

**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 28 November 2019 at 10.00am.

Present: Representing Perth and Kinross Council:

Councillors Councillor C Ahern (substituting for Councillor Lyle), H Anderson, R McCall and S McCole (all Perth and Kinross Council); K Donaldson, Depute Director Corporate & Democratic Services), C Hendry (on behalf of Executive Director (Housing & Environment) and K Robertson (on behalf of Executive Director (Education and Children Services)).

Present: Representing Trade Unions:

S Hope and L Roberts (both UNISON) and S Robertson (Unite the Union).

In Attendance: D McPhee and H Johnstone (Housing & Environment), P Johnstone, S McLeod, E Sturgeon, C Flynn and L Brown (all Corporate and Democratic Services.

Apologies: Councillor Lyle; H Meldrum (GMB), B Nichol (UNISON).

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 26 September 2019 was submitted and approved as a correct record.

The Committee agreed to vary the order of business to hear the Equalities Update as the next item.

3. EQUALITIES UPDATE

D McPhee, Equalities Team Leader, provided an update on the following equality programmes and schemes implemented by the Council:

- The LGBTi+ Staff Network is aimed at providing a social and support network to staff who may be LGBTi+ and the disABILITY Staff Network is aimed at providing a social and support network to staff who may

have a visible or invisible disability or long-term health condition, or have a friend or family with a disability or long-term condition;

- See Me In Work is a programme aimed at tackling the stigma and discrimination surrounding mental health in the workplace;
- The Stonewall Scotland Diversity Champions Programme is an employer's programme aimed at ensuring all LGBTi+ staff are accepted in the workplace. The LGBTi+ programme led to the creation of the LGBTi+ Staff Network;
- Brexit - EU Settlement Scheme – the Council continues to pro-actively raise awareness of the Home Office EU Settlement Scheme and works closely with a number of third-sector organisations who are funded to provide specialist support to applicants. Quarterly figures available up to September 2019 indicate that 3030 applications have been made from Perth and Kinross; approximately 43% of eligible local applicants;
- The Armed Forces Covenant - the Council currently has a silver award in relation to the covenant, which is a public commitment to support defence personnel whilst providing a supportive environment for reservists and cadet force adult volunteers. The Council intends to submit a bid for a gold award in 2020 and is working to prepare an Action Plan with the Regional Employer Engagement Director of the Highland Reserve Forces and Cadets Association.
- Show Racism the Red Card - as the local authority with the longest running partnership agreement with Show Racism the Red Card the Council has commenced on its 12th year of local anti-racism educational work in primary schools across Perth and Kinross. A showcase workshop will take place in the Council Chambers in early 2020 to which all members of the EJCC are invited;
- Staff Learning and Development – in addition to the Council's e-learning equality programme staff also have the opportunity to attend a number of different equality learning opportunities delivered by external partner organisations and community groups;
- Holocaust Memorial Day – discussions are ongoing with the Anne Frank Trust regarding a local event on 27 January 2020, Holocaust Memorial Day. Input from EJCC members would be welcomed and invitations will be issued once the plans for the day have been finalised.

The Convener thanked David for his informative presentation.

4. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Employee Benefits - Annual Leave Purchase Scheme (Item 3(ii) refers)

E Sturgeon advised that 130 applications were received from employees by the closing date of 15 October 2019 to purchase additional annual leave in 2020 under the new Annual Leave Purchase Scheme.

(ii) Short Life Working Group on Role of Committees (Item 6 refers)

C Flynn reported that due to existing diary commitments it had not been possible to fix a date for the first meeting of the Short Life Working Group. It was hoped that a date could be agreed before the Christmas holidays.

Post meeting note: A date of 30 January 2020 was subsequently agreed.

(iii) Voluntary Severance Scheme (VSS) 2019 (Item 7(ii) refers)

P Johnstone advised that 100 enquiries had been received from staff in relation to the VS scheme by the October deadline. 36 applications have been approved to go forward to the next stage and the employees concerned have until 6 January 2020 to advise the Council if they wish to progress with their application.

5. CAR BENEFIT SCHEME

E Sturgeon advised that the new low or ultra-low carbon emission car benefit scheme which operates as a salary sacrifice arrangement will commence in January 2020. Employees will be given the opportunity to lease the car which will be maintained and insured with the running costs, other than fuel being deducted from the employee's salary in equal monthly instalments.

6. MYVIEW DEVELOPMENTS

The Committee received a presentation from E Sturgeon on MyView – Taking the Council workforce on a journey. He advised that MyView is an online information portal where employees can access information on HR and payroll functions such as booking annual leave, claiming car mileage and expenses, arranging time off in lieu, requesting training opportunities, completing questionnaires and changing their personal details. 97% of permanent and fixed term employees have access to MyView and 58% of supply and casual staff also have access.

E Sturgeon agreed to circulate a link to a video on the MyView Portal to the Committee for information.

7. REAL LIVING WAGE

E Sturgeon reported that the real living wage would rise to £9.30 an hour from 1 April 2020.

8. SUPPORTING HEALTH AND WELLBEING FRAMEWORK

S McLeod provided an update on the implementation of the Supporting Health and Wellbeing Framework since the September meeting of the EJCC. She reported that HR Team Leaders were leading in their own areas of

responsibility and providing support and advice on implementation to SMTs and service teams. Focused support was being provided where specific hot spots had been identified. Feedback received so far from employees, managers and the Trade Unions has been very positive.

S Hope confirmed he had also received positive feedback and that employees welcomed the “common sense” approach being taken by managers in implementing the new Framework.

9. MENOPAUSE GUIDANCE

E Sturgeon reported that the Council was currently developing a Menopause guidance document with a view to submitting a report to the next meeting of the EJCC for comment. In response to an enquiry on why this would be guidance rather than a policy document and why the document would not include guidance on periods, E Sturgeon advised that guidance rather than a policy would allow for a more flexible approach to be adopted. P Johnstone added that inclusion of periods would be made in the guidance.

Although welcoming the proposal some members expressed concern that managers might feel less of an obligation to follow guidance rather than policy.

P Johnstone advised that the Supporting Health and Wellbeing Framework is the principal document covering all aspects of health in the workplace, there will be guidance documents beneath it. Should any manager not be implementing any guidance documents this would be picked up on an individual basis. She advised that the Council is endeavouring to create an environment where people feel confident raising issues with managers and feel safe and supported.

The Committee:

- (i) Noted the proposal to develop Guidance on Menopause
- (ii) Agreed that Periods be included within the guidance.
- (iii) Agreed that the draft guidance be submitted to the next meeting of the EJCC on 27 February 2020 for comment.

10. VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION SHORT LIFE WORKING GROUP

The Committee received a progress report on the work of the Violence and Aggression Short Life Working Group. H Johnstone advised that an action plan has been developed which takes account of recommendations from the SLWG and from Scottish Government on the use of physical intervention and seclusion in schools. The group have recommended that any future reports to the Joint Negotiating Committee for Teaching Staff, the EJCC and the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee should provide tailored information specific to each Committee and should also include accessible and relevant data, prompts for reflection and an analysis of trends.

With the support of colleagues in HR the SLWG is drafting guidance to support staff wellbeing along with guidance on the on-line system DASH used to record incidents of violence and aggression.

The Committee noted the position.

11. TIMETABLE OF MEETINGS IN 2020

The Committee noted the dates of meetings in 2020 are as follows:

27 February;
28 May;
24 September, and
26 November.

12. ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

There were no other items of business for discussion.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

27 February 2020 at 10.00am.