

Notes of Employee Side Liaison Panel

24 February 2021 at 10am via Teams

Employer Side Attendees:

Cllr Barry Rickman
Cllr Hilary Brand
Cllr Jeremy Heron
Cllr Mark Steele

Employee Side Representative Attendees

Kevin Beckett
Bertie Russell
Steve Drodge

Officers Attending

Bob Jackson
Alan Bethune
Heleana Aylett
Manjit Sandhu
Elaine Olden
Brian Byrne
Nikki Swift
Chris Noble

Advisors to Employee Side Attending:

Neil Duncan-Jordan– Unison
Nicola Nixon - GMB

Apologies:

Richard White

Barry (BR) to chair the meeting.

- 1 Minutes of the last meeting – attached

Went through the minutes of the last meeting for any comments. None raised.

- 2 Work Programme – attached

Work programme contained most items being covered today and Heleana went through the items. Rewards scheme will be looked at in another meeting.

- 3 Domestic Abuse Update – Brian Byrne and Nikki Swift to attend

Work is continuing with HCC (Safeguarding Group) and is being led by the Jude Ruddock- Atcherley, strategic domestic abuse manager. Work continues to develop one policy which can be utilised by all district and Boroughs within

Hampshire. When completed this will be shared with the employee side and it is envisaged this will be completed by HCC in the last quarter of 2020/21. The drive for a pan Hampshire policy is that this will deliver a consistent approach and response to any person suffering DV within the county. This is important given a significant number of staff do not reside in the area where they work. There are 2 core partner agencies primarily commissioned for the support and protection of DV victims i.e Hampshire Police and Stop Domestic Abuse.

NFDC provides Safeguarding Training which includes domestic abuse to all staff based on their operational role. i.e staff undertaking public facing roles or office based have this provided every 2 years as part of mandatory training. Different levels are delivered i.e Level 1 is given to all staff and is part of their induction. Level 2 is for visiting officers and others that may have contact with the public either face to face or remotely. We have also commenced staff training session on domestic abuse 'guidance for staff and managers' with a further session booked for March 10th.

Neil emphasised that it was the staff policy he was interested in. Brian explained that it is a staff domestic abuse policy that HCC are working on and it is envisaged this will be available at the next meeting. The policy is to deliver a consistent document to cover all staff within the Hampshire area.

4 Health and Leisure Review – MS and Cllr Steele to attend

Manjit explained that the review is now at the final stages of decision making. It goes to Council tomorrow. In January, there were a number of Staff briefings and the Q&A's that arose from those briefings and questions asked via the leisure review email were shared with Community and Leisure Panel and attached to the Cabinet report. The meetings were well attended and good questions raised.

Support Services impacted by the review are being discussed with Employee Side and will follow normal established review processes.

Cllr M Steele - Once a decision has been made we will move forward with mobilisation. Very happy with the process to date.

Neil – Briefing meetings – talking about 400 staff but only about 90 attended. Less than 50% attended. Wanted to explore the level of staff responses.

Cllr M Steele – first face to face meetings over two years ago was about the same as to the recent meetings. Manjit explained that the number of staff attending virtual staff meetings was very similar to the numbers who attended previous face to face meetings. Staff were also able to send any questions to

a 'LeisureReview' email address, and responses to each question were also provided.

Nicola Nixon (GMB) – requested information on the process. Can she be brought up to speed. Manjit - Will arrange a briefing separately.

- 5 Health and Safety Issues – standing item
- Update on recruitment for Corporate H & S Manager - HA
 - Exit Interview Notes – AB – attached

Bob explained that Neil had contacted him separately to request a meeting on this item and therefore it maybe best to defer the item to next ESLP meeting.

The Corporate H&S Manager vacancy was currently out to advert, this was due to close on Sunday.

- 6 Coronavirus Rapid Flow tests – Bertie

Bertie said that his question had been answered via information placed on the NFDC site by comms.

- 7 Annual Leave Carry forward – KB

Kevin - Carrying over holiday more than 5 days. Heleana – one week can be carried over and Service Managers can allow staff to carry over an additional weeks leave. It was important that staff took their leave entitlement and the council was encouraging staff to have downtime and breaks, even though normal holidays could not be booked, staff still needed to take their leave. Kevin said the approach needed to be consistent. Heleana will provide a further communication to Service Managers.

Neil – People are now entitled to carry over 20 days over a two year period. Neil would like to have a look at the messaging – as to responsibilities as employer. Heleana would share the communication with Employee Side.

- 8 Ideas Scheme - paper attached

Heleana – NFDC previously had a scheme. The briefing paper detailed what the scheme would cover. Employee Forum would consider any corporate suggestions. It was expected that most items would be to do with their own work areas and therefore would be dealt within their service. The suggestion scheme will continue to encourage staff to share ideas within their service or wider across the council.

- 9 Senior Pay Structure - paper attached

Heleana went through the report sent with the agenda.

Main points were:

- The introduction of a new band between current band 9 and service manager grade 10.
- New Service Managers to have a revised JD and not use the generic one.
- Two exceptional performance points to be introduced for new appointments in Bands 9, new 10 and 11 (Service Manager).
- Removal of the cash alternative car payment. Those currently receiving it in bands 9 would see this incorporated into their basic pay.
- Moving forward Market Supplements would be based on a % increase on top of the normal recruitment salary up to a maximum of 10%

Report going to HR Committee. Employee Side comments can be added to the report.

Heleana asked for Employee Side comments by the end of next week (5th March) so they can be included.

10 Performance Management - paper attached

Heleana – Covering report for this item. As part of the ITrent system there is a performance review module. However, ITrent is primarily a Payroll and HR system and so this does have limitations. We have moved forward from where we were. We can produce reports from the system to see how we are doing. All reviews have not been completed and there are various reasons for this including furlough and shielding. One way forward is to move to a more performance pay system, we need a system that has the items that can take all information in. Performance reviews should be done within a set time scale as currently they are not consistent throughout the council and the timeframe does not inform the increment process. Would need to investigate what systems are available that could meet the councils future needs.

Neil – UNISON is opposed to a performance related pay system – when do you need our comments by – Heleana explains by the 5th March. Is there a problem with Staff performance?

Hilary – timeframe, how often do they have performance reviews.

Nicola – People do not like this sort of system. Concern is that it sounds like a pay and reward system – with links to pay.

Bob – The performance review process reflects individual performance and provides feedback, not all staff can access the current system via technology. Reviews once a year. Not a pay and reward system.

Manjit – People have one to one meetings on a regular basis and these help take into account how the staff are performing and developing, and this contributes to the yearly review.

11 Local Pandemic Pay Claim

Touched on this subject at the last meeting. Richard not here, should we leave until next time.

Neil – no need to delay – additional pandemic payment throughout authorities.

Bob - The Council is not planning to implement an additional pandemic payment for staff.

12 Any other business

Kickstart – Heleana advised that we had a call that NFDC have now moved up the list and our vacancies are now with the job centres. The Council has applied for 18 places. Hope to have more information by the HR Committee.

Nicola – has there been any discussions about post covid – i.e. long covid and how we support staff. No discussions but this will be added to the work programme

After some discussion around whether the current working practices will continue post covid, it was agreed to add new ways of working to the Work Programme