

DRAFT

JOINT STAFF COMMITTEE

Wednesday 20 November 2002

PRESENT:-

EMPLOYER'S SIDE – Councillors BOWKER, Mrs HEALY (Deputy Chairman), MARSDEN, SKILTON, THOMPSON and WILLIAMS.

STAFF SIDE – Mr R CROWHURST, Mrs L SARGENT (Chairman) and Mrs P SHEARER.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE - Mr M RAY (Chief Executive), Mr G STEVENSON (Head of Environmental Health), Mr D Lindsay (Commercial Services Manager), Mrs C FREEMAN (Head of Personnel) and Ms A ROBINS (Employee Relations Adviser).

(An apology for absence was reported from Mr P Cocks and Miss J Gibbs).

16. MINUTES. The minutes of the meeting held on 17 July 2002 were submitted and approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

17. PERSONNEL STANDARDS. The Committee considered the report of the Head of Personnel regarding new and revised personnel policies and procedures. A comprehensive review had been agreed as part of the Best Value Review of Personnel and was also necessary to take account of ever changing employment legislation. A brief summary of the first set of new policies and procedures were detailed in this report and the revised documents relating to Disciplinary, Grievance, Appeals against Selection Decisions, Alternative Employment, HR Performance Management and Attendance Management were attached as appendices.

The review process had involved an examination of other Local Authority practices, discussions with a cross section of Council Managers and had been the subject of ongoing consultations with UNISON. UNISON had agreed the procedures in principle and had made detailed comments on the wording for the majority of the documents.

UNISON reported that additional comments on wording might be made regarding the Performance Management Statement and the Alternative Employment Procedure but that the contents and structure were supported.

Councillor Mrs Healy welcomed the revised documents which set a clear framework for decision making and had taken into account emerging equalities legislation and the equality standards for local government. It was noted that the Cabinet would consider the report at its meeting on 5 December 2002.

It was reported that a comprehensive training programme was being drawn up for managers to ensure that they were familiar with the new and revised policies and were able to implement them effectively. This would be a rolling programme to take account of any further revisions to the procedures. The Head of Personnel advised that the training would commence with Heads of Service early in the New Year and cascade down to other staff as required.

UNISON highlighted the importance of monitoring the use of the procedures. The Head of Personnel advised of the new requirement for Managers to inform the Employee Relations Adviser at the commencement of any disciplinary or grievance procedure of any potential action to be undertaken. This would allow for advice to be given at an early stage and for the necessary monitoring in accordance with the relevant legislation. The Attendance Management procedure also stressed the need for consistent monitoring and encouraged managers to seek support from Personnel.

RESOLVED: That Cabinet be recommended to adopt the revised Policies and Procedures in line with the requirements of employment law and HR best practice.

18. HEALTH AND SAFETY ITEMS. –

(a) **DRAFT HEALTH AND SAFETY WORK PLAN.** The Committee considered the report of the Head of Environmental Health and the Head of Personnel regarding the proposed work plan for health and safety for the period October 2002 to March 2004. The arrangements and responsibilities for the delivery of health and safety had been reviewed as a result of changes to the Council's Support Services. The Head of Personnel was now responsible for the provision of Health and Safety policy advice and the Head of Environmental Health for operational matters and for the interpretation of emerging Health and Safety legislation. The draft plan identified the key objectives and priorities for health and safety and had been drawn up by the Health and Safety Adviser following consultation with Safety Representatives at a meeting of the Joint Safety Committee. It was noted that progress on the delivery of the work plan would be reported to the Joint Safety Committee on a regular basis.

The Head of Environmental Health reported that SMART objectives would be set for the work plan. It was noted that risk assessments would be prioritised and those areas with the highest risk carried out first. The Committee was advised that the vacant post of Environmental Health Technician, which supports the work of the Health and Safety Adviser, had been advertised. Additional support would be provided through the employment of a temporary member of staff.

UNISON reported that their two Health and Safety Officers were currently undergoing the necessary training. It was proposed that the representatives meet with the Health and Safety Adviser, Mr Lindsay to discuss future working and consultation.

RESOLVED: That the content of the Health and Safety Work Plan for the period October 2002 to March 2004 be approved.

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

(c) **ACCIDENT STATISTICS 1 APRIL 2002 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2002.** The Committee received accident statistics for the above period and commented on the number of incidents reported. Mr Lindsay advised of the strict process for dealing with incidents of abusive and intimidating behaviour and that the appropriate action was taken in such cases. It was noted that the "At Risk Register" was scheduled to go online in the near future.

NOTED.

19. FUTURE MEETINGS. The Committee was advised that, following consultation with UNISON and the Deputy Chairman of this Committee, future meetings had been rescheduled and would meet on a quarterly basis. The next meeting was noted as Wednesday 19 March at 2.30 p.m.

The meeting closed at 2.50 pm

Mrs L SARGENT

Chairman

kc/joint staff(02.11.20mins)