

STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes

**TUESDAY, 31 OCTOBER 2017
(2.00 PM)**

PRESENT: Councillor A Forrester (Chairman)

Representing the Council:

Councillors M Bowen, B Johnson and C Wood

Representing the Employees:

S. Robinson - Unison

J. Percival - Unison

Officers

T. Cooper - Organisational Development &
Transformation Manager

D. Owen - Corporate Health & Safety Officer

P. Trafford - Member & Community Services Officer

APOLOGIES: Councillors C R Jebb, L D Lea and C Pearce

Background Papers to these Minutes are exempt by virtue of the provisions of Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 - Part 1 of Schedule 12A, Paragraph 1 (Information relating to an individual) or Paragraph 4 (Labour relations matters).

Please note: These minutes are subject to approval by Cabinet.

9 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

10 **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

MATTERS ARISING –

- David Owen advised that, further to Minute No. 3, he had recently attended a Counter-Terrorism training session at Alrewas. He intended to arrange 2 training sessions in the Staffordshire Moorlands on:- a) Emergency Planning (involving the Civil Contingency Unit) and b) Fire Safety (following the Grenfell Tower disaster). It was vital to ensure that elected members were aware of what they were expected to do in emergency situations.
- David advised members that the Alliance had achieved the ROSPA Gold Award. Members felt that this should be publicised to recognise the work done to gain the award.

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- Steve Robinson referred to Minute No. 5 and asked what had been done in researching the recorded resolutions relating to pay anomalies. Tanya Cooper confirmed that the relevant research had been completed and the information was with the Executive Director with a view to forwarding to Councillors.

11 HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURES - REVISED PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT GUIDANCE

Changes in legislation had brought about the necessity to repeal certain parts of the Corporate Health and Safety Policy. Changes to the management structure of the Alliance required further amendments to be made. The resultant updates would form part of the 'Electronic Health and Safety Portfolio'.

Documents appended to the report were:-

- A. PPE selection form;
- B. List of PPE to be provided for work groups or individuals;
- C. Respirator Face-Fit testing;
- D. PPE Guidance.

The main subject of discussion centred around Face-Fit testing which concerned the use of Respirators. Whilst most usage within the Alliance was contained within the housing repairs at High Peak, there were occasions when such apparatus was used by the waste collection service at Staffordshire Moorlands. The main concern was with regard to the effect of facial hair on the achievement of an effective face mask seal.

Whilst other authorities had taken draconian steps to combat such problems by insisting that staff shave off their facial hair, it was not thought that the Alliance would need to follow that route. Other solutions to the problem were available – a) passing the task to another colleague, or b) the use of a 'positive pressure' mask, rather than a 'negative pressure' mask.

Managers / Supervisors were to be fully trained in conducting the tests and the results needed to be recorded appropriately for future reference.

Steve Robinson queried the reference contained within Appendix C – Respirator Face-Fit testing – under "What can be done if an employee has trouble passing the fit test for a face piece". The document read "In such cases the employer may wish to seek medical advice and an annotation to the individual's personal health record should be made." David Owen agreed to research this point further and report back to the next meeting.

RESOLVED – That the report be **NOTED** and the attached policy documents and appendices be **APPROVED**.

12 SICKNESS REPORT

Tanya Cooper presented the Alliance sickness report covering the period April 2017 to September 2017. The Staffordshire Moorlands headlines were:-

- Average 4.14 days per Full-Time Employee (FTE) had been lost against the annual target of 9 days, therefore on target;
- 666 FTE working days lost – 3.14% of all FTE working days;

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- Estimated cost to the authority – over £53,000;
- 16 long-term sickness cases accounting for 530.5 working days;
- Main cause for sickness absence was musculo-skeletal problem (34.64% of all absence).

Actions taken by SMDC were:-

- 23 stage 1 and 9 stage 2 cases heard;
- 5 cases had sought redeployment;
- 7 currently had a phased/supported return to work plan in place;
- 3 had temporarily adjusted duties;
- There had been 7 stress-related cases, 5 of which were ongoing (1 work-related, 2 personal and 2 a combination of work/personal);
- 36 cases referred to Occupational Health;
- Flu clinic held in September.

Steve Robinson asked whether information could be provided to give a statistical split between office/operational staff. This was agreed to be provided for the next meeting.

13 FEEDBACK FROM THE QUARTERLY UNION MEETING

Tanya Cooper reported following the quarterly union meeting which had taken place the previous day. Subjects discussed were:-

Mini Review of Customer Services section

As a result of the success of Channel-Shift, the Customer Services staffing structure had been reviewed and simplified. There were no redundancies or staff 'at risk' and the target for savings had been met. A small number of 'vulnerable' staff had been identified and managers were looking to give support.

Steve Robinson expressed the hope that Customer Services staff would receive sufficient training and be given enough time to deal with queries properly.

Flexible Working Policy

Following the pilot scheme, amendments to the policy had been agreed. A final draft was to go back to the working group and the unions.

Guidance and training was to be given to all managers to ensure a consistent approach.

Domestic Violence Policy

This had been finalised very late and was too late to be brought to this JCC meeting but would be presented at the next meeting in January 2018.

Union questions

- Alliance Environmental Services (AES) update – Moving into the next phase, the next meeting with AES was to take place on 14 November 2017, looking closely at the Staffordshire Moorlands Waste Collection Service and Fleet Management. The Executive Director & Chief Finance Officer – Andrew Stokes – would be addressing staff affected by this as soon as possible afterwards.

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- Ongoing Pay Anomalies – Following the resolutions made at the previous JCC on 18 May 2017 (see Minute No. 10 above), it had been established that the cost across the Alliance of removing the bar on pay-scales and resuming the incremental system previously in place was £939,000 over 5 years. Individual contracts had been checked with regard to the bar featuring at a lower point of the scale for AR3 and AR4 and this affected 41 people. Raising the bar to the central point in those scales would cost £22,000 in the current year. Refuse Drivers were the clearest example of pay anomalies, in that those with longer service who had reached the top of their scale were paid £20,138, whereas those who remained at the bar level due to their shorter service were paid £17,742. All drivers did the same job and all were sufficiently experienced to do all aspects of their job. Members felt that this was unsatisfactory and requested that a comparison exercise be carried out with other authorities. This was agreed.
- Deductions Of Contributions At Source (DOCAS) -New government legislation meant that deductions for union fees could no longer be done without charge. As a result, UNISON had proposed a 1% levy on members to cover the cost of making the deductions. UNISON were due to meet to discuss the matter further.

14 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 23 January 2018.

15 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Members were saddened to hear of the loss of Darren Richards, one of the Refuse Drivers, who tragically passed away as a result of injuries sustained in a motor-cycle accident which occurred during the weekend prior to this meeting.

The meeting closed at 3.45 pm

_____Chair _____Date