

JOINT CONSULTATIVE FORUM

At a Meeting of the Joint Consultative Forum held in the Civic Space, Council Offices, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Thursday, 16 March 2023 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Bollan, David McBride, Michelle McGinty and Martin Rooney and Jim Halfpenny (EIS); David Scott (GMB); Claire MacKenzie (SSTA); Margaret Wood (Unite) and David Smith (UNISON).

Attending: Victoria Rogers, Chief Officer – People and Technology; Peter Barry, Chief Officer – Housing and Employability; Alan Douglas, Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration; Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; Laurence Slavin, Chief Officer – Resources; Angela Wilson, Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property; Claire Cusick, Senior Education Officer; Craig Jardine, Corporate Asset Manager; Alison McBride, Strategic People and Change Manager; Sylvia Chatfield, Head of Service for Mental Health, Addictions and Learning Disabilities; Fiona Taylor, Head of Health and Community Care; Gillian Gall, Head of Human Resources; and Ashley MacIntyre, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillors Karen Conaghan, Daniel Lennie and Hazel Sorrell; John Wagner (GBM); Susan Shannon (UNISON); Peter Hessett, Chief Executive; Amanda Graham, Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture and Facilities; and Gail Macfarlane, Chief Officer – Roads and Neighbourhood.

Councillor David McBride in the Chair

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

It was noted that there were no declarations of interest in any of the items of business on the agenda.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of Meeting of the Joint Consultative Forum held on 1 December 2022 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

INVESTIGATION AND DISCIPLINARY HEARING TIMESCALES

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – People and Technology advising of times taken to conclude investigation and disciplinary processes based on data from the period 1 April to 30 September 2022 and continuous improvement plans.

After discussion and having heard the Strategic People and Change Manager in explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Forum agreed to note the contents of the report.

TRADES UNION ISSUES

'Kilbowie Emergency Lighting' (item requested by Margaret Wood, Unite)

Ms Wood provided the undernoted statement in relation to the above issue.

Issue raised 7/2/22, Whistleblowing form sent – No adequate response.

Concerns over how the contract was tendered, no detail, no design therefore monitoring of quality and spend is impossible.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property, the Corporate Asset Manager and the Chief Officer – Regulatory and Regeneration in response, the Forum agreed:-

- (1) to note that the action regarding Kilbowie emergency lighting was missed in error and later carried out in 2020 in line with advice provided by Health and Safety and Procurement;
- (2) to note that Ms Wood would have the opportunity to discuss the issue further with the Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property if required; and
- (3) to note the update provided and the concerns raised during the discussion.

'Fixed Electrical Testing' (item requested by Margaret Wood, Unite)

Ms Wood provided the undernoted statement in relation to the above issue.

Issue raised since 2021.

68 Council Premises without a current test cert, 14 with remedial. RPO's are responsible for these premises with no ability to get this work carried out. This includes schools, ELCC, residential homes leaving vulnerable people at risk. It has taken until now to get a spreadsheet with all premises.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – Supply Distribution and Property and the Corporate Asset Manager in response, the Forum agreed:-

- (1) to note that approximately 40 Council Premises do not have a current test certificate;
- (2) to note that all identified premises would be programmed to be completed by the end of the current year;
- (3) to note that the information would be reported to and monitored through the quarterly Supply, Distribution and Property Health and Safety Committee;
- (4) to note that an update would be provided at the next meeting of the Joint Consultative Forum;
- (5) to note that Ms Wood would meet with the Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property to discuss a specific issue; and
- (6) to note the update provided and the concerns raised during the discussion.

'Integrated Housing Management System' (item requested by Joint Trades Union)

Mr Smith provided the undernoted statement in relation to the above issue.

IHMS across the Council and the cost to WDC is eye watering for a system that isn't fit for purpose across most services that use the system.

Concerns have been raised within various forums about the impact of IHMS on the organisations ability to respond to need, tasks take an extra ordinary amount of time to process resulting in staff being unable to fulfil other aspects of their role. Service detriment is experienced across multiple departments with service areas submitting SRA's due to this which remain unresolved after a lengthy period of time. Also some service areas considering utilising other processes to seek resolution.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – Housing and Employability and the Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution and Property in response, the Forum agreed:-

- (1) to note that Mr Smith would email the Chief Officer – Housing and Employability providing employee feedback and specific issues highlighted;
- (2) to note that a briefing would be circulated to Members of the Forum and all Elected Members detailing the aims and key milestones of the system;
- (3) to note the update provided; and
- (4) to note the wellbeing issues and other concerns raised during the discussion.

Agency costs within care homes and Care at Home to West Dunbartonshire Council' (item requested by Joint Trades Union)

Mr Scott provided the undernoted statement in relation to the above issue.

The costs are approximately £1.5m for each area, £3m in total.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Health and Community Care in response, the Forum agreed:-

- (1) to note that the HSCP Board Members have been made aware of the issue;
- (2) to note that job descriptions would be reviewed and updated within the Care at Home Review;
- (3) to note that recruitment and retention would be looked into; and
- (4) to note the update provided and the concerns raised during the discussion.

HSCP – Change Management Policy' (item requested by Joint Trades Union)

Mr Smith provided the undernoted statement in relation to the above issue.

HSCP are not using the agreed change management policy in relation to Organisational Change which affects WDC employees within HSCP. We have had confirmation at the TU Conveners meeting that WDC Chief Officers expect HSCP to use this process and it is not being deployed. WD JTU have consistently asked for feedback on current service redesign within HSCP, existing process is becoming protracted and members advise wellbeing is being affected due to the duration of the change system deployed by HSCP. Trade Unions are not clear on this process being deployed and have little information in relation to proposed change within service area.

After discussion and having heard the Head of Human Resources, HSCP in response, the Forum agreed:-

- (1) to note that the Head of Human Resources, HSCP confirmed the aim was to deliver the review at a quicker pace;
- (2) to note that a joint approach would be taken;
- (3) to note that implementation dates would be shared with Members of the Forum when these have been set;
- (4) to note the update provided; and
- (5) to note the wellbeing issues and other concerns raised during the discussion.

Note: Margaret Wood (UNITE) left the meeting during consideration of this item.

'Job Evaluation' (item requested by Joint Trades Union)

Mr Smith provided the undernoted statement in relation to the above issue.

WD JTU have significant concerns in relation to job evaluation processes within HSCP, we have raised these continually and appear to be not far forward. Concerns centre around understanding of the process/procedure, application of the process and sign off. Concerns centre around low paid women workers being severely impacted during a cost of living crisis, forms are or have been in process for a year or longer in some examples with low paid women workers advising that they are using foodbanks due to in work poverty. Should these matters have been resolved with more urgency we could have assisted in supporting members.

After discussion and having heard the Chief Officer – People and Technology and the Head of Human Resources, HSCP in response, the Forum agreed:-

- (1) to note that the job evaluations would take place in date order of submission as previously agreed with the Convenors;
- (2) to note that cost of living was not a factor that could be considered for re-evaluation but that material change(s) to roles most certainly was;
- (3) to note that the Head of Human Resources, HSCP would keep the Joint Trades Union informed of how the review process is progressing; and
- (4) to note the update provided and the concerns raised during the discussion.

The meeting closed at 3.40 p.m.