

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CENTRAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2010 AT 1400 HOURS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS, LONDON ROAD, KILMARNOCK

PRESENT: Councillors Hugh Ross, Douglas Reid, Maureen McKay, Tom Cook, Barney Menzies and Jimmy Kelly; William Cree (TGWU); Brian Reid (UNISON); Stuart Ross (GMB); and Andrew Wilson (UCATT).

ATTENDING: Fiona Lees, Chief Executive; Elizabeth Morton, Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services; Alex McPhee, Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support; Martin Rose, Head of Human Resources; George Park, Employee Relations Manager and Jennifer Morrison, Administrative Officer.

ALSO ATTENDING: Paul Bennett (UCATT), Full Time Official and Elizabeth Wilson, representing Louise Gilmour, Full Time Official.

APOLOGIES: Councillors Jim Todd and Kathy Morrice; Arthur West, Trade Union Convener; Louise Gilmour and Jim Winter, Full Time Officials; Jennifer Elliot and Philip McGhee (TGWU); Liz McCulloch (UNISON); Janet Mitchell (GMB); and Billy McBurnie (AMICUS/AEEU).

CHAIR: Councillor Hugh Ross, Vice Chair.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

1. The Committee resolved "That under Section 50A(4) of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, as amended, the Press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 11 of Schedule 7A of the Act".

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

2. There was submitted and approved as a correct record the minutes of the following meetings, viz:- (circulated)
 - 2.1 (i) Minutes of Meeting of 13 May 2010; and
 - (ii) Minutes of Special Meeting of 24 June 2010

2.2 MATTERS ARISING

The Administrative Officer reported and it was noted there was now a vacancy for a GMB Member on the Committee following Elizabeth Wilson's retiral from the Council.

SINGLE STATUS UPDATE

3. There was submitted a report dated 1 September 2010 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support which provided an update on Single Status and related matters.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the Unions position that they had hoped to reach agreement on mileage allowances, as part of the negotiations on the revised Conditions of Service and they would be further writing to members on the matter; and
- (ii) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

PENSIONS ISSUES

4. There was submitted and noted a report dated 1 September 2010 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support which provided an update on (i) the financial position of Strathclyde Pension Fund following its annual meeting which took place on 18 June 2010 and (ii) the Pensions Pathfinder Project.

PROCESSING AND PAYMENT OF WEEKLY WAGES OVER CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR PERIOD 2010/2011

5. There was submitted a report dated 31 August 2010 (circulated) by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support which requested consideration of arrangements for the processing and payment of weekly wages over Christmas and New Year period 2010/2011.

It was agreed:-

- (i) to note the arrangements for the processing and payment of weekly wages over the festive period;
- (ii) that the Trade Unions support the communication of the pay arrangements to employees via their own communication channels; and
- (iii) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

BUDGET UPDATE

6. The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support provided the meeting with information as follows, viz:-
- (i) Information had been given the previous day to all Finance Directors in Scotland with regard to funding. East Ayrshire Council could have a cash cut of at least 4% in their grant for 2011/2012. This would result in a funding gap for 2011/2012 well in excess of £10M;
 - (ii) Some remedial action had been taken already, with Directors examining budgets on a line by line basis;
 - (iii) Half the Council's costs were employee costs. There would be natural wastage and voluntary severance. Compulsory redundancies could not be ruled out, however the Council wanted to minimise these. A report would be submitted to Cabinet with proposals and thereafter consultations would take place with Trade Union and employee groups; and
 - (iv) That a reasonable estimate of the number of reduction in posts over the next three years would be around 700 which equated to 15% of the budget.

Following a point, raised the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support advised that it would not be helpful to trawl all employees regarding possible voluntary severance.

The Chief Executive emphasised the need to focus resources available on ensuring that statutory responsibilities could be met and, at the same time, that agreed Community Planning priorities could be progressed.

ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

7.1 CONNAUGHT

Andrew Wilson, UCATT, raised the issue of Connaught which had gone into administration. It was noted that the Council's Housing Asset Service had taken on the emergency side of the Council's contract with Connaught as an interim measure.

Concern was expressed for former Council employees who had transferred to Connaught, and confirmation was given that under TUPE agreement employees would transfer across to any new company which bought Connaught.

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support reported that the Council would have the option of withdrawing from the Connaught contract. It was understood that there were other businesses interested in buying Connaught and he would be contacting the Administrators the following day, as the Council had to take a decision quickly on whether to stay with Connaught, if a new buyer could be found quickly, or to look at a new company.

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Support hoped that the matter would be resolved very shortly.

The meeting terminated at 1440 hours.