

PROCEEDINGS OF THE LOCAL JOINT FORUM - 9 NOVEMBER 2017

manager and possibly withdraw from the process if it was practicable for them to do so.

AGREED: That the submission of the revised Code of Conduct to Personnel Committee, on 9 November 2017, for approval, be noted subject to the changes suggested above.

4. MATTERS RAISED BY THE UNIONS

(a) Fair Workload Charter

A McNamara, Chair and NEU representative, reported that following the motion to Council on 24 January 2017 (Minute 41 refers) on a Reading Fair Workload Charter, which had the aim of making the workload of teachers more manageable and was to be made available for schools to sign-up to, it was suggested that the Charter be included on the agenda of the next meeting of Schools Forum and then a report submitted to the next meeting setting out how the Charter could be presented to all schools in the Borough.

AGREED:

- (1) That the Reading Fair Workload Charter be included on the agenda of the next meeting of Schools Forum;
- (2) That a report be submitted to the next meeting by the Chair setting out how the Reading Fair Workload Charter could be presented to all schools in the Borough.

MATTERS RAISED BY THE UNIONS AFTER THE AGENDA HAD BEEN PUBLISHED

(b) Role of Directors at DJFs

M Cooper, UNISON, suggested that the terms of reference for the Directorate Joint Forums should be re-issued so that everyone was clear about their role and how frequently they should be meeting. He also stated that there was a need to ensure that the right people were invited to the meetings and that they attended, as well as recognising that the trade unions also needed to ensure the meetings were well attended by their representatives.

Councillor Lovelock confirmed that it had always been the intention that Directors attended the meetings but that it had to be accepted that there would be occasions when this would not be possible. Directors would be reminded that they should attend the meetings and the position should be monitored by producing details of attendance for future meetings.

AGREED:

- (1) That Directors be reminded of their requirement to attend Directorate Joint Forum Meetings;
- (2) That details be produced of attendance at future Directorate Joint Forum Meetings.

(c) Management Proposals to Freeze Increments

A Elliott, UNISON, expressed concern over the proposal to freeze pay increments and requested a financial analysis of the position before the proposals were implemented.

Councillor Lovelock reported as far as she was aware the Chief Executive had commenced discussions with staff on the proposal and was to carry out a briefing on the financial position of the Council on 17 November 2017. The proposal was not being made lightly and there was a need to fully understand the financial position of the Council in the light of the reduction of grant from central government.

The union side also raised concern over the Christmas Leave Offer, a trial that would see non-essential services and Council buildings closed for four days over Christmas. To take part, staff could volunteer to buy two days leave and would be given two days leave which would enable the Council Offices to be closed on those days. It was made clear that this would be a voluntary trial in 2017 to see what the take-up from staff was and no one was being compelled to take up the offer. A frequently asked questions document was also being put together for staff and the annual Christmas closure communication plan would come into force in the coming weeks.

AGREED: That the position be noted.

(d) Meeting with Councillors - Budget

Further to the meeting of Policy Committee on 25 September 2017 (Minute 25 refers) and the question that had been submitted by B Reynolds on behalf of UNISON on "Response to Budget Saving Proposals", M Cooper, UNISON, requested that a meeting be held between union representatives and Councillors to discuss the evidence and proposals that were being put together by the trade unions. In response Councillor Lovelock reconfirmed her understanding that the trade unions were going to submit their concerns, alternative proposals and background information to the questions in one document and who they met with would depend on the issues that were raised. The unions had also stated that they would forward their proposals to the Chief Executive and Directors when their alternative proposals had been completed.

AGREED: That a meeting between the Trade Unions and relevant Councillors be arranged once the Unions had submitted their concerns, alternative proposals and background information to the question they had submitted to the meeting of Policy Committee on 25 September 2017.

(e) UNISON's Apprenticeship Charter

B Reynolds, UNISON, tabled a copy of UNISON's Apprenticeship Charter and reported that a meeting had been arranged with Barry Wren, Head of New Directions, to discuss what New Directions had put together in respect of apprenticeships. It was then hoped that the Council would sign-up to the Charter. However, it was suggested that as there were other unions in the Council there should be a joint charter. It was also confirmed that there would be no issue with union

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representatives meeting with apprentices to explain what a union was and its role, once it had been established how many apprentices there were in the Council and which departments they worked in. It was thought this was not clear since the induction process had to be completed on-line.

AGREED:

- (1) That the position be noted;
- (2) That a meeting be arranged between union representatives and apprentices once it had been established how many apprentices there were in Council and which departments they were working in.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

Following the submission of a number of items by the Trade Unions after the agenda had been despatched, see above, Councillor Lovelock stated that in future an agenda setting meeting needed to take place at least a week before the agenda was due to be despatched.

AGREED: That in future an agenda setting meeting take place by email at least a week before the agenda was due to be despatched.

(The meeting opened at 5.00pm and closed at 5.53pm).