

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (MANUAL/CRAFT) – 7 September 2000

Motherwell, 7 September 2000 at 10 am.

A Meeting of the JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (MANUAL/CRAFT)

PRESENT

Councillor McElroy, Convener; Councillors McCallum, Saunders, and Valentine, A. Fair, AEEU; A. Duncan, W Lindsay and F. McKay, GMB; R. Power, M. Veldon and G. Wilmshurst, TGWU, S. Dillon, UCATT, and K. Campbell and C. Llewellyn, UNISON.

CHAIR

Councillor McElroy (Convener) presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Chief Executive, Chief Committee Services Officer, Head of Personnel Services, Chief Personnel Officer, Principal Personnel Officer and Personnel and Administration Manager, Department of Construction Services.

APOLOGIES

Councillors Chadha, Gordon, Grant and Smith; and G. Smith, Vice-Convener.

PAYROLL RATIONALISATION

The trade union representatives requested that payroll rationalisation be included on the agenda as an urgent item. The Convener advised the Committee that as no notification of the item had been received prior to the commencement of this Committee to enable the availability of an appropriate official to speak on the item, he could not agree to the request to include an item on payroll rationalisation.

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. The Chief Executive outlined his vision for this Council and his plans for actioning that vision, highlighting organisational issues for 2000/2001. The trade union representatives emphasised the need for greater consultation at all levels of the Council.

The Committee thanked the Chief Executive for his presentation and noted the comments made by the trade union representatives regarding consultation.

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2. There was submitted a Minute of the Joint Consultative Committee (Manual/Craft) held on 11 May 2000.

The Committee noted and approved the terms of the Minute.

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MATTERS ARISING - WAGE SLIPS - ADVERTISING

3. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 11 May 2000, the trade union representatives requested the outcome of the investigation into information recorded on payslips for both trade union subscriptions and advertising. The Head of Personnel Services advised the Committee that the wording of information recorded on payslips had been amended.

DRAFT REVISED CONSTITUTION

4. With reference to paragraph 9 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 11 May 2000 when it was agreed that a report be submitted to this Committee setting out proposals for a merged Joint Consultative Committee and reviewing the constitution, there was submitted a report dated 1 September 2000 by the Head of Personnel Services regarding a draft revised constitution (1) indicating that the craft operatives would transfer to the new Public Private Partnerships on 1 January 2001; (2) suggesting that one Joint Consultative Committee could represent all employees' interests, excluding teachers; (3) proposing the implementation date for the revised arrangements be the first meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee in 2001, and (4) intimating that the Trade Union membership of the Joint Consultative Committee required determination.

The trade union representatives advised the Committee that it was their opinion that this proposal was premature as there were still a number of issues for this Committee to address prior to merging into one Joint Consultative Committee.

The Committee agreed to continue the report by the Head of Personnel Services to a future meeting of this Committee.

BEST VALUE

5. The trade union representatives requested the current position on the Council's best value regime and outlined the belief of the workforce that best value was linked to job cuts. The Head of Personnel Services advised the Committee that the focus of best value was on the outcome of the service reviews and in particular on personnel implications.

The Committee agreed that better consultation was necessary when dealing with best value.

TUPE TRANSFERS

6. With reference to paragraph 2 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 11 May 2000 when the General Manager, Construction Services and Head of Personnel Services advised of the up-to-date position on TUPE, the trade union representatives requested the current position on (1) the transfer of pensions for TUPE transfers; (2) the assessments being carried out by Actuaries on pensions, and (3) injury benefits allowances.

Having heard the Head of Personnel Services and the Personnel and Administration Manager on discussions taking place on the basis that TUPE would apply at the point of transfer, the identification of employees against individual partnerships and the Council's position on injury benefit allowances, the Committee noted the concerns of the workforce regarding the transfer of pensions

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HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

7. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 16 March 2000 when the progress made with the formation of a Health and Safety Forum was noted, the trade union representatives requested the current position regarding the establishment of a Council wide Health and Safety Committee. The Head of Personnel Services advised the Committee that a detailed paper setting out a framework for a health and safety forum was the subject of departmental consultations and would be issued to the trade unions for discussion and consultation in the near future.

SUPPLY AND AVAILABILITY OF RED BOOK TO TRADE UNION REPRESENTATIVES ON THE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

8. With reference to paragraph 3 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 11 May 2000 when it was agreed that a report be submitted on the request from the Trade Union representatives that consideration be given to supplying the Joint Consultative Committee Trade Union side members with a copy of the Red Book and that a register be provided to the Trade Unions indicating where the Red Book would be located and accessed within each department, there were submitted reports dated 28 and 30 August 2000 by the Head of Personnel Services thereon (1) setting out in the Appendices to the report a list of locations and availability within departments of copies of the Red Book; (2) advising of the cost of providing copies of the Book to trade union representatives on the Joint Consultative Committee, and (3) indicating that all relevant budgets had been fully committed for the financial year 1999/2000.

Following discussion, the Committee noted the concerns of the trade union representatives in obtaining and accessing copies of the Red Book.

FILLING OF VACANCIES

9. The trade union representatives questioned the length of time being taken to fill vacant posts in the Council. The Head of Personnel Services advised the Committee that the Policy and Resource Vacancy Control Sub-Committee had been disbanded and that it was for individual departments to decide on the filling of vacant posts and that additionally the Chief Executive would scrutinise posts on salary scale PO12 and above.

ADVERTISING OF VACANCIES

10. The trade union representatives questioned the rationale of decisions to advertise vacancies in certain publications while disregarding specific publications. The Head of Personnel Services highlighted the numerous avenues used to advertise vacancies of the Council and explained the criteria utilised when choosing an appropriate publication.

ADVICE AND GUIDANCE SERVICE

11. The trade union representatives requested the current position on the provision of an advice and guidance service for employees in their final year of employment. The Head of Personnel Services advised the Committee (1) that the Scottish Retirement Council ran a course on "preparing for retirement"; (2) that advice was given on available training and pension entitlements, and (3) that the Council would shortly be introducing an Independent Financial Advice Service to employees of the Council.

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The Committee noted the concerns of the trade union representatives regarding the dissemination of information to employees and agreed to investigate increasing the awareness of employees of the services being offered.

ACTING UP POSITIONS

12. The trade union representatives referred to the secondment of employees between departments or to external agencies and their entitlements on return to a substantive post. The Head of Personnel Services advised the Committee that the Council did not have a formal secondment policy and indicated that each case was viewed on an individual basis.