

EMPLOYEES' CONSULTATIVE FORUM**1 NOVEMBER 2007**

Chairman: * Councillor Mrs Camilla Bath

Councillors: * Bob Currie * Julia Merison (3)
 * Tony Ferrari (4) * Chris Mote
 * Graham Henson * Navin Shah

Representatives of HTCC: (Currently no appointees)

Representatives of UNISON: Ms K Bubenzer * Mr G Martin
 * Ms M Cawley * Mr R Thomas
 * Mr S Compton

Representative of GMB: * Ms P Browne

* Denotes Member present/Employee Representative present
 (3) and (4) Denote category of Reserve Member

[See Appendix 1 for list of officers in attendance]

PART I - RECOMMENDATIONS - NIL**PART II - MINUTES**77. **Councillor Janet Cowan:**

A minute of silence was observed in memory of Councillor Janet Cowan.

78. **Attendance by Reserve Members:**

RESOLVED: To note the attendance at this meeting of the following duly appointed Reserve Members:-

Ordinary Member

Councillor David Ashton
 Councillor Paul Osborn

Reserve Member

Councillor Tony Ferrari
 Councillor Julia Merison

79. **Declarations of Interest:**

RESOLVED: To note the following declarations of interest made by Members present relating to the business to be transacted at this meeting:

- (i) Councillor Bob Currie declared a personal interest in that he was a retired member of UNISON. Accordingly, he would remain in the room and take part in the discussion and decision-making on all items of the agenda.
- (ii) Councillor Graham Henson declared a personal interest in that he was a member of the Communication Workers' Union and his cousin was a Council employee. Accordingly, he would remain in the room and take part in the discussion and decision-making on all items of the agenda.
- (iii) Councillor Navin Shah declared a personal interest in that he was a member of Amicus. Accordingly, he would remain in the room and take part in the discussion and decision-making on all items of the agenda.

80. **Arrangement of Agenda:**

RESOLVED: That (1) all items be considered with the press and public present;

(2) agenda item 11 – UNISON Report on Front Desk – be considered before agenda item 8 – Equality Monitoring Report 2006-2007.

81. **Minutes:**

RESOLVED: That (1) the minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2007 be taken as read and signed as a correct record;

(2) the minutes of the special meeting held on 29 August 2007 be deferred until printed in the Council Bound Minute Volume.

82. **Public Questions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no public questions were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 16 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

83. **Petitions:**

RESOLVED: To note that no petitions were received at this meeting under the provisions of the Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 14 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

84. **Deputations:**

RESOLVED: To note that no deputations were received at this meeting under the provisions of Advisory Panel and Consultative Forum Procedure Rule 15 (Part 4E of the Constitution).

85. **Equality Monitoring Report 2006-2007:**

The Forum received a report of the Interim Divisional Director, Human Resources and Development, setting out the annual workforce profile statistics and equalities monitoring data in relation to Harrow Council's employment practices during 2006/2007.

Members noted that the information did not cover the Council's key partners. The officer agreed to contact Directorates to establish whether workforce profile information was provided through the contract monitoring process. If this information was not available, the officer would ask that it be requested on a six-monthly basis so that it could be included within Council reports.

Members expressed concern over performance in appointing disabled people and asked officers to investigate this. Officers also agreed to provide more detailed information on disciplinary cases, the number of which had risen sharply.

Members noted the absence of representatives of the Black Workers' Group (HCBWG) and the Disability Awareness, Information and Support (DAIS) group. The Chairman informed the Forum that an email had been received regarding the lack of facility time for HCBWG. The Chairman referred members of the Forum to paragraph 2.8.17 of the officer's report, which stated that there was no corporate budget provision to provide release for employees to attend or undertake work on behalf of employee support groups, including HCBWG. Members asked officers to write to the Groups to find out why they had not attended. It was also suggested that a representative of Harrow Council for Racial Equality (HCRE) be invited in future when equality issues were being discussed.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

86. **Update on Organisational Review:**

The Forum received a report of the Interim Divisional Director, Human Resources and Development, providing background information on and setting out the current position in relation to the Organisational Review.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

87. **Health and Safety Questions from UNISON:**

A representative of UNISON informed the Forum that this item had been withdrawn on the understanding that written responses would be received to the union's questions.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

88. **UNISON Report on Front Desk:**

The Forum received a report from UNISON, expressing concern at the failure to resolve issues relating to the design of the Access Harrow front desk. The Director of Business Transformation and Customer Services explained that a misunderstanding had led the Forum to expect an interim solution by the end of July 2007. After discussion, during which relevant front desk staff attending the meeting answered questions from members of the Forum, the officer agreed to produce a timetable as soon as possible to adapt the existing counter in consultation with staff. The offer

reported that a longer-term solution would be subject to budget constraints. In the meantime, issues relating to the job descriptions of staff in Access Harrow and the amount of time spent at the front desk would be dealt with through the normal channels.

RESOLVED: That the above be noted.

(Note: The meeting having commenced at 7.40 pm, closed at 10.05 pm)

(Signed) COUNCILLOR CAMILLA BATH
Chairman

Appendix 1Officers in
attendance:

Ms C Cutler	Director, Business Transformation & Customer Services
Ms S Jerath	HR Adviser
Mr J Price	HR Adviser
Mr D Ramadan	Head of Service, Access Harrow
Mr J Turner	Interim Divisional Director, Human Resources & Development
Mr D Ward	Head of Audit & Risk
Mr P Williams	Service Manager, Health & Safety