

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

Minute of meeting of the Employees Joint Consultative Committee, held virtually via Microsoft Teams on Monday 27 September 2021 at 10.00am.

Present: Representing Perth and Kinross Council:

Councillors C Ahern, D Illingworth (substituting for Councillor M Lyle), R McCall, S McCole, B Pover, J Rebbeck and F Smith.

Present: Representing Trade Unions:

S Hope (UNISON)
S Robertson (Unite the Union)
G McColl (GMB)
A Fleming (GMB)
C Weston (EIS) (up to item 6)

In Attendance: S Crawford, P Johnstone, C Flynn, J Beveridge, C Judge, S Kinnear, L McGeorge, K Molley, E Sturgeon and S Nicoll (all Corporate and Democratic Services); F Crofts, R Lyle and N Taylor (Communities); G Boland (Education and Children's Services); and C Paton (Health and Social Care Partnership).

Apologies: Councillors M Lyle (Perth and Kinross Council); and L Roberts (UNISON).

S Hope in the Chair.

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

S Hope welcomed all present to the meeting and apologies were noted above.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE CORPORATE HEALTH SAFETY AND WELLBEING CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF 7 JUNE 2021

The minute of meeting of the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Consultative Committee of 7 June 2021 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

4. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

5. HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE REPORT

There was a report submitted by Regulatory Services Manager (G/21/32) (1) preparing to inform and assist the Employee Joint Consultative Committee in monitoring health and safety compliance and performance across Perth and Kinross Council; and (2) providing an overview of health and safety activities.

In response to a question from Councillor R McCall regarding the increase in stress levels recorded, P Johnstone advised that HR pro-actively manage stress and sickness levels and statistics are analysed to raise any hotspots with management. Managers are also encouraged to complete incident report forms for employees who are absent as a result of work-related stress. E Sturgeon added that it's also important for all employees to complete their DSE assessment to ensure staff have the correct equipment to work comfortably from home.

In response to a question from S Hope regarding Violence and Aggression incidents across schools, P Johnstone advised that a report was issued to teachers at the JNCT last week with updated figures and a joint working group meet regularly to review staff training requirements and incidents. The style of the report has been updated and is split into violence and aggression incidents and challenging and distressed behaviour incidents. S Hope asked for an overview of information be brought forward to this committee.

C Weston raised concerns over ventilation throughout schools and the difficulties with Winter approaching, J Beveridge notified that CO2 monitors will be installed throughout schools by October 2021. He added that staff will be advised to keep windows and doors open while teaching and officers are looking at other ways to ensure heat doesn't fully escape school buildings. This is a national issue that will be reported back to Scottish Government.

Councillor S McCole requested that all members of the JCC be sent the full report and most current action plan of the HSE visit to North Forr depot which occurred in January 2021.

Resolved:

The contents of report G/21/32, be noted.

6. FIRE SAFETY QUARTERLY REPORT

There was a report submitted by Regulatory Services Manager (G/21/133) (1) preparing to inform and assist the Corporate, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Consultative Committee in monitoring fire safety performance across Perth and Kinross Council; and (2) providing an overview of the Fire Safety Key Performance Indicators for Quarter 1 of 2021/22.

G Boland advised that 11 schools had fully completed action plans. S Crawford added that any action plans that have been updated will be circulated to all members for their information.

Councillor S McCole raised the issue of cladding on several premises that had been audited. S Crawford advised that an update will be brought to a future meeting of the JCC.

In response to a question from A Fleming regarding depots and why they were not included in the fire and safety action plans, R Lyle and S Crawford advised that there were no outstanding actions this quarter and therefore no reason to be listed. A Fleming asked another question regarding fire assessments across depots in Perth and Kinross, R Lyle advised that fire risk assessments are updated on an annual basis and that he would contact A Fleming with more detail.

Councillor C Ahern raised concerns over the lack of employee training in relation to fire extinguishers. He added that it is essential to know the different types of fire extinguishers, so they can be used sensibly and correctly if required.

Resolved:

Contents of Report G/21/133, be noted.

C WESTON LEFT THE MEETING AT THIS POINT.

7. MINUTE OF MEETING OF THE EMPLOYEES JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF 27 MAY 2021

The minute of meeting of the Employees Joint Consultative Committee of 27 May 2021 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

8. MATTERS ARISING

(i) SECONDMENT INFORMATION – ANALYSIS OF STATISTICS TAKEN IN JUNE 2021 (REFERS TO ITEM 9)

There was a report submitted by Human Resources (G/21/130) outlining secondment statistics that were gathered in June 2021.

In response to a question from Councillor S McCole regarding the number of secondments extending two years, C Judge advised that analysis was undertaken, and guidance has been created to help mitigate secondments exceeding two years. More funding would be required to make these secondments, permanent posts.

Resolved:

The contents of report G/21/130, be noted.

(ii) AGENCY NUMBERS (REFERS TO ITEM 9)

There was a report submitted by Services Manager, Operations and Fleet (G/21/131) providing background and information on the deployment and management of temporary staff recruited to supplement the PKC Operations and Fleet permanent workforce.

In response to a question from S Robertson regarding HGV drivers, N Taylor advised that permanent posts are not covered by agency staff and these employees are usually called in to cover long-term sickness absence. Officers are looking at expanding the driver pool as staff turnover rates for HGV drivers increase. He added that a report on this was brought to Communities SMT.

Resolved:

The contents of report G/21/131, be noted.

9. REMOBILISATION UPDATE

There was a verbal update by S Nicoll, Property Services Manager on staff returning to work in Council offices. He advised that when the first lockdown occurred, around 1,900 members of staff were working from home. He added that more and more people are returning to Council offices but with levels of Covid increasing, this must be monitored carefully. There are currently around 110 employees working regularly from Pullar House and some area Council offices have reopened. 2 High Street is still closed due to ongoing repair works. S Nicoll advised that lateral flow tests are provided to employees returning to work in Council offices throughout Perth and Kinross.

The Committee noted the position.

10. HYBRID WORKING UPDATE

There was a verbal update by C Judge, Human Resources on the development of the hybrid working pilot. She highlighted that three hybrid meeting rooms are currently in use in Pullar House, and it is aimed that another three will be in operation by next month. HR are working with IT to trial the delivery of services through this new way of working and acknowledges that this form of working may not be suitable for all departments. Guidance on hybrid working has been introduced and engagement with managers, employees and trade union representatives is ongoing.

Members shared their support of hybrid working and S Hope asked for an update on the trial to be brought to a future meeting of the JCC.

The Committee noted the position.

11. WORKFORCE PLAN

There was a verbal update by C Judge, Human Resources regarding the previous Corporate Workforce Plan 2018-21. Work around certain areas of the previous plan were delayed due to consequences of the pandemic. C Judge added that progress of actions from the new Corporate Workforce Plan 2021-23 will be shared at Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis and HR will continue to engage with JCC members.

The Corporate Workforce Plan 2018-21 was an item on the agenda of the Scrutiny Committee of 15 September 2021. A link to this paper was issued to JCC members for their information.

The Committee noted the position.

12. COMMUNITY VACCINATION CENTRE UPDATE

There was a report submitted by E Sturgeon, HR Manager (G/21/134), providing an update on the Community Vaccination Centre.

In response to a question from Councillor S McCole regarding staffing resources at vaccination centres, E Sturgeon advised that 543 individuals have volunteered with 150 of those working shifts regularly. He added that there is now a move away from P&K Council staff, towards communities, in helping run vaccination centres across Perth and Kinross. F Crofts advised that it is important to acknowledge the challenges ahead as Winter approaches. Delays in delivering covid vaccinations could occur, due to individuals receiving Flu vaccinations from the NHS.

A Fleming advised that if centres are still looking for volunteers, he would be happy to help when available.

Resolved:

The contents of report G/21/134, be noted.

13. PLATINUM JUBILEE

There was a verbal update by P Johnstone, HR Manager, regarding the Platinum Jubilee in June 2022. Consultation with Trade Unions had been undertaken and a report will be submitted to full Council, seeking approval on the leave and service delivery arrangements that will allow the Council to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in June 2022.

The Committee noted the position.

14. OH UPDATE

There was a verbal update by S Kinnear, Human Resources regarding Occupational Health. Officers are working with PAM (OH provider) to enhance the current wellbeing offer. Extra support measures are being introduced,

PAM Assist which includes a 24-hour helpline and live chat function to support staff wellbeing. These will go live in November 2021.

In response to a question from S Hope regarding communication with staff, P Johnstone advised that a communications plan has been developed including raising awareness at SMT's and news bulletins uploaded to ERIC.

S Hope asked for an update to be brought to a future meeting of the JCC.

The Committee noted the position.

15. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

- (i) Perth and Kinross Council achieved the Gold Level Recognition Award for their support towards the Armed Forces Community. Councillor Ahern thanked members of staff for their contributions.
- (ii) S Hope advised that UNISON have been working with the Council and St Johnstone Football Club to promote 'Show Racism the Red Card'.

16. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

6 December 2021

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