

JOINT STAFF EMPLOYER FORUM

17 November 2010
5.30 - 6.55 pm

Present: Councillors Smart (Chair), Bick (Vice-Chair), McGovern, Pitt, Shah and Todd-Jones

Officers: Liz Brennan (Unison), Vicki Davidson (Organisational Development Manager), James Goddard (Committee Manager), Kevin Roberts (GMB) and Deborah Simpson (Head of Human Resources)

FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL

10/17/JSEF Apologies for Absence

Councillor Dryden

10/18/JSEF Minutes

The minutes of the 20 April 2010 meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

10/19/JSEF Matters Arising from the Minutes

The Essential Users Review has been undertaken. The Head of Human Resources has discussed posts identified with managers. Liaison would also occur with staff and trade unions after data has been checked. An update on progress will be given at the next JSEF.

The Head of Human Resources gave an update on staff sickness absence figures. The trend for Cambridge City Council staff matches CIPD figures. Stress is a noticeable factor in absences. Joint work between managers and Human Resources (training, discussions at an earlier stage, return to work interviews) has improved absence management, but trade unions representatives felt that there was room for improvement.

10/20/JSEF Declarations of Interest

Name	Item	Interest
Councillor Shah	All	Personal – Member of UCU
Pitt	All	Personal – Member of and school trade union representative for ATL
Councillor Smart	All	Personal – Member of ATL
Councillor Todd-Jones	All	Personal – Member of Unison

10/21/JSEF Public Question Time

None.

10/22/JSEF Option to Exclude the Public

JSEF unanimously agreed that the Forum should be open to members of staff to address the committee, but was not a Working Group that would be open to members of the public.

JSEF caveated the decision by saying that (as per practice in other council meetings), non-members would be excluded for confidential items. Also, that members of the public may be invited to attend for exceptional matters following a specific request.

Action Point: Committee Manager to liaise with Democratic Services Manager and Civic Affairs committee concerning implementing this.

10/23/JSEF Action Plan Post Investors in People Assessment

The committee received a report from the Organisational Development Manager regarding Action Plan post Investors in People (IiP) Assessment.

The Organisational Development Manager referenced actions undertaken set out in the committee report. The Council restructure is influencing how the

Council addresses the two indicators identified for further improvement could be made post assessment. All liP indicators will be reviewed when the assessor returns December 2010, to liaise with the Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager concerning actions taken and to be taken as part of on-going liP work.

A communications strategy is in place to address liP related issues:

- (i) Assisting staff to understand cultural change. For example, through Chief Executive and Leader Briefings.
- (ii) Moving towards a homogenous view of the Council to increase operational efficiency, rather than staff feeling as though they operate in silos/separate directorates.
- (iii) Recognition where staff performance has exceeded expectations. Staff are motivated by factors other than money, therefore other means such as award ceremonies are being considered. Human Resources are supporting the Communications and Marketing Team who are leading work on a corporate staff recognition scheme.

Ways to monitor progress of the above include the staff attitude survey and a central repository of strategies (which are currently split into mid term objectives for separate directorates).

Examples of changes already occurring include:

- (i) An HR Business Partner is developing a guidance template for a personal letter that can be issued by managers to staff who exceed expectations.
- (ii) Staff have shown greater awareness of Council vision and MTOs through surveys.
- (iii) The Chief Executive is working to introduce an open communication culture.

Action Point: Organisational Development Manager to report back to JSEF concerning Investors in People assessment.

10/24/JSEF Partnership Agreement

The GMB representative referred to a copy of the 2003 Cambridge City Council Partnership Agreement circulated in the Forum.

The GMB representative sought support from delegates to refresh the document and bring a revised version back to the next JSEF meeting to seek approval and sign off. The Forum agreed to this proposal.

The Trade Unions would also welcome a facilitated event to explore future working once the Partnership Agreement has been reviewed, refreshed and an Action Plan developed.

Action Point: JSEF members to read Partnership Agreement document circulated in meeting and refer comments back to GMB. GMB to circulate revised document, and seek approval for it, at next meeting.

Action Point: Councillor Smart and Head of Human Resources to liaise concerning updating Partnership Agreement document in the context of the Single Status Document.

10/25/JSEF Procurement Agreement

The Unison representative referred to a copy of the Procurement Agreement circulated in the Forum.

The purpose of the document was to set out relationship protocols for joint work on procurement between the Council and Trade Unions, it was not a procurement strategy.

Human Resources and the Trade Unions have organised a meeting to discuss a training proposal for managers, stewards and Human Resources staff.

JSEF welcomed the Procurement Agreement document in principle. It was suggested that a TUPE specific section, as part of the general process document, would aid clarity and avoid overlap of documents and strategies.

10/26/JSEF Committee Dates 2011-12

Dates for 2011/2012 were approved as follows:

8 February 2011, 19 April 2011, 16 November 2011, 7 February 2012 and 24 April 2012.

Indicative 2012/2013 meeting dates for information:

14 November 2012, 5 February 2013 and 23 April 2013.

Action Point: Committee Manager to seek alternative dates for moving future August JSEF meeting dates to July. Dates to be signed off at next meeting.

**Post Meeting Note: Dates provisionally moved as follows -
23 August 2011 to 5 July.
21 August 2012 to 3 July.**

The meeting ended at 6.55 pm

CHAIR