

**PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL
STRATEGIC POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
EMPLOYEES JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE**

Minute of meeting of the Employees Joint Consultative Committee, held in the Council Chamber, 2 High Street, Perth on Thursday 30 November 2017 at 2.00pm.

Present: Representing Perth and Kinross Council:

Councillors H Anderson; B Brawn (on behalf of Councillor M Lyle), R McCall (on behalf of Councillor I Campbell) and S McCole; G Boland (on behalf of the Executive Director (Education & Children's Services)); J Dixon (on behalf of the Depute Chief Executive).

Present: Representing Trade Unions:

S Hope (UNISON); S Robertson, A Thomas, L McLaren and T Todd (Unite the Union).

In Attendance: K Donaldson (Corporate Human Resources Manager); L Johnston, K Molley (Observer); G Reeves, K Ridley, J Somerville and P Steel (all Corporate and Democratic Services).

Apologies: F Fraser, T Maric and M Dickson (UNISON); and H Meldrum (GMB).

S Hope in the Chair

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest in terms of the Councillors' Code of Conduct.

2. MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minute of meeting of the Employees Joint Consultative Committee of 28 September 2017 was submitted and approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Transformation Programme (Item 7 refers)

The JCC agreed that further updates in respect of the Transformation Programme could be requested in the future but it did not require consideration at every meeting.

(ii) **Flexible and Mobile Working (Item 8 refers)**

T Todd confirmed that following the last JCC meeting the outstanding queries relevant to training and mobile working had been resolved following assurances from HR representatives.

(iii) **Council Construction Charter (Item 9 refers)**

P Steel reported that following the last JCC meeting George Ramsay had attended a meeting and the Council would now look to change the procurement strategy with the Construction Charter due to be formally adopted in the New Year.

(iv) **Health and Wellbeing (Item 10 refers)**

S Hope reported that he had attended a meeting with HR following the last JCC meeting and was pleased to confirm that a number of managers were due to attend a 5 week course in mental health first aid. He added that the Council needed to remain aware that this was a matter that many employees were guarded about and did not necessarily wish to disclose to their manager.

(v) **Job Families and Job Matching (Item 11 refers)**

K Donaldson confirmed that she hoped to meet with trade union representatives prior to Christmas and reported that:-

- (a) Following consultation with Senior Management Teams – headings under the Care Job Family would be revised, and
- (b) The Council was close to implementing the next phase of job families.

(vi) **Voluntary Severance Scheme (VSS) (Item 12 refers)**

K Donaldson reported that 121 employees had to date registered an interest by asking for VSS figures and that the deadline for providing estimated voluntary severance was that day. The next stage in the process would be for managers to examine if there was a business case, with final decisions being made at the February 2018 Council meeting.

L McLaren asked about support provided to employees internally and K Donaldson referred to the Preparing for Retirement course being run and the recommendation that employees seek Independent Financial Advice if appropriate.

(vii) **Revenue Budget 2018/19 (Item 13 (i) refers)**

K Donaldson confirmed that the usual meeting with trade unions and the Chief Executive had been scheduled for the following week.

4. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

- (i) The Full Council Summary of the Employee Engagement Survey was submitted.

- (ii) G Reeves, Corporate Organisational Development, spoke to the paper and highlighted emerging themes. Overall levels of engagement remain high although there had been a slight dip in some topic areas. The employee survey is one of a great many mechanisms to involve employees and find out what matters to them and to encourage staff to share ideas and suggestions for improvement.

She reported that two Employee Engagement Officers were to be employed and would facilitate future thinking sessions relevant to engagement. They would assist services in future engagement with employees and equip employees with skills for the future.

Discussion which followed the presentation included comments relevant to employee apathy regarding the survey, the need to continue to convey to employees positive change due to previous survey responses, and it not being possible to benchmark findings with other local authorities.

Resolved:-

The JCC noted the position.

5. EXPANSION OF EARLY LEARNING IN CHILDCARE 1140 HOURS

There was submitted a report by the Head of Education: Early Years & Primary (G/17/202) outlining the implications of the Scottish Government commitment to increase the provision of funded Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) from 600 to 1,140 hours by 2020.

Staff briefings had commenced to ensure all staff are aware of the increased access to early learning and childcare and the need for workforce changes. S Hope spoke of initial concern amongst employees who had entered such employment because of the family friendly hours. G Boland noted that HR was currently producing a Question and Answer factsheet and P Steel noted that as part of a 4 year plan there would be numerous opportunities to examine how to best accommodate the existing workforce by working differently and flexibly. She added that the overall aim was to maximise and sustain employability and asked if there was anything that she could provide to alleviate concerns immediately. S Hope said that UNISON was putting out the message that there were positive outcomes with more permanent roles and possible promotion opportunities.

S Robertson asked if an Equality Impact Assessment had been undertaken and P Steel confirmed that this had taken place. Discussion then centred on the successful initiative - Men in Childcare and opportunities for staff to retrain for a career in early years. This would be similar to the successful Learn To Teach programmes.

In response to a question from Councillor Anderson, K Donaldson noted the Council's commitment to ensure mixed provision (public and private

nurseries) and P Steel noted the desire amongst parents for the combination model to remain.

K Donaldson confirmed that future updates would be submitted to the JCC annually.

Resolved:-

The JCC noted the contents of Report G/17/202.

6. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled to take place on Thursday 22 February 2018 at 10.00am. It was also confirmed that a 2018 timetable would be circulated to members prior to the next meeting.

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