

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Joint Advisory Group held
at The Council Chamber, County Hall, The Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Monday, 30th
January, 2017 at 10.00 am**

PRESENT: County Councillor P. Murphy (Chairman)
County Councillor A. Easson (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: D. Dovey, J. Higginson,

TRADE UNION SIDE:

J. Davies (UNISON)
P. Short (UNISON)
R. Hayward (GMB)
J. Standerwick (NASUWT)
A. Haigh (NUT)

G. Davies – WPO GMB
J. Fry – WPO GMB
Y. Selwood – WPO GMB

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Tracey Harry	Head of People and Information Governance
Roger Hoggins	Head of Operations
Mark Howcroft	Assistant Head of Finance
David Bartlett	Support Team Manager, People Services
Sue Caswell	HR Lead, People Services
Jill Thomas	HR Adviser
Tracey Thomas	Youth & Community Manager, Youth Service
Richard Williams	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

Councillors M. Legge (GMB), S. Davies (NAHT) and P. Strong (NUT), A. Williams (NUT)

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

2. Confirmation of minutes

The minutes of the Joint Advisory Group Meeting held on 21st November 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Chairman. In doing so, it was noted that the trial regarding refuse vehicles had been suspended.

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3. Draft Capital Budget Proposals 2017/18 to 2020/21 and Draft Budget Proposals 2017/18 for Consultation

We received a presentation by the Chairman of the Committee outlining the draft Capital Budget Proposals 2017/18 to 2020/21 and the draft budget proposals 2017/18.

In doing so, the following points were noted:

- In response to a question raised by the Trade Union Side regarding potential redundancies, it was noted that firstly, redeployment of staff is undertaken. Departmental restructures are currently ongoing and further details will be made available on completion. It is anticipated that it will be mainly vacant posts that will be removed. Staff requesting to take a phased retirement will also be considered.
- A Trade Union representative noted that there is £1,000,000 pressure for Leisure and Cultural Services to undertake work prior to the potential handover of assets to the Alternative Delivery Model (ADM). It was noted that there several options available for the ADM. The ADM is currently going through the political process and responses are being collated and evaluated. Condition surveys are being undertaken and at this stage the figure in question is not actually known. There is no agreement currently in place with regard to the hand-over of assets.
- In the capital pressures it was noted that there is no figure regarding the projected cost in respect of the Severn View Care Facility renewal. The Committee was informed that for anything new to appear in the Capital Programme it will need to pay for itself or needs to be a strategic priority of the Council, which would then replace something already in the Capital Programme. The Severn View Care Facility replacement is likely to occur in four to five years' time. In the meantime, costs will be identified and quantified. At this stage, it is a potential pressure and liability for the Council, going forward.
- In response to a question raised regarding school kitchens, it was noted that a rolling programme has been established regarding maintenance and modification of school kitchens. Considerable work has been undertaken this year regarding this matter. The changes tend to occur when head teachers require the work, i.e., during school holidays, to reduce upheaval. Therefore, this type of work will be undertaken and treated as a priority as part of the maintenance programme.

We resolved to receive the presentation and noted its content.

4. Alternative Delivery Model for Leisure, Youth and other Services

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We received a verbal update by the Youth and Community Manager regarding the Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) for Leisure, Youth and other Services. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- Officers are near to completing the draft outline business case, which follows the Welsh Government's five stage model.
- A paper will be presented with details of analysis of the four options available to a Joint Select Committee meeting on the 27th February 2017. Papers will be circulated to stakeholders two weeks prior to the meeting.
- The paper will then be presented to Full Council on 20th March 2017.
- Pending that decision, there will be an opportunity to refine the chosen route for Monmouthshire and commence further consultation before the final decision is made in September 2017.
- In response to a question raised by the Trade Union Side regarding Monmouth swimming pool, it was noted that the Authority has a commitment to the people of Monmouth to replace the swimming pool which will be done in the most cost effective way and to establish the most benefit from it.

We resolved to receive the verbal update and noted its content.

5. Monmouthshire County Council's Single Status Collective Agreement

We received a letter from the GMB Trade Union in which the Committee was asked to consider amending the current Monmouthshire County Council Single Status Collective Agreement in relation to:

- Bank Holiday Enhancement.
- Annual Leave Entitlement.
- Standby / Callout Payments.
- Harmonisation of Terms and Conditions.
- Inconsistency of Implementation.

Rowena Hayward, representing the GMB Trade Union, outlined the following points:

- During Christmas 2016, the Trade Union was in a situation where it had to resort to a more formal process on behalf of its members.
- This came about through the change in the local authority wishing to take away the voluntary aspect within the WSS service and cleansing to issue job descriptions which stated that with effect from that day in October 2016, GMB trade union members would be contractually obligated to both work the designated bank holidays for single time.

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- Previously, prior to Single Status, double time was paid with a day in lieu.
- During Christmas 2015, management had agreed to pay an enhanced rate and during Christmas 2016, the Chief Executive agreed to pay a one off payment which removed the threat of industrial action.
- This matter also affects care services.
- Cleansing and Grounds Section – There is concern that the work force have now been issued with a 12 week notice to go over to contractual working. GMB Trade Union members consider that providing the remuneration for the bank holiday working or the overtime working, the rounds have been changed, meaning that the work force is having to work longer due to the rounds taking longer, as there are more homes being built, resulting in more collections being required. However, there are only a finite level of resources to undertake the work required. If this becomes a contractual obligation, there is concern amongst the work force.
- The GMB Trade Union would like the Committee and Senior Management to re-consider the bank holiday working remuneration, as most local authorities in the area pay double or even triple time.
- Standby payments, as outlined in the Single Status Agreement, have identified that there are still trade union members that are called out but they do not attract their hourly rate, contrary to the Single Status Agreement.
- The annual leave entitlement under the Single Status Agreement is a maximum of 30 days. However, it was noted that there are still some members of staff with 32 days annual leave per year. The GMB Trade Union is requesting that all staff are brought up to a maximum of 32 days annual leave.
- Zero hour contracts – Single Status is about the harmonisation of terms and conditions. In the care sector, care workers are working different contracts to other workers within the Authority. The GMB Trade Union is asking the Authority to look into this matter.
- The GMB Trade Union, with the local Authority's support, wants to seek a resolution to the issues raised.

Having received the information from the GMB Trade Union, the following points were noted:

- Janet Davies, representing UNISON, informed the Committee that UNISON had accepted the amended job descriptions.

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- 32 days annual leave – This came from 1996, which was a ‘trade off’ for disturbance allowance. This matter went to the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC), the equivalent to the current Joint Advisory Group (JAG), in which this matter had been agreed. This agreement remained until 2000. At this point, the annual leave was changed at a national level. There was another agreement at this time in which any member of staff working for Gwent County Council or Monmouthshire County Council accruing 15 years’ service during the period 1996 to 2000, were allowed to retain their 32 days annual leave. This would phase out over a period of time.
- The Single Status Agreement affects all staff and is a collective agreement across all parties and was subject to a Trade Union ballot.
- In response to a question raised, it was noted that within the contracts for home care there are 20 hour and 30 hour contracts. For example, in the first week, staff may be given work for the 20 hours. For the second week, staff might have work for up to 15 hours, so there is a surplus of five hours. Staff are then required to pick up extra work that they also have to accumulate over a three to six month period 50 hours in excess of their accumulative contractual hours. It was considered that this matter should be discussed at Audit Committee.

We resolved that

- (i) the points raised would be reviewed and a report be brought back to a future Joint Advisory Group (JAG) Meeting;
- (ii) that the matter relating to contracts for home care staff regarding 20 hour and 30 hour contracts should be discussed at a future meeting of Audit Committee.

The meeting ended at 11.10 am