

CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the Meeting of the CHILTERN DISTRICT COUNCIL AND JOINT STAFF COMMITTEE

held on **23 JUNE 2010**

PRESENT:	Councillor	N M Rose	- Chairman
	"	Miss P A Appleby	
	"	A Dibbo	
	"	D W Phillips	
	"	J F Warder	
	Unison	A Whichelow	- Vice Chairman
	"	T Pearce	
	"	M Shirley	
	"	I Snudden	

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from E. Darvell (Unison)

7. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 May 2010, copies of which had been circulated previously, were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

In connection with the distribution of papers for future meetings, both sides agreed that every effort should be made to allow these papers, including minutes, to be discussed in the open part of the meeting. There was however a recognition that if there were issues of a sensitive or confidential nature then these would need to be discussed in the closed part of the meeting after the resolution to exclude the public had been agreed.

8. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

9. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED –

That under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Note: The relevant paragraph number from Part 1 of Schedule 12A is indicated at the end of the Minute heading.

10. **PERFORMANCE RELATED PAY SCHEME (Paragraph 3)**

The Committee received a report divided into 3 sections as follows:

- Section A summarised the current position of the parties following the discussions at the meetings on 18 May;
- Section B set out the 6 options that had been contained in a report to Personnel Committee on 9 February 2010; and
- Section C developed a range of possible variations of the “hybrid” option 6.

The report explained that the point of the meeting was to discuss the options with a view to narrowing them down so that a small number could be developed further for joint consideration and possible agreement.

The Chairman opened the discussion by referring to the Council's position and saying that the proposals in the Coalition Government's budget had made the Council's financial position even more bleak and that the picture was likely to worsen even further following the Comprehensive Spending Review due in the autumn. Reductions in expenditure were inevitable and with salary costs making up a substantial proportion of the Council's budget it was also inevitable that reductions would need to be made in staff costs. Whilst understanding the concerns of staff and recognising the contribution they had made it was now time to stop the talking and make the reductions through adoption of one of the options.

Alan Whichelow referred to the Terms of Reference of the Committee and emphasised that the role of the Committee was to negotiate which Unison was prepared to do in order to reach a position which was acceptable for its members. It was not the role of Unison to consult on savings and on this issue Alan Whichelow urged the Council to revisit the paper prepared by Heads of Service identifying savings options, a paper which had not identified the PRP Scheme as a possible saving option. The PRP Scheme offered outstanding value for money and if staff morale and goodwill were to be maintained then it was essential to maintain it.

The Chairman, whilst accepting that the PRP Scheme had benefits, reiterated that the Council could no longer afford the £300,000 to fund it. If the savings required in staff costs were not found by making changes in the PRP scheme then they would have to be found through other ways e.g. staff redundancies or a 5% pay cut across the board.

During the discussion that ensued Councillors Miss Appleby, Dibbo, Phillips and Warder all explained why the challenges facing the Council were requiring it to make changes to the PRP Scheme to reduce staff costs. Alan Whichelow, Ian Snudden, Tina Pearce and Maxine Shirley, whilst understanding the Council's position, questioned whether members had already reached a decision to scrap the PRP Scheme

and emphasised the importance of entering into meaningful negotiations so that a mutually acceptable agreement could be reached.

At the end of the discussion and in order to advance the negotiations it was agreed that more work should be done to identify the costs and benefits of options 6c (i) – (iv) together with an assessment of the impact of maintaining the scheme as a mechanism for appraising staff etc but with the facility to make payments suspended until the budgetary position improved.

RESOLVED -

That a further meeting to consider in more detail options 6c (i) – (iv) be held on 9 July 2010 at 2.30 pm.

11. WASTE COLLECTION PROJECT

The Committee received a copy of the report which had been submitted to Cabinet on 15 June 2010 detailing the decisions that had been made and work carried out since the Joint Waste Committee for Buckinghamshire (JWC) at its meeting in March 2009 had recommended “that Scenario 4 (Horizontal Integration - Joint Waste Collection Contract Officer Team) be agreed with Scenario 5 having further work including governance, so that we can evaluate Scenario 5 by the end of September this year. The Chief Executive referred to the response from the Joint Bucks Unison Branches in Local Government that had been reported to the Cabinet on 15 June 2010 and said that a joint response was being prepared on behalf of the four Councils.

Alan Whichelow, after acknowledging that the proposals had more implications for Unison members and Staff at Aylesbury Vale District Council, explained that any response from CDC Unison Branch would be made jointly with the AVDC Branch.

RESOLVED -

That the report be noted.

12. SHARED LEGAL SERVICES

The Member/Officer Working Group on Shared Legal Services had met twice since being set up to investigate the opportunity for joint working to replace the current arrangements and the Committee received a copy of a report which had been submitted to Cabinet on 15 June 2010 setting out the Working Group’s deliberations and recommendations, the main one of which was enter into an arrangement for a shared legal service with Aylesbury Vale District Council.

In commenting on the report Alan Whichelow said that Unison’s main concern was the risk of a conflict of interest in the role of a shared Head of Legal Services bearing in mind the different contracts that

might need to be worked on depending on the decisions each Council made with regard to the Joint Waste Collection Project. If there were such a conflict it may be necessary to seek external advice at a cost likely to erode the savings made by the shared service arrangement.

RESOLVED -

That report be noted.

The meeting closed at 12.36 am