

AGENDA ITEM NO: 4

To : Members of the Human Resources Committee

Councillors : Steve Comer, John Bees, Mark Wright, Charles Price,
Richard Eddy (subs:)

Copy to : Robert Britton, Head of Human Resources
Minute Book, Pauline Draisey, Evelyn Pearce,
Kirstie Macrae,/Graham Clarkson/Linda
Fitton/ Siobhan Burke, relevant report authors.
Spares x 15

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

14 MAY 2009

PUBLIC FORUM STATEMENTS

AGENDA ITEM	AUTHOR OF STATEMENT	SUBJECT(S) OF STATEMENT	No.
5	Martin Jones UNISON	Creation of Consultative Boards	1
5	Steve Paines UNITE	Creation of Consultative Boards	2

AGENDA ITEM 5 (2) :-

“CREATION OF CONSULTATIVE BOARDS FOR EMPLOYEE RELATIONS”.**VIEWS OF UNISON**

UNISON is concerned by the report of the (Designate) Service Director, Strategic HR/ Workforce Strategy, which sets out to replace the existing Employees Joint Consultative Committee (EJCC), with a new Joint Employee Relations Board (JERB). UNISON's concerns are set out as follows:-

1. At present, the EJCC allows for a wide range of recognised trade unions to be allocated seats from the TU Side on the committee, including manual and craft employees. By restricting the membership of the JERB to the Single Status and Teaching Unions, there will be no allocation to the many groups such as manual and craft trade unions. As these unions have members in the City Council' who are affected by the corporate employee relations policies for example, UNISON believes that an allocation of the seats to the TU Side must include membership from these trade unions.
2. UNISON notes that the proposed constitution allows for 4 members of the TU Side requires attendance for quoracy, but that no reference is made as to whether this should be 4 separate TU's. If the proposals are accepted, the quoracy could come from a minimum of trade unions (UNISON and UNITE for example). In the interests of democracy, this proposal should be reassessed.
3. Under paragraph 2.1 of the report, it is claimed that two dedicated meetings with the TU side have been held. Whilst an interim report for information was taken to the EJCC in March this year, there have been no other consultation meetings with the TU Side over the proposals. The only meetings taken place with the TU's on consultative issues, have been with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, on how the City Council can improve its dialogue with members of the public and the trades unions. This followed the report of the independent consultant to the City Council.
4. UNISON is deeply concerned by the implications of the report, as set out under paragraphs 3.1. and 3.6.

At present, under the existing EJCC arrangements, the TU Side meets independently some 4 weeks prior to the agenda conference, in order to consider items which the TU Side would wish to see raised at the EJCC. The TU Side Secretary to the EJCC then compiles the reports on behalf of the TU Side and forwards copies to the Councillor Support Clerk for inclusion, together with copies of the reports to Employee Relations. The TU Side Secretary also forwards at the same time to Employee Relations, a memorandum indicating what matters following the previous EJCC, that the TU Side would like an update on.

At the agenda conference, the draft responses to the TU Side reports are given to the TU Side Secretary and Chair, together with other reports being

presented. The Chair and Secretary of the Teachers Trades Unions are also invited to the agenda conference.

What paragraph 3.1 implies, is that the two joint secretaries will agree the agenda items for the JERB. This means that the TU Side collectively will no longer have their own report for consideration which is bitterly opposed by UNISON, as this removes the right of individual TU's to bring reports to the JERB.

5. At present, UNISON is still the largest trade union with over 3,800 members employed by the City Council. This is recognised by the City Council, as the current allocation of seats on the EJCC is broken down as follows:-

UNISON	9 seats
UNITE/ AMICUS	7 seats
GMB/ APEX	5 seats
UCATT	1 seat
GMPU	1 seat
MPO	1 seat
ATL	2 seats
NAHT	1 seat
NASUWT	2 seats
NUT	2 seats
SHA	1 seat
Total	32 seats

UNISON's allocation of 3 seats under the revised JERB is calculated at the existing 9 (from a single status group on the EJCC) divided by 24 and multiplying by 8 (the revised Single Status allocation). UNISON will agree that 3 would be the correct figure. However, when calculating the same formula for UNITE and the GMB respectively, the allocation of seats for UNITE should read 2.3 seats, and 1.7 seats for the GMB. UNISON believes that any allocation of TU seats to the proposed JERB, must be truly reflective of TU membership numbers.

6. UNISON agrees that there is a need to revise the EJCC so that the membership of the committee is manageable. However, in the light of the concerns as listed above, UNISON believes that the EJCC should remain in its current format for the next twelve months, and that discussions take place between the City Council and the TU Side over the proposed JERB should commence, in order to :-
- Agree on the size and membership of the TU Side to the JERB.
 - Agree on the constitution of the committee.
 - Agree on the format of the TU Side report to the JERB

Members of the HR Committee are asked therefore to defer agreement on the 3 recommendations as set out in the report until all three issues in point 6 have been resolved.

Martin Jones
UNISON Bristol Branch



Trade Union response for Human Resources Committee 14 May 2009

Agenda item 5(2) Creation of Joint Consultative Board for Employee Relations

Paragraph 3.4 of the report states that existing membership consists of 24 members from Single Status and Craft Unions. Historically Craft had their own consultative forum. In Appendix A it states voting will be split according to whether the issue is Single Status or Teacher. What about Craft issues which are covered by a separate national agreement the Red Book? In the Authority Amicus side of Unite, UCAT and Unite the Union represent Craft employees so I consider further work is required to incorporate Craft into the Joint Employee Relations Board.

There will be issues that affect Support Staff in schools but the report is not clear how their representatives will be accommodated. For training and development purposes or for specific agenda items the trade union side wants the right to invite representatives. So the proposal to have attendance approved by the joint secretaries is adding bureaucracy to the process.

Reference items being referred to the Committee the joint chairs should also be part of this decision making process as they will be chairing the main meeting. In paragraph 3.1 failures to agree from DJCCs' should be referred to the JERB and the report should acknowledge this.

Finally in Appendix A the employer's side is seven. The teacher's side is five so voting will not be democratic because the employers have a majority! Therefore the proposal in paragraph 4.2 to consider reducing the TU seats to one per union is not supported as the employers side will dominate and have the majority in any voting situation.

Steve Paines (Convenor)