

JOINT CONSULTATIVE FORUM

At a Meeting of the Joint Consultative Forum held by video conference on Thursday, 11 March 2021 at 2.05 p.m.

Present: Councillors Karen Conaghan, Jim Finn, David McBride, Jonathan McColl and Iain McLaren; Derek Hutchison, David Scott and John Wagner (GMB); Claire Mackenzie (SSTA); Sean Davenport, Simon Macfarlane, Susan Shannon and David Smith (UNISON); and Chris Rossi and Margaret Wood (Unite).

Attending: Victoria Rogers, Chief Officer – People & Technology; Malcolm Bennie, Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture & Facilities; Gail Macfarlane, Chief Officer – Roads & Neighbourhood; Peter Barry, Chief Officer – Housing & Employability; Stephen West, Chief Officer – Resources; Angela Wilson, Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution & Property; Claire Cusick, Senior Education Officer – Pupil Support; Fraser Downie, Nurse Team Leader; Alison McBride, Strategic People & Change Manager; Anne McFadden, Digital Leadership, Skills & Culture Manager; Leeanne Galasso, People & Change Partner; Karen Goodwin, Health and Safety Officer; Raymond Lynch, Senior Solicitor; and Scott Kelly, Committee Officer.

Apology: An apology for absence was intimated on behalf of Val Jennings (UNISON).

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 3 December 2020 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

TRADE UNION FACILITY AGREEMENT

With reference to the Minutes of Meeting of the Joint Consultative Forum held on 3 December 2020, the Chief Officer – People & Technology provided a verbal update in respect of the review of the Trade Union Facility Agreement and the Forum agreed:-

- (1) to note that further discussion had taken place with trade union conveners in relation to the review of the Facility Agreement but that it had not been possible for agreement to be reached on a formula which might have been used to determine conveners' facility time in accordance with each union's level of membership; and
- (2) to note that discussions would continue and that if agreement could be reached on amending the Facility Agreement then a report would be submitted to the May 2021 meeting of the Corporate Services Committee seeking approval of the changes.

FIT FOR FUTURE REVIEWS

The Strategic People & Change Manager, the Digital Leadership, Skills & Culture Manager and the People & Change Partner gave a presentation in relation to Fit for Future Reviews.

After discussion and having heard officers in answer to Members' questions, the Forum agreed:-

- (1) to note that Fit For Future reviews were being conducted in response to requests from services and that the Organisational Development and Digital Change Team had concluded its first reviews, including of Waste Services;
- (2) that the reviews focussed on helping services to deliver a more digital approach, support employees and users and identifying any skills gaps;
- (3) to note the contributions made by HR and ICT in the process;
- (4) to note that following the completion of a review and the handover to the service, ongoing support would continue to be provided; and
- (5) to note that a presentation on the service had been delivered to trade union conveners at an early stage and that this matter had been a standing item at Conveners' Group meetings.

TRADES UNIONS ISSUES

Sessional Staff Not Being Paid an Average Wage (item requested by UNITE)

The Forum heard from Ms Wood who expressed concern that some casual workers who had been unable to work for the Council in view of the pandemic had not received another compensation payment (in addition to that paid for the period of lockdown 1) and requested that consideration be given to compensating them by backdating their pay to their average wage level and that efforts be made to ensure that people were offered appropriate contracts.

In response the Chief Officer – People & Technology advised:-

- (a) that the Scottish Joint Council (SJC) for Local Government Employees had issued a circular in April 2020 which offered guidance to Councils in this area, and that discussions had taken place with the trades unions in relation to this;
- (b) that the guidance provided by the SJC stated that casual workers required to remain available for work in order to have been considered for compensation and that while some had accepted offers of work, others had declined;
- (c) that when level four restrictions were put in place and reduced work in particular services, a number of casual workers had been deployed elsewhere including latterly in vaccination centres;
- (d) to note that further discussion would take place with trade union conveners in relation to this matter; and
- (e) to note that a report to Council was being prepared detailing the use of and compensation arrangements for this group.

Impact of Local COVID-19 Infection Rates (item requested by EIS)

The Forum noted that no representative from EIS was in attendance to speak to this matter.

Effectiveness of Health and Safety Mitigations with the Reopening of Schools (item requested by EIS)

Following discussion, the Forum noted:-

- (1) that no representative from EIS was in attendance to speak to this matter; and
- (2) that officers had been in discussion with the EIS co-conveners in relation to their concerns regarding this matter and, if they were to consent, the Chief Officer – People & Technology could share relevant correspondence with the Leader of the Council.

The meeting closed at 2.50 p.m.

