

**Carlisle City Council / Trades Union Bi-Monthly
Corporate Joint Consultative Meeting
Wednesday 14 April 2004**

Present: C Wright; UNISON
P Crack; UNISON
D Williams; Head of MS&ES
J Cross; Principal Personnel Officer
K Graham; GMB
M Mooney; Executive Director (Chair)
J Gooding; Executive Director
D Kavanagh (Minutes)

Apologies: A Westnedge; AMICUS
P Stybelski; Town Clerk & Chief Executive
F Mitchell; UNISON
G Caig; GMB

C Wright advised the meeting that Penny Crack and Floss Mitchell had been appointed as joint Branch Secretaries.

CJC 08/04 MINUTES OF THE CJC 11 FEBRUARY 2004

The minutes of the last meeting of the CJC held on 11 February 2004 were agreed as a true record.

CJC 09/04 MATTERS ARISING

CJC 03 / 04 Skills for Life
M Mooney reported that things are progressing with a meeting with colleagues to be held soon.

BAC

M Mooney gave an update and advised that the review was now coming to an end with a meeting set to finalise the review.

CJC 07/04 Civic Centre Lifts
J Gooding advised still looking at possible improvements to the lifts.

Attendance Management Policy & Guidance

J Cross gave an update on the above advising that the Attendance Management Policy and Guidance officially went live as from 1 April 2004. She thanked everyone for their valuable input and gave a reminder that the new forms were now in use.

Redeployment

J Cross gave CJC advance notice that she is working on our policy for redeployment to give greater clarification.

C Wright raised a concern that in the past people seeking redeployment had not received an interview when applying for posts. It was agreed that this would be looked at through the process of the review. J Cross thanked him for his comments and advised that JC/MSES would be happy to receive further comments on the current policy and suggestions for improvements.

It was agreed that P Crack and J Cross would hold a separate meeting to discuss further.

Probationary Period & Assessment

J Cross gave an overview on proposals for a new corporate induction programme for all new starters. Trades Union representatives to be involved in the production of the programme and any views/suggestions on the contents to be passed to J Cross. D Williams advised that the programme would provide clarification (who does what) and a better interface between local and corporate induction into the organisation. This will integrate with the overall HR Strategy.

M Mooney suggested Members be included in the induction process to give a political overview. Business Unit Heads, Town Clerk and Chief Executive and Trades Unions will also give input.

The draft programme to be brought back to a future meeting before being finalised.

Customer Contact Centre / HR Matters

J Gooding gave an update on progress with the Customer Contact Centre project. The contract has been signed and J Gooding has given presentations to several business units on the project. Consultation with staff is taking place through the Chat Room on Public Folders.

Initial drawings have been received from Capita and it is expected that the Centre will go live in the autumn with access to services via Internet and telephone. J Cross advised that once the structure is in the latter stages MSES will be able to look at jobs and staffing required for the CCC. Further discussions will take place on applicable HR matters between MSES and Trades Unions as the process continues. When J Cross has further details on the requirements for staff she will draft a document for consultation and discussion. J Cross will keep the Unions advised.

Revenue & Benefits Review

J Cross updated CJC on the above review and some concerns raised by members of staff in Revenues and Benefits regarding gradings. P Mason is therefore to undertake a mini management review comparing grades with other local authorities. P Mason will include Trades Unions in this process.

C Wright noted the concerns and will keep the situation under review.

Management Development Programme

D Williams gave an update and advised that the programme is now into its second phase. The MDP phase 2 has more components and has been enhanced by a new element the 'Achieving Cumbrian Excellence' (ACE) regional initiative. This initiative is funded from IDeA money and all District Council's in Cumbria will take part. It is about management development and Member development. ACE will be integrated into the MDP and the MLDP. The ACE programme will comprise of two learning sets for managers and each business unit will be represented. There will be two themes – 'Making partnerships work and Corporate Working. Managers will work on a task within one of these themes.

D Williams reported that good progress is being made with the MDP to date with the majority of managers already engaged.

CJC 11/04 INVESTORS IN PEOPLE RE-ASSESSMENT

D Williams gave an overview on the Committee Report and action plan circulated to the meeting and highlighted the key issues.

- IIP inspection will be in June this year with fewer staff needing to be seen by the inspectors.
- The Assessor will see a Trades Union representatives if possible but will receive contributions from TU reps in any form.
- The process will involve confidential interviews with staff.

The Action Plan addresses the specific points raised by the assessor last time with actions put together to co-ordinate with the improvement plan to achieve good practice across the authority in people management. Progress is good and on schedule for June.

D Williams asked for any feedback / comments on the report.

CJC 12/04 HR STRATEGY

As a Local Authority employer we need to have an HR People Strategy. J Cross advised that to date we have a number of policies and procedures on people management but no formalised overarching Strategy.

MSES is in the process of producing a 'plan' setting out where we are now and where we want to be in the next 3 years, stating how we will get there. This will be a strategic policy for personnel direction which when drafted will be circulated for comments. The timetable for completion is very tight and J Cross requested feedback from the Trades Unions on our current people policies in order to inform the process. The first draft will be taken to CMT and will then be circulated to CJC for comments.

CJC 13/04 EMPLOYEE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAMME

A short paper on the above was circulated for discussion and D Williams gave a brief overview. SSDG is overseeing the programme which is intended for all staff. It is a similar model to the MDP. Over the course of the next 3 years it is hoped that all staff will take advantage of the programme which will be launched in June.

P Crack raised the need for training in customer contact skills for staff. D Williams advised that this would be addressed by the above programme and continuous improvement for all staff across the authority (not just those within the Customer Contact Centre). D Williams stressed that this was a significant investment in staff to enhance skills.

CJC 14/04 CAR PARKING

P Crack requested an update on the situation with staff car parking. She reported that a number of staff had concerns that staff permits for the Swifts Car Park would be withdrawn in the near future.

J Gooding advised that this was not the case. Furthermore, there may be a few extra permits for the Swifts available following the Carlisle Housing Association's staff move out of the Civic Centre. Capacity at the Swifts Car Park to be reassessed prior to any reallocation of permits to Business Units.

The Trades Unions welcomed any movement of staff back to the Swifts Car Park.

CJC 15/04 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Smoker's Corner

Smokers are to be provided with an area at the rear of the building instead of the front. Access etc is currently being sorted and staff will be informed once the facilities are in place.

The Trades Unions supported this initiative.

Appraisal

K Graham raised his concern that a long time had passed since the training on the appraisal process and advised that there was still a delay in receiving appraisals within several Business Units.

D Williams advised that the Business Process Re-engineering may have had an effect on appraisals taking place in some Business Units.

P Crack advised that appraisals were not taking place in Customer and Information Services.

Executive Directors will take this up with Business Unit Heads.

Single Status

K Graham raised the question of Single Status. A further meeting yet to be held between J Gooding, J Cross and the Trades Union Representatives.

This matter to be discussed further at next CJC meeting on 15 June 2004.

Staff Probationary Periods

K Graham asked for clarification on the 6-month probationary period for staff. J Cross gave clarification and advised that this was part of the National Conditions whereby a 6-month probationary period applies to all new staff coming from outside the authority. However, all managers are asked to make an assessment of staff at the end of the first 6-month period in post. We will be reviewing these arrangements during the next year.

Job Adverts

K Graham asked for clarification on the requirement for extra checks for certain posts. J Cross advised that checks such as police checks (criminal records) were carried out only where required by legislation and usually for posts working directly with vulnerable groups.

Minutes of Other Meetings

D Williams reminded CJC of the requirement of those meetings, which report to CJC, to forward copies of their minutes for consideration at the next meeting.

Date and Time of Next Meeting

Wednesday 15 June 2004 at 10.00am in Slupsk.

The Meeting Closed at 11.40am.