

MINUTE

of

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (FIRST TIER)

Minute of Meeting held at 2.00pm in the Council Chamber, Council Headquarters, Giffnock on 19 May 2016.

Present:

Councillor Jim Fletcher
Councillor Ian McAlpine

Councillor Gordon McCaskill
Councillor Ralph Robertson

Union Representatives:

Mr Allan Cameron (UNITE)
Ms Tracey Dalling (UNISON)
Mr Steven Larkin (UNISON)
Mr Brian Dunigan (UNITE)

Mr Gordon Lees (UNISON)
Mr Alan Munro (EIS)
Mr Des Morris (EIS)
Mr David Nimmo (GMB)

Attending:

Caroline Innes, Deputy Chief Executive; Margaret McCrossan, Head of Accountancy (Chief Financial Officer); Sharon Beattie, Head of HR, Customer and Communications; Phil Daws, Head of Environment (Housing and Property Services); and Linda Hutchison, Senior Committee Services Officer.

Councillor Fletcher in the Chair

Apologies:

Mr Martin Doran (GMB); Mr John Guidi (SSTA); and Mr Mark Kirkland (UNISON).

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

1. The committee considered and approved as a correct record the Minute of the meeting held on 21 January 2016.

ONGOING BUDGET ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

2. Under reference to the Minute of the meeting of 21 January 2016 (Item 2 refers) when the Council's budget and related financial difficulties had been discussed and it had been noted that there was a commitment to engage with the Trade Unions on savings proposals to address the anticipated funding gap that remained to be addressed, Mr Larkin commented that the Unions had not yet been advised of new savings proposals. He added that they had hoped to have been contacted before now, expressing concern about the possibility of this not happening until late summer.

Having thanked the Trade Unions for supporting the recent national campaign against funding cuts, Councillor Fletcher referred to the value of such action and the positive impact it had had on the final financial settlement local authorities received for 2016/17, making particular reference to Integration Joint Board related funding that had been directed to local authorities, and the need to continue to apply pressure to secure fairer financial settlements in future. Thereafter he clarified that the Budget Strategy Group (BSG) had not yet met to discuss further possible savings measures and would not do so until next month, confirming that no political decisions on savings had been made thus far. Having referred to Government limits to be applied to increasing Council Tax levels, Councillor Fletcher commented that increased Council Tax revenue and use of some reserves could contribute to bridging the savings gap, but that other measures would also be required. He added that public consultation of the type undertaken previously was not planned, but that early discussion would take place with the Trade Unions on sensitive cuts and those impacting on the workforce, and that if the BSG was minded to do so there would be consultation with the Trade Unions and service users on savings measures with a public impact.

During discussion, in reply to Councillor McCaskill, Councillor Fletcher confirmed that no decision had yet been taken on the extent to which reserves would be used in future. Councillor McAlpine supported Councillor Fletcher's comments on the effectiveness of the recent national campaign against the cuts, referring also to the need to continue with the approach and wish to minimise cuts and avoid compulsory redundancies. Councillor Fletcher referred to the importance attached by all to avoiding compulsory redundancies if possible and to related discussions which would take place with the Trade Unions should this be proposed, such as regarding specialised service provision for example.

It was agreed to note the position and comments made.

EQUAL PAY SECOND WAVE CLAIMS

3. In reply to Mr Nimmo who asked if the Council intended to settle any second wave equal pay claims which had not been raised through the Trade Unions, Councillor Fletcher clarified that he was not aware of any such claims, but that all those submitted, irrespective of how they were raised, would be dealt with in the same way and on their merits. Having clarified that most of the second wave claims had been settled and provided an update on the extent to which some were ongoing, he indicated that problems were not anticipated completing these.

In reply to Councillor McCaskill, Councillor Fletcher clarified that he was not aware of any third wave of claims, referred to the Council's status as an equal opportunities employer, commented on the good progress made on dealing with claims locally compared to some other areas, and thanked all officers involved in dealing with this issue.

Ms Dalling added that further claims could not be completely ruled out, referred to job evaluation issues and the need to avoid disparities in future, and confirmed that audits were being undertaken to identify issues to help avoid protracted actions. Thereafter Councillor McAlpine stressed the Council's commitment to addressing equal pay, commending the stage that had been reached locally.

It was agreed to note the position and comments made.

COUNCIL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

4. The Committee considered the Minute of the meeting of the Council's Health and Safety Committee held on 10 February 2016.

Mr Larkin commented that the Minute was subject to amendment as it had already been agreed that reference should have been included to an issue that was raised but not recorded. Regarding the reference made to the Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Joint Business Support Group encouraging staff to attend health and safety training, he commented that training was being arranged but not attended and sought further clarification on this. The Head of Environment (Housing and Property Services) clarified that he was unsure of the current position, undertaking to raise this at the next meeting of the Committee.

Regarding the Accident and Incident Reporting System (AIRS) which was raised, the Head of Environment (Housing and Property Services) reported that he understood that it had been checked already that information held in hard copy had been uploaded to AIRS and matched that kept electronically therefore.

The committee noted:-

- (a) that the Head of Environment (Housing and Property Services) would raise the HSCP health and safety training issue discussed at the next meeting of the Health and Safety Committee; and
- (b) otherwise, the Minute and that it was subject to amendment.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

5. The committee noted that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on Thursday, 22 September May 2016.

VALIDICTORY

6. Councillor Fletcher paid tribute to the contribution which Mr Munro and Mr Cameron, who were retiring, had made to discussions and the work of the Committee over a number of years. In particular, he referred to Mr Munro's role as Joint Chair, thanked them for their hard work and wished them both well for the future.

Mr Munro and Mr Cameron replied in suitable terms, during which Mr Cameron commended the work of officers, the approach of Members and the Council to discussions on a range of issues some of which had been difficult, and the way accommodation had been reached on various matters.

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