

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Staff
Consultative Group held on 23
November 2023**

- Lynn Smith (Chair)
+ Cllr Valerie White (Vice Chair, in the Chair)

+ Cllr Alan Ashbery	+ Keiran Bartlett
+ Cllr Lisa Finan-Cooke	+ Kelly Fidgett
+ Cllr Mary Glauert	+ Joe Fullbrook
+ Cllr Mark Gordon	+ Gillian Riding
Cllr Ying Perrett	+ Anthony Sparks
+ Cllr Murray Rowlands	Vacancy
Cllr Pat Tedder	

+ Present
- Apologies for absence presented

In Attendance: Julie Simmonds, Gavin Ramtohal, Damian Roberts, Nick Steevens and Rachel Whillis

19/J Notes of Previous Meetings

The notes of the meetings held on 14 September, 27 October and 3 November 2023 were agreed as correct records.

20/J Speak Up Policy and Procedure

The Group considered proposed revisions to the Speak Up Policy. In addition to the changes set out in the agenda report it was agreed to further consider the wording at paragraph 8.1 of the Policy to allow more flexibility with appointing an investigator, including where appropriate a panel of investigators.

It was noted that the Policy was reviewed on an annual basis.

RESOLVED that the Employment Committee be advised to agree the revised Speak Up Policy, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, as amended.

21/J Speak Up Policy Annual Report (Verbal)

The Group was informed that, between January and October 2023 there had been eight disclosures made in accordance with the Speak Up Policy. It was noted that the reporting timeframe was usually between January to December but this had been altered due to the greater workload in the January meeting.

22/J Pay Negotiations 24/25 - Verbal Update

The Group was informed that, at its meeting the previous week, the Employment Committee had recommended to Full Council that a pay increase of 4% be agreed for 2024/25. It was, however, advised that the Committee had not agreed the Staff

Representatives' request for an additional day's leave to be given during the Christmas week when the Council Offices were closed.

23/J Achieving Equity Strategy

The Group reviewed a new Equity Strategy which detailed the Council's obligations in relation to how it treated people and how it would strive for equity rather than equality

The draft Strategy was reviewed and it was agreed to propose the following changes:

- (i) Inserting brief descriptions on equality and equity and, if possible, a visual representation of these meanings;
- (ii) Updating the first sentence of the second paragraph in the 'Why is this important' section to correct the omission of the word 'that';
- (iii) Amending the final bullet point under the Surrey Heath's vision and aims section as follows:
"...We will take steps to engage people from all ages in the democratic process ~~and~~ when building healthy lives initiative ~~and~~. ~~We~~ will also seeks ways to bridge the technological divide that exists between generations."; and
- (iv) Ensuring that references to equity and equality were consistently applied.

RESOLVED that the Executive be advised to adopt the Achieving Equity Strategy, asset out at Annex A, as amended.

24/J Politically Restricted Posts and Guidance

The Group was informed that a new Politically Restricted Posts Guide had been produced setting out the requirements for designating Politically Restricted Posts in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Policy was intended to provide clarification on which posts were affected.

RESOLVED that the Employment Committee be advised to adopt the Politically Restricted Posts and Guidance, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report.

25/J Work Programme 2023-24

The Work Programme for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year was reviewed.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme for 2023/24, as set out at Annex A to the agenda report, be agreed.

Chair