

Motherwell, 14 March 2002 at 2 pm.

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

PRESENT

Councillor McElroy, Convener; Councillors Chadha, Gordon, McCallum, Saunders and Selfridge; P. Cairns and S. Ross, GMB; G. Devine and M. Scroggie, T & G; C. Llewellyn and S. Taylor, UNISON.

CHAIR

Councillor McElroy (Convener) presided.

IN ATTENDANCE

The Committee Services Officer, Head of Personnel Services, Chief Personnel Officer and Divisional Support Manager (North)

APOLOGIES

Councillors Grant, Morris and Valentine and R. Power, Vice-Convener.

The Convener exercised his discretion to vary the order of business as hereinafter minuted.

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (MANUAL/CRAFT) - MINUTE

1. There was submitted the Minute of the meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee (Manual/Craft) held on 22 November 2001.

The Committee noted and approved the terms of the Minute.

MATTERS ARISING

(1) PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP (PPP) - EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

2. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 22 November 2001 when, inter alia, the strength of feeling of the trade unions on the handling of the consultation process was noted, the trade union representatives referred to the meeting held on 19 February 2002 at Summerlee Heritage Conference Centre, Coatbridge on Education 2010 PPP and indicated that they had comments to make on the Minute of that meeting.

The Committee agreed that any comments on the Minute be forwarded to the Director of Education.

(2) SMOKING IN COUNCIL PREMISES POLICY

3. With reference to paragraph 7 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 22 November 2001 when, inter alia, the Committee were advised that measures would be put in place to assist people to stop smoking, the trade union representatives requested an update on the enforcement of

the Smoking in Council Premises Policy and particularly referred to the position regarding lets of premises.

The Head of Personnel Services (1) explained the principles of the Policy which was based on a hierarchy of measures that could vary between premises; (2) intimated that in relation to lets of premises it was for the Department of Community Services to deal with any waivers that may be requested; (3) intimated that any individual problems in relation to the Policy should be referred to the relevant Department in the first instance, and (4) advised that any employees interested in the Get Fit to Quit Smoking classes who had difficulty due to shifts worked should respond to the Department of Community Services and (a) attach a note of their normal working pattern, and (b) request an alternative timing to accommodate this.

The Committee noted the position in relation to the Smoking in Council Premises Policy.

(3) PROVISION OF A POLICY ON WHISTLE BLOWING

4. With reference to paragraph 8 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 22 November 2001 when the Committee were advised, *inter alia*, that a proposed policy on whistle blowing was being developed, the trade union representatives asked when the proposed policy would be available for consultation.

The Head of Personnel Services agreed to consult with the Director of Administration regarding the availability of a proposed policy on whistle blowing.

CONCIERGE SYSTEM

5. The trade union representatives raised the issue of the Council using a security firm in an emergency if a concierge was on sick leave. The Divisional Support Manager (North) advised the Committee that correspondence had been received by the Director of Housing and Property Services from the GMB regarding the matter and that a reply would be made to that Union as soon as possible.

The Committee noted that a reply would be issued to the GMB on the concierge system.

DRAFT REVISED CONSTITUTION

6. With reference to paragraph 6 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 22 November 2001 when the trade unions were asked to consider the terms of a proposed draft constitution for a merged Joint Consultative Committee, there was submitted (1) a report dated 1 September 2000 by the Head of Personnel Services which set out (a) proposals for the merger of the Joint Consultative Committees (APT&C) and (Manual/Craft) in light of the single status agreement, and (b) the draft constitution for a Joint Consultative Committee for local government employees, and (2) a letter dated 15 January 2002 from the North Lanarkshire Joint Consultative Council Trade Union Sides commenting on the draft revised constitution viz (a) indicating that in terms of the membership of the Joint Consultative Committee each side could have a representation of 13 members; (b) suggesting that figures be supplied from the Finance Department payroll for UNISON, TGWU, GMB, MSF and other unions showing membership and allowing an equitable distribution of representation, and (3) requesting that the statement "the quorum shall not be achieved on the trade union side by only members of one trade union" be added.

The Head of Personnel Services (1) indicated that a response had been made to the Joint Consultative Council Trade Union Sides on the comments, viz:- (a) that in terms of the membership of the Joint Consultative Committee each side could have a representation of 12 members; (b) that each Trade Union had been given figures from the Finance Department's payroll showing membership to

allow discussion on equitable distribution of representation, and (c) that there would be no difficulty in adding the statement "the quorum shall not be achieved on the Trade Union Side by only members of one trade union", and (2) acknowledged that it would not be the intention of the Council to merge the Joint Consultative Committee (APT & C) and the Joint Consultative Committee (Manual/Craft) until progress had been made on the core conditions of service for manual and craft employees.

The Committee agreed that the trade union representatives consider the content of the reply by the Head of Personnel Services on the terms of the proposed draft Constitution for a merged Joint Consultative Committee and submit any comments to the Head of Personnel Services.

MANUAL/CRAFT CORE CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

7. With reference to paragraph 4 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 3 December 1999 when the Committee noted that trade unions should be involved in future reviews impacting on core conditions of service, the trade union representatives requested that progress on the manual/craft core conditions of service be noted.

The Committee noted that the manual/craft core conditions of service were under active consideration.

FACILITIES FOR TRADE UNIONS

8. There was submitted a report dated 11 March 2002 by the Director of Administration regarding proposed facilities for trade unions (1) detailing a draft policy which set out levels of support to be made available to the trade unions in terms of internal mail facilities, use of land line telephones and facsimile machines, use of mobile phones and use of photocopying/printing facilities, and (2) advising that the draft policy took account of the arrangements and resources within departments of the Council as well as service delivery implications.

The Committee agreed that the trade union representatives consider the content of the draft policy and submit any comments to the Head of Personnel Services.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE - DEATH IN SERVICE/PRE-RETIREMENT ARRANGEMENTS

9. With reference to paragraph 11 of the Minute of the meeting of this Committee held on 22 November 2001 when it was agreed that the matters in relation to employee assistance in respect of death in service and information for employees nearing retiral age would be placed in front of the Personnel Practitioners Forum, there was submitted a report dated 4 March 2002 by the Director of Administration outlining general guidelines to be issued to departments (1) detailing the standard procedure to be adopted in the circumstances when an employee dies in service, and (2) outlining the arrangements proposed in relation to pre-retirement.

The Head of Personnel Services advised the Committee that guidance to Departments on the procedures in relation to circumstances when an employee dies in service and in relation to pre-retirement would be discussed at the Personnel Practitioners Forum and agreed to forward a copy of the finalised guidance on the procedures to the trade union representatives.

The Committee noted (1) that guidance to Departments on the procedures would be discussed at the Personnel Practitioners Forum, and (2) that finalised guidance on the procedures in relation to circumstances when an employee dies in service and in relation to pre-retirement would be forwarded to the trade union representatives.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

10. The trade union representatives referred to the grievance procedure and indicated that in some Departments the timescales laid down were not being adhered to. The Head of Personnel Services indicated that if specific problems were being encountered within the grievance procedure they should be passed to the Head of Personnel Services for investigation.

The Committee agreed that the matter be raised at the Personnel Practitioners Forum to remind Departments of the timescales laid down within the grievance procedure.

ANNUAL LEAVE

11. The trade union representatives raised the issue of those employees commencing employment on 3 January and the full year not being included in the calculations for annual leave. The Head of Personnel Services advised the Committee that the matter had been the subject of discussion and that there were various factors to be considered before producing a common framework.

The Committee noted that the matter of the annual leave calculation was being actively considered.

ARRESTMENT OF WAGES/SALARIES

12. The trade union representatives raised the issue of advance payments of wages/salaries over the holiday period and the effect on an arrestment of wages. The Head of Personnel Services explained that the Council had no control over the formula used in the Debtors (Scotland) Act for the arrestment of wages.

The Committee agreed that the Head of Personnel Services explore with the Director of Finance a possibility of running separate pay runs at the holiday period to alleviate the effect on an arrestment of wages.

EMPLOYEE COUNSELLING SERVICE

13. The trade union representatives commented on the feedback being received on the Employee Counselling Service and particularly the fact that after two visits the employees were being removed from the service.

The Head of Personnel Services (1) explained (a) that the Council received information from the Employee Counselling Service showing referrals received; (b) that the information received was of a general nature, and (c) that any areas of concern regarding an individual case could be raised with the Department concerned in the first instance, and (2) indicated that anonymous questionnaires could be issued to those employees who had dealings with the Employee Counselling Service to assess the quality of the service and any problems encountered.

The Committee agreed that the Head of Personnel Services raise the issue of the Employee Counselling Service at the Personnel Practitioners Forum to discuss any problems encountered and to issue a questionnaire to appropriate employees.