

JOINT CONSULTATIVE FORUM

At a Hybrid Meeting of the Joint Consultative Forum held in the Civic Space, 16 Church Street, Dumbarton on Thursday, 16 June 2022 at 2.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors Jim Bollan, Karen Conaghan, Craig Edward, David McBride, Martin Rooney and Hazel Sorrell; Jim Halfpenny (EIS); David Scott and John Wagner (GMB); Claire Mackenzie (SSTA); and Chris Rossi and Margaret Wood (Unite).

Attending: Amanda Graham, Chief Officer – Citizen, Culture & Facilities; Laura Mason, Chief Education Officer; Laurence Slavin, Chief Officer – Resources; Angela Wilson, Chief Officer – Supply, Distribution & Property; Alison McBride, Strategic People & Change Manager; Sylvia Chatfield, Head of Mental Health, Learning Disability & Addictions, Health & Social Care Partnership (HSCP); Audrey Slater, Head of HR, HSCP; Louise Hastings and Lisa MacGregor, People & Change Partners; Nigel Ettles, Section Head – Litigation (Legal Officer); and Scott Kelly, Committee Officer.

Apologies: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Councillor Daniel Lennie; David Smith (UNISON); Victoria Rogers, Chief Officer – People & Technology; Peter Hessett, Chief Officer – Regulatory & Regeneration; and Gail Macfarlane, Shared Head of Service – Roads & Neighbourhood.

Mr John Wagner in the Chair

APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Mr Wagner, Chair, invited the Forum to consider the appointment of the Vice Chair of the Forum, from the Management Side until September 2022, and it was agreed that Councillor David McBride be appointed.

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 10 March 2022 were submitted and noted. It was noted that the Minutes had been submitted to the meeting of West Dunbartonshire Council held on 23 March 2022, approved as a correct record and all decisions contained therein had been approved.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2.10 p.m. in order that technical difficulties could be resolved. The meeting reconvened at 2.17 p.m. with all those listed in the sederunt present.

EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS MONITORING: BI-ANNUAL AND ANNUAL UPDATE 2021/22

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – People & Technology advising of the progress on employment relations matters for the period 1 October 2021 to 31 March 2022 and annual analysis for 2021/22 across the Council.

Having heard Ms Hastings, People & Change Partner, in explanation of the report and in answer to a Member's questions, the Forum agreed:-

- (1) that future reports should provide more clarity on the status of disciplinary cases; and
- (2) otherwise to note the contents of the report.

EMPLOYEE WELLBEING ANNUAL UPDATE 2021/22 (COUNCIL WIDE)

A report was submitted by the Chief Officer – People & Technology providing detailed analysis on Council wide employee wellbeing and attendance for the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

After discussion and having heard Ms Hastings, People & Change Partner, in explanation of the report and in answer to Members' questions, the Forum agreed:-

- (1) to note the annual findings for reported absence from 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022, and in particular:-
 - (a) the increase in Council wide sickness absence of 34,506 full time equivalent (FTE) days lost compared to the same period the previous year;

- (b) that the proportion of absence attributed to personal stress had decreased by 6%, that mental health absences and musculoskeletal had both decreased by approximately 3% and that COVID-19 absences had increased by 9.7%; and
 - (c) that the comparisons to 2020/21 considered the full year of the COVID-19 pandemic, which had seen employees working from home and was a year where flexible working practices were widely adopted across the Council, and that this was likely to have been a significant contributing factor to the lower levels of sickness absence; and
- (2) that it would be helpful for the Forum to be provided with an overview of the processes in place for Stress Risk Assessments at a future meeting.

Note: During consideration of this item the decisions taken by the Forum in relation to the earlier items of business were reiterated for the benefit of those attending via Zoom in view of the technical difficulties which had been experienced earlier in the meeting.

TRADES UNION ISSUES

The Forum noted that the Trades Union had not provided, in advance of the meeting, any issues that they wished to raise.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

After discussion, the Forum agreed that its next meeting would be held as a face to face meeting on Thursday, 8 September 2022 at 2.00 p.m. in the Civic Space, Council Offices, Church Street, Dumbarton.

The meeting closed at 3.05 p.m.