 20 November 2002; 15 January; 19 March and 21 May 2003 all on Wednesdays commencing at 2.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 12.30 pm

G H Marsden

Chairman

kc/joint staff(02.01.28mins)