

**Employee Side Liaison Panel**  
**18 July 2022 at 9.30am via Teams**

**MINUTES**

**Employer Side Attendees:**

Cllr Jeremy Heron  
Cllr Jill Cleary

**Officers Attending**

Kate Ryan (KR)  
Alan Bethune (AB)  
Heleana Aylett (HA)  
Elaine Olden

**Advisors to Employee Side Attending:**

Neil Duncan-Jordan– Unison (ND)

**Apologies:**

Alan Durrant  
Kevin Beckett  
Cllr Edward Heron

**Not in attendance:**

Cllr Hilary Brand  
Richard White – Unite  
Bertie Russell

**Employee Side Representative Attendees:**

Steve Drodge

Cllr Jill Cleary lead the meeting in the absence of Cllr Edward Heron.

Kate Ryan took the opportunity of mentioning the changes implemented in respect of the recent heat wave:-

Waste Staff were starting earlier than normal – 5.30am start rather than 6am.

It was also agreed that a trial of sun protection cream was given to staff during the summer months. This would then be reviewed to see if this would be implemented as a longer term arrangement.

**1 Minutes of the last meeting**

Minutes were supplied of the previous meeting. HA went through the minutes briefly. Minutes were agreed.

ND raised the Mileage Allowance which was previously discussed. He felt it raised problems for some staff using their vehicles for work purposes. He commented that breaking the HMRC guidelines did not make the staff worse off. Did NFDC have any data on who this affected, how many etc.

HA said that they were looking in this matter, also making sure that all staff using their vehicles did have correct insurance etc. Spencer was also looking at this from a Health and Safety Prospective. They would get back in due course with a report reflecting the information on this subject.

## **2 Work Programme**

HA went through the Work Programme. The Menopause item had been added and there was a report later in the meeting. Hybrid Working – on this subject NFDC were asking staff over a couple of weeks for feedback on the system and were happy to say that the response was good. In the light of this they are hoping to bring a report to the next meeting. Cllr Jeremy Heron did ask if some of the questions were about team building and productivity? It was confirmed that managers were being asked specific questions on their views on this subject. ND asked if this scheme was contractual or temporary at the moment and HA advised it was temporary. ND said it would be good to see how the scheme was being used in all grades and understood that certain staff unfortunately could not use this scheme due to their jobs within the Council. HA said that when recruiting it was certainly a plus to some candidates.

## **3 Outcome of Leadership Review.**

Report shared with the Panel and other documents (Outcome report, Consultation feedback, proposed structure and pay report) supplied for information purposes. The report covered all aspects of the review procedures and staff briefings etc.

ND was on leave last week and has not been able to review the report and asked to send HA any comments he has in the next week or so.

KR said that the employees were being fully supported and believed that this move was necessary. It would mean that there would be redundancies, maybe 2 but there are other opportunities if anyone wished to take these up.

ND asked of NFDC ran a Pay Protection Scheme and HA said that there was a scheme which protected for 6 months and if a candidate wished to move to another position, at the end of the 6 months they would be placed at the top of the grade they moved to. The staff would be fully supported and advised.

This was to go to Council in September to get the interview process and panel agreed and decision were set for December.

## **4 Health and Safety Issues – standing item No Matters raised within the Agenda.**

No item for this meeting as it was too early for the next quarterly report due to the meeting being brought forward. This means that there will be two reports in the next meeting.

ND raised the issue of the heatwave over Monday and Tuesday and what the Council had set up. KR confirmed that the offices were not closing but general guidance had been given and the measures that Kate discussed at the start of the meeting would also be in hand. KR agreed that this matter needed to be looked at as there was no temperature threshold. HA said that all staff had different situations as some needed to be in work to carry out their jobs but others could work from home. Any staff at risk should do everything they need to be safe. Cllr Jill Cleary said that this heatwave was a learning curve which needed planning for in the future.

## **5 Menopause Policy**

HA introduced the Policy. Within the report there are references to a number of websites for help and support in this matter. It was all about raising awareness with all staff and about being able to discuss the situation freely. While personal experiences may differ it was important to provide a supportive environment where staff could raise their concerns and issues.

ND welcomed the policy and again said that he had not had time to read the policy through and would like to come back to HA with his comments in due course. This was agreed.

Cllr Jill Cleary commented that she was fully supportive of the policy

## **6 Market Supplement Report – HA – Appendix 7 attached**

HA discussed the report supplied to the Panel. NFDC have been finding that recruiting had been difficult in some areas and they have needed to use the market supplement. They now are finding that it is also affecting the bands 11/12 and this report explained the need for NFDC to have more flexibility over these areas. The market supplement could be from 10% to 15% but this has to be justified and supported by Chief Executive, the 151 Officer and the Portfolio Holder and these are then reviewed after 12 Months. At present there is approx. 80 positions with market supplements and approx. 50 of these are drivers and the others are in various other areas.

There will be more of a breakdown in the HR Metric Report in future showing the service areas where market supplements are being used, the number of positions, etc. NFDC have had feedback from agencies that pay was not sufficient in the market for some posts to attract the right employees and NFDC are taking this on board.

KR commented that this is needed as it is challenging times and are mindful that the use of market supplements is not the long-term solution.

## **7 Staff Benefits Report**

The Report was explained by HA and supplied to the Panel. Explained there were three schemes that the Council wished to introduce later in the year as at present they were

introducing AVC's. To continue with the Childcare Vouchers and add the Cycle Scheme and Staff Benefits. There were a number of other benefit schemes available on the framework but at present these were the ones of interest.

## **8 Issues raised by Employee Side**

### **1. Update on Pay Banding – NDJ**

ND said that this matter was raised previously and wanted to know the position in respect of Bands 1-8. AB explained that at the moment the matter stays the same and that the first employer offer is expected to be made shortly after an NJC meeting to be held on Monday (25/07), and that NFDC will be able to update them on the matter then.

### **2. Potential redundancies at Freedom Leisure – NDJ**

ND said that Freedom do meet with them on occasions and at the last meeting announced the need for redundancies due to the reduction in membership at the leisure centres. NFDC said that they were aware and that they were expecting a meeting in the next few weeks.

AB said they were aware that Freedom were having consultations with staff next week and it was up to Freedom to deal with this process. Nothing further had been received from Freedom.

Cllr Jeremy Heron said that NFDC were keeping an eye on the matter but at the end of the day Freedom Leisure had to act.

### **3 Staffing Shortages (particularly at the depots) and Recruitment**

ND explained that he had been told that there were regular shortages causing problems with crews. He wondered what the reason was sickness or not enough staff and how NFDC were dealing with the issue.

HA displayed a slide of some details that had been supplied for the Waste Area (a copy to be forwarded to ND). This showed that services were running with the sack delivery being intermittent to enable the crews to fill shortages and other plans were shown on the slides of how the staff were redeployed to different areas if required. Advertising for new staff is ongoing with a new driver and 2 new loaders. 5 existing staff were being trained as loaders.

ND asked about the longer term issue and he said that NFDC were at the lower end of the pay and that they needed to change this in order to attract new staff.

This was being monitored, and the recruitment of additional loaders to the garden waste rounds would give another indication of the labour market at this end of the pay scale. In other areas there were vacancies too.

## **9 Any Other Business**

## **1. Casual Contracts**

HA stated that where possible staff were moved to fixed contracts rather than casual. Approx 18 were left as casual. If these were to establish more of a pattern in their employment, then these could be move to fixed contract. ND asked for a further discussion with HA to discuss the matter.

No further business was raised by the Panel members and so the Chairman closed the meeting.

DRAFT