

# Employee Side Liaison Panel

27 August 2020 via Skype

## Employer Side Attendees:

Cllr Barry Rickman  
Cllr Hilary Brand  
Cllr Jeremy Heron  
Cllr Mark Steele (item 4)

## Employee Side Representative Attendees

Kevin Beckett  
Bertie Russell

## Officers Attending

Bob Jackson  
Alan Bethune  
Heleana Aylett  
Manjit Sandhu (item 4)

## Advisors to Employee Side Attending:

Richard White - Unite  
Peter Terry – Unison  
Emma Lang - Unison

### Item 1

#### HR Ctte Reports

There were three reports due to go onto the HR Ctte in September. These were the Wellbeing Action Plan, Workforce Profile and Training Update Report. HA wanted to check that any comments received so far were all that were coming. PT commented that the longer the unions had to prepare their comments the better.

### Item 2

#### Employee Survey Results

HA presented the overall results from the recent Staff Survey. Each Service Manager has now been given the results for their own service area in order to discuss issues within their teams. The employee side welcomed the presentation. It was commented by the employee side that the views of the furloughed Leisure workforce was also important considering the Leisure Centres' re-opening plans.

### Item 3

#### Return to Work Presentation

BJ gave a presentation on the actions that have been taken so far and that will continue to be taken to ensure a safe phased reopening of ATC. Clarification was sought on the timescale for this. Services had been given indicative timescales to develop a plan to, but BJ confirmed that we will only reopen when we are ready. The timescale would be flexed accordingly. The Employer side were working to be in a position to share the Risk Assessments and the Return to work guidance with the unions for them to comment on early in September. The Unions stated that their expectation would be that we

should aim for 2m distance rather than 1m+. The employer side commented that 2m was also the preference, but in some spaces with narrower walkways for example, this wasn't possible, hence also working with 1m+.

#### **Item 4**

##### **Health and Leisure Employment Aspects**

MS went through a few slides to give an update on the progress so far in relation to the review.

The Unions were unhappy with several points in the contract. In places they did not feel that the wording was strong enough.

They felt that in relation to the pension arrangements the council was looking to save money at the expense of the workforce.

They felt there was a lack of detail in terms of Employee Relations information from bidders. They would have liked details on issues such as the number of Employment Tribunals bidders had attended or their policy on Trade Union Recognition.

MS stated that the evaluated section on Organisation and Resources is all about employees. Before we get to the best and final offer stage, we will be seeking further clarity on several issues and we will also be asking questions from the local authority reference sites.

RW stated that the Recognition Agreement should transfer under TUPE. MS confirmed that this is in the contract.

Update: The exact wording from the contract is as follows:

The Operator shall and shall procure that each and every Sub-contractor shall recognise the trade unions representing the Transferring Employees to the same extent as they were recognised by the Authority before the Service Transfer Date.

#### **Item 5**

##### **Homeworking Allowance**

Unison requested that the Council consider paying an allowance to those working from home to cover the additional costs that may have been incurred such as shelving, additional electricity or heating.

Unite requested that also considered are those that have continued to work throughout the pandemic delivering services in operational areas and so do not have the opportunity to work to home. They were opposed to having a two-tier system.

Cllr Heron pointed out that employees were just as likely to be better off as a result of working from home, both in terms of fuel savings and savings in commuting time.

It was agreed that the council would consider the request and inform the unions of their decision.

#### **Item 6**

##### **Callout Payments**

The current standby payment system is split into two payments. One payment is for being on standby and available and this is paid whether you need to leave home or not.

The second part is a call out payment. This is paid when an employee needs to leave home and attend site in an emergency. On these occasions the payment is based on the number of hours away from home.

There are several staff on standby who do not necessarily need to leave their home to resolve an issue.

The unions are concerned that these staff are primarily female and that the practice is unfair. It was agreed that this would be investigated.

#### **Item 7**

##### **Extremely Clinically Vulnerable**

The council was asked to explain how they would be treating these employees in relation to getting them back into the workplace.

HA explained that these employees would all be treated on an individual basis. Robust risk assessments have been completed and employees will be able to see these. We do have to balance the fears and anxiety of individuals about returning with ensuring that there is no detrimental effect on their mental health and wellbeing if they remain at home

#### **Item 8**

##### **Any Other Business**

##### **Domestic Violence**

PT expressed disappointment that this issue had not been progressed. HA agreed to follow this up with the team.

##### **Pay Award 2020**

The employee side commented that the 2.75% pay offer had now been accepted by the unions and requested that NFDC reflect this in pay back to April at the earliest opportunity. HA confirmed that the council had already implemented this the final 0.75% being in May pay, backdated to April. No further payments were required.

END