

EMPLOYEE ISSUES FORUM

Minutes of meeting held via Microsoft Teams on 18 May 2021

Chair:

Councillor Isobel Dorman

Councillors Present:

Councillor Graeme Campbell, Councillor Gerry Convery, Councillor Lynsey Hamilton, Councillor Ian Harrow, Councillor Graeme Horne, Councillor Monique McAdams, Councillor Jim McGuigan

Councillors' Apologies:

Councillor Joe Lowe, Councillor Collette Stevenson

Attending:

Finance and Corporate Resources

C Lyon, Administration Officer; K McVeigh, Head of Personnel Services; E McPake, Human Resources Business Partner

Social Work Resources

G Booth, Operations Manager, Justice Services; M Kane, Service Manager, Performance and Support

1 Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

2 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of the Employee Issues Forum held on 2 March 2021 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

The Forum decided: that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

3 Council-wide Workforce Monitoring – January to March 2021

A report dated 27 April 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) was submitted on the following Council-wide employee information for the period January to March 2021:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ disciplinary hearings, grievances and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers, exit interviews and labour turnover
- ◆ recruitment monitoring
- ◆ Staffing Watch as at 13 March 2021

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 2 March 2021 (Paragraph 3)]

4 Social Work Resources – Workforce Monitoring – January to March 2021

A joint report dated 27 April 2021 by the Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources) and Director, Health and Social Care was submitted on the following employee information for Social Work Resources for the period January to March 2021:-

- ◆ attendance statistics
- ◆ occupational health statistics
- ◆ accident/incident statistics
- ◆ disciplinary hearings, grievances and Dignity at Work cases
- ◆ analysis of leavers and exit interviews
- ◆ Staffing Watch as at 13 March 2021

Councillor Hamilton requested further information on the reasons why there had been such a rise in accidents/incidents over the period. Officers agreed to investigate this issue and report back on any significant findings.

Councillor Convery requested figures in terms of what Social Workers and Social Care Workers were paid in comparison to both North Lanarkshire and Glasgow City Councils. The Head of Personnel Services advised that work had been undertaken in this area and confirmed that the rates were comparable with other councils in Scotland and would be kept under review.

The Forum decided: that the report be noted.

[Reference: Minutes of 13 November 2018 (Paragraph 4)]

5 Social Work Activity to Support COVID-19 Pandemic

A report dated 5 May 2021 by the Director, Health and Social Care was submitted providing an update on the:-

- ◆ work undertaken to establish a system for the sourcing, supply and distribution of PPE as part of the response to the COVID-19 pandemic
- ◆ delivery of Meals at Home by the Unpaid Work Service

The COVID-19 pandemic led to a number of new operational challenges for services, many of which were now very familiar given the worldwide, national and local profile surrounding the impact of the pandemic.

One such challenge was the sourcing, supply and distribution of PPE to ensure that staff could safely continue to provide vital frontline services in line with Public Health Scotland (PHS) guidance.

From a social care staffing perspective, although the use of PPE was not new, the requirements of changing PHS guidance had altered how staff had to practise, particularly as more became known about the virus.

NHS partners were supplied with PPE directly via National Services Scotland (NSS), however, social care providers always had responsibility to procure their own PPE in line with the needs of infection and control guidance.

Given that social care across Scotland was delivered through a mixed market of provision, it was not only Council social care provision, but also external social care provision, that had to be taken account of in a PPE context. In a South Lanarkshire context, PPE had to be secured to allow provision, across the sector, to home care, care homes, adult supported living providers, unpaid carers and personal assistants for approximately 200 organisations.

Details on resourcing those new requirements and the local infrastructure put in place to implement the delivery of the required PPE was detailed in the report.

The PPE hub created in March 2020 had become a core service over the last year and was now fully embedded as part of the social care delivery model. As at January 2021, the hub had received and managed approximately 25 million items of PPE.

In preparation for services progressively beginning to step up, the PPE hub had now been moved to a more suitable and permanent location, within a custom fit unit in Whistleberry Industrial Estate. Consideration would be given to the future staffing arrangements of the hub as many of the staff who were currently based there were due to return to their substantive duties.

G Booth, Operations Manager, Justice Services gave a presentation on the Meals at Home Service by the Unpaid Work Service. The presentation covered the following:-

- ◆ the aims of the service
- ◆ referral and roles
- ◆ school hubs
- ◆ operation of the service
- ◆ feedback from service users
- ◆ staff and volunteer feedback

The Chair, on behalf of the Forum, thanked M Kane and the staff at the PPE hub, and G Booth and the Meals at Home Service for their invaluable efforts during a very challenging time.

The Forum decided: that the report and presentation be noted.

6 Urgent Business

There were no items of urgent business.