

## **EMPLOYEES' CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

**Date: 27 April 2009**

### **EMPLOYEES' SIDE REPORT ON Housing: Restructuring of Services SUMMARY AND DECISION REQUESTED**

**Consultation process was flawed:**

**Unison wishes to raise major concerns regarding the lack of commitment to the values and obligations within the Policy for organisational change which underpins this Councils pledge of partnership working.**

**This Union requests that the Portfolio holder undertake to remind officers that they are required to consult and provide adequate comments and documentation (Recognition and Procedural Agreement 5.6); and that they have a greater responsibility to communicate effectively with the staff' and staff side to ensure that the 'Create Values' are disseminated to all.**

### **CHRONOLOGY**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>OUTCOME</b>
<b>1.12.08</b>	<b>Issue raised informally by Branch Secretary with Service Manager</b>	<b>No response from Manager</b>
<b>11,12.08</b>	<b>Meeting between management and unions</b>	<b>Matter unresolved</b>
<b>19.01.09</b>	<b>Meeting with staff and unions</b>	<b>Requests for documentation by this union still outstanding; Matter referred to AHJC</b>
<b>30.01.09</b>	<b>Meeting with Paul Najsarek Corporate Director and Unison</b>	<b>Unison raised their concerns and tabled counter proposal</b>
<b>9.02.09</b>	<b>Adults and Housing Joint Committee</b>	<b>No resolution was found – matter referred to ECF</b>
	<b>This is not an exhaustive list of meetings and letters that have been held to resolve this matter</b>	

### **REPORT**

**It was acknowledged in a letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> November 2008; that 'restructure always presents an uncertain time for staff'; yet apologies were tabled by Ms Gwyneth Allen at the very first meeting with staff for the inappropriate and insensitive way that employees were informed of the proposed**

deletion of posts. The letter also stated that 'whilst I do not want to alarm staff unnecessarily, it is vital that staff and unions are aware of these proposals'; this assurance has proven not to be the case in practice.

**Consultation process was flawed:**

Unison wishes to raise major concerns regarding the lack of commitment to the values and obligations within the Policy for organisational change which underpins this Council's pledge of partnership working. The original documentation provided on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 for Consultation was inaccurate; and the information was distributed to all employees prior to informing those in the posts at risk of deletion.

**Failure to respond to reasonable requests for information/documentation:**

Unison has frequently, repeatedly and reasonably requested that all the documentation could be provided. This union questioned the decision by the management of this service not to conduct even basic feasibility studies; the reluctance to provide any relevant evidence to substantiate the deletion of posts and the reallocation of residual tasks to remaining employees as identified in the consultation document was derelict and ill considered.

This failure to provide all the relevant documentation and attributed costs from the first restructure (which failed to meet the required outcome).

Unison has requested this vital documentation in order to base a balanced and objective response to the proposal, has placed an impediment to constructive and meaningful consultation.

Unison is committed to working with all parts of this Council to provide an effective value for money service delivery, to protect its member's jobs, which in turn provides consistency of service and maintains familiarity and trust to the residents of Harrow. It is with regret that our endeavours in this regard have been frustrated by the failure of the Housing department senior management team to engage in meaningful debate, effective communication and provision of valuable information which would achieve a collective input by all stakeholders.

**AUTHOR: Harrow UNISON Branch Secretary Gary Martin**

**CONTACT DETAILS 020 8424 1795**

**Date 31<sup>st</sup> March 2009.**

**The amendments to the UNISON'S ECF resolutions are as follows:-**

1. That all outstanding information requested by UNISON in the consultation process be supplied within a reasonable time frame (five working days)
2. That the consultation process is revisited, as it is in breach of the protocol for the managing organisational change 1.1 and also the recognition and procedural agreement section 15.

Unison wishes these amendments to be adopted and agreed by the members of the forum.

**Harrow UNISON Local Government Branch.**