

Report To: Council

Date of Meeting: 28th March 2019

Lead Member: Councillor Mark Young, Lead Member for Corporate Standards

Report Author: Steve Price, Democratic Services Manager

Title: Joint Consultative Committee for Health and Safety and Employee Relations

1. What is the report about?

This report is about the creation of a single committee for HR and corporate health, safety and welfare issues. The proposed name of the new committee is the Joint Consultative Committee for Health and Safety and Employee Relations.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

Power to create a single committee for HR and corporate health, safety and welfare issues lies with full Council. Council is being asked for its approval to establish this new committee and approve its terms of reference (attached as appendix 1).

3. What are the Recommendations?

That Council approves:

- i) The establishment of the Joint Consultative Committee for Health and Safety and Employee Relations;
- ii) The termination of the existing Local Joint Consultative Committee (LJCC) and the Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee; and
- iii) The Terms of Reference (attached as appendix 1) for the Joint Consultative Committee for Health and Safety and Employee Relations.

4. Report details

4.1 There are currently two committees – the LJCC and the Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee that consider employee-related issues. Both committees are internal consultative bodies and have a similar make up in terms of employer and employee (trade union) representation.

4.2 Many of the same people sit on both of the existing committees but there have been ongoing difficulties in achieving quorate meetings with many being held informally for a lack of a quorum or cancelled.

4.3 Achieving a quorum has been particularly difficult for the employees' side of the committees, made up of Denbighshire Council staff representatives of Unison, Unite the Union and the GMB. The current LJCC's constitution requires at least one representative of each trade union to be present which has been problematic but is not a requirement of the Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee's terms of reference. The workload and time-commitment required from the union staff members, who need to be released from their posts to attend meetings (in addition to their preparation work for meetings), is often a difficulty for employee representatives.

4.4 Having a combined committee and amending the quorum rules would alleviate many of the problems outlined above.

4.5 A further issue that has affected the committees is that on occasion scheduled meetings have not had sufficient business at that time to justify holding a meeting. By merging the HR, health, safety and welfare functions of the existing committees into one meeting this problem is less likely to affect the viability of meetings in future.

4.6 The proposal to merge the LJCC and Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committees and the draft terms of reference have been considered and supported by both committees and by the employer and employee sides of both committees.

4.7 It is anticipated that the new committee will meet 4 times a year. This is a reduction from the combined 7 meetings a year of the current committees. Special meetings could be held by the new committee as and when required.

5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

There is no direct impact on the Corporate Priorities.

6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

With a reduction in the overall number of meetings, the proposal would reduce the costs associated with holding and attending meetings.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

Not required for this report.

8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

The proposal to merge the existing staff consultative committees has been discussed and unanimously endorsed at recent LJCC and Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee meetings and at a Corporate Joint HR/Trade Union Meeting.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

The merger of two existing committees will result in a very minor financial saving to the authority.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

There are no obvious significant risks in agreeing to the recommendations.

11. Power to make the Decision

Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972.