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# Minutes

**Meeting of** : Joint Consultative Forum  
**Meeting held in** : Meeting Room, 37 Endless Street, Salisbury  
**Date** : Tuesday 16 October 2007  
**Time** : 10.00 am

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**Present:**

**Chairman**

Councillor A Thorpe (Portfolio Holder for Resources) –  
Present from the item covered in minute 26 below (Draft People Support Policy and Action Plan) onwards.

**Councillors:**

Councillors I McLennan and M Hewitt

**Staff Side:**

Rick Wells (UNISON), Jane Mitchell (UNISON), Jenny Marshall (Unite)

**Officers in Attendance:**

Karen Gard (Employee Relations Manager), Andrea Glover (People and Planning Manager) Rachel Herbert (Employee Relations Adviser), Anne McConkey (Part Only) (Head of People and Organisational Development), Paul Trenell (Democratic Services Officer) and Mark Wareham (UNISON Branch Organiser)

**Apologies:**

Cllr Miss Tomlinson

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## RICK WELLS IN THE CHAIR

**19. Minutes:**

**Resolved:** That

- 1) the minutes of the meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2007 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman;
- 2) future agendas of the Joint Consultative Forum include 'Matters Arising' from previous minutes as a standing item.

**20. Declaration of Interests:**

There were none.

**21. Minutes from the Health and Safety Committee:**

Forum members considered the minutes from the last meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on 26<sup>th</sup> September June 2007. The forum noted that the meeting in question was inquorate as only one representative from the employer's side was present.



Awarded in:  
Housing Services  
Waste and Recycling Services



The forum discussed the issue of pedestrian access to Churchfields and were informed that UNISON had written to the Chief Executive on the matter.

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the Health and Safety meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2007 be noted.

**Recommended to Cabinet/Management:** that

- (1) the coordination of the Health and Safety Committee be reviewed and improved;
- (2) the Chief Executive attends every Health and Safety Committee meeting. Where unable to attend a deputy should attend in his place;
- (3) a member of the Cabinet be appointed to the Health and Safety Committee.

**22. Security of Employment and Redundancy Policy:**

The forum received an update from members present and noted that the Cabinet had resolved to retain existing arrangements on security of employment and redundancy with a view to securing a county-wide policy at a later date. Forum members expressed dissatisfaction with this decision, emphasising the fact that existing arrangements are contrary to age discrimination legislation. The forum were informed that UNISON had written to the Leader of the Council, Councillor Paul Sample, regarding comments recently attributed to him in the Local Government Chronicle concerning the proposed new redundancy scheme, but had yet to receive a reply.

**Recommended to Cabinet:**

That the issue of Security of Employment and Redundancy Policy be reconsidered at the next meeting of Cabinet.

**23. Unitary Status Update:**

Members discussed issues surrounding the move to a unitary authority for Wiltshire. It was felt that there was uncertainty surrounding the impact of the new council on staff. Concern was expressed that extra demand may be placed on staff who are required to continue with their 'business as usual' work but simultaneously take on responsibilities relating to the transition.

**Resolved:** that the minutes of Wiltshire County Council's Joint Consultative Committee be included on all future Joint Consultative Forum agendas for information.

**24. Office Centralisation Project:**

There was no new information to consider.

**25. Workforce Information:**

The Forum considered the previously circulated paper detailing the staffing establishment and equalities monitoring data. With regard to the Vacancies Policy, forum members were informed that the recruitment protocol had been agreed with the result that frontline positions can be recruited to immediately. Non-frontline positions are being advertised within the five existing councils in Wiltshire as secondment opportunities, and if not filled within seven days being advertised externally as fixed term contracts running up to the vesting day of Wiltshire Council. A definition of "frontline staff" was being worked on at time of writing. Comments were made as follows:

- The Chairman welcomed back the People and Planning Manager, Andrea Glover;
- Staff turnover figures and reasons for exit should continue to be closely monitored;
- Whilst Wiltshire County Council have agreed to transfer all existing staff on to the new authority on vesting day, this may not necessarily be in their existing positions;
- If staff are to be retained up to vesting day it is important that they receive reassurance and clarity about their future;
- There is a need to distinguish between staff already employed on fixed-term contracts that go beyond vesting day and those who are appointed on contracts running up to vesting day;
- The possibility of recruiting recently retired staff on short-term contracts to fill gaps in the workforce up to vesting day.

**26. Draft People Support Strategy and Action Plan:**

The Head of People and Organisational Development updated the forum on the above report and emphasised that it represented a key document for the purposes of motivating and assuring staff during the transition. The forum discussed the importance of a number of issues in light of Local Government Reorganisation including stress awareness, the danger of overuse of honoraria and the need to comply with equal pay requirements.

**Resolved:** that

- 1) the update be noted;
- 2) an update on the Draft People Support Strategy and Action from The Head of People and Organisational Development plan be included on future agendas of the Joint Consultative Forum.

**27. Pay Update:**

The UNISON Branch Organiser informed the forum that UNISON members were being balloted over industrial action. Results were expected in late October and a further update would follow in due course.

**28. Date of the Next Meeting:**

The Forum discussed the date for the next meeting

**Resolved:** that the next meeting be held on Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> January at 2:00 pm in the SCS Training Room at the Depot.

*The meeting closed at 11.20am*