

STEVENAGE BOROUGH COUNCIL
JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
CONSTITUTION

1. TITLE

- 1.1. The title of the Committee is the Joint Consultative Committee, reporting to the Executive.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1. It is important for efficiency and for good industrial relations that employees be kept informed by Management on matters which concern them, and that their views are sought and considered on existing practices and on proposed changes which would affect them, so that misunderstandings and conflict are prevented.
- 2.2. Without prejudice to the right of Management to manage, and of the employees to make representations in their interests through their own organisations, the general objectives of the JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE are:
- (a) to afford a regular basis of consultation and negotiation on matters relating to industrial relations, productivity and working and other arrangements, and terms and conditions of employment which are not negotiated under more extensive bargaining arrangements at National, Provincial or other agreed local levels, with the object, as a matter of mutual concern, of maintaining and developing an efficient service;
 - (b) to secure the largest possible measure of agreement as to the Conditions of Service of the Council;
 - (c) to discuss in relation to local conditions the implementation of matters which have been prescribed or recommended at National, Provincial or other agreed local levels;
 - (d) to give employees a wider interest and greater responsibility in these matters;
 - (e) to maintain an effective means of reporting back to employees.

3. FUNCTIONS

- 3.1. The Joint Consultative Committee shall have no executive function, but in pursuance of its general objectives, the following matters are examples of those which may be discussed by the Committee and on which recommendations may be made:
- (a) Employer objectives

- (b) Organisation or reorganisation
- (c) Productivity or major method changes
- (d) Consideration of all matters relating to efficiency
- (e) Personnel policy and conditions of service matters
- (f) Employee training and development
- (g) Working conditions
- (h) Employee health, safety and welfare
- (i) Equality issues
- (j) Procedures for settlement of Grievances at local level
- (k) General questions relating to discipline, conduct and grading appeals (but excluding matters related to particular individuals)
- (l) Maintenance of essential services in emergencies

3.2. For the avoidance of doubt, questions affecting individuals are excluded from consideration unless they represent matters of principle which are of general application to employees.

4. COMPOSITION

Membership

4.1. The Committee shall comprise:

4 Members of the Stevenage Borough Council appointed annually by the Council (to be known as the Employer Side);

7 current employees of the Council (to be known as the Staff Side), appointed annually by the Authority's recognised Trades Unions, in proportion to the numbers of members for which each organisation is recognised by the Authority on the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council. Should the number of members of any one organisation be insufficient to qualify the organisation to appoint one representative, it may combine with one or more organisations for this purpose.

4.2. By agreement within the Staff Side, the respective numbers of representatives appointed by each recognised Trades Union may be varied for one or more meetings, subject to the overall Staff Side membership number at paragraph 4.1.

4.3. If a member of the Committee ceases to be a Member or employee of Stevenage Borough Council, they shall thereupon cease to be a member of the Joint Consultative Committee. Any vacancy ensuing may be filled by the Council, the organisation or the combination of organisations concerned.

Appointment of Officers

- 4.4. The Employer Side and Staff Side shall each appoint a Chair from its members at its first meeting each year after the Annual Meeting of the Council. The Chair of meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee shall alternate between the Chair of the Employer Side and the Chair of the Staff Side between meetings.
- 4.5. The Chief Executive shall act as Secretary for the Employer Side.
- 4.6. The Staff Side of the Committee shall appoint a Secretary from its membership at the first meeting each year, who shall hold office for one year and shall be eligible for re-election.

Advisers

- 4.7. Either side may arrange for the attendance in an advisory capacity of officers, or Council Members who are not members of the Employer Side of the Committee, or Trades Union Officials, at any Committee meeting where it would be helpful to the business under discussion. Any such attendances shall be recorded in the Minutes of that meeting.
- 4.8. Attendances under 4.7 shall be notified to the Joint Secretaries of the Committee no less than 5 working days before the meeting of the Committee. Such notification may be made as a standing notification.

Working Parties

- 4.9. The Committee shall have power to appoint or arrange for the appointment of Working Parties as necessary.

5. PROCEDURE

- 5.1. Meetings shall be scheduled for each cycle in the annual programme of meetings of the Stevenage Borough Council, with the provision that any meetings may be cancelled on reference to the Chair of the Employer Side and the Chair of the Staff Side if there is insufficient business.
- 5.2. Additional or special meetings, as necessary, shall be held at the request of the Chair of the Employer Side and the Chair of the Staff Side (subject to the provisions of paragraph 5.4.).
- 5.3. For any meeting under paragraphs 5.1 or 5.2 there shall be an itemised agenda agreed between the Joint Secretaries or their representatives. Copies of any reports for the agenda shall be passed by either side to the other not less than 10 working days prior to the scheduled date of the meeting; this shall not apply to special meetings required for matters of urgency. As a principle, urgent business is to be avoided, but it may be considered provided that it has been agreed by both the Chair of the Employer Side and the Chair of the Staff Side in advance of the meeting.

- 5.4. No matter within the purview of the Joint Consultative Committee shall be included in the agenda unless it is unresolved to the satisfaction of Management or the Staff Side after discussion with the Chief Executive and/or with the Council's Chief Officer Board (via the appropriate corporate group) or Chief Officers as appropriate.
- 5.5. The Employer shall provide reasonable facilities for meetings of the Staff Side of the Committee. Such meetings may be held during normal working hours.
- 5.6. One third of the members of the Staff Side and one-third of the members of the Employer's Side of the Committee shall together constitute a quorum.
- 5.7. Recommendations shall be reached by a majority of each of the two Sides of the Committee voting separately.
- 5.8. Overtime, in accordance with the provisions of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services or the Joint Negotiating Committee for Local Authority Craft & Associated Employees as amended by local agreements, will be payable to the Staff Side representatives when attending meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee which are outside employees' normal working hours.
- 5.9. The minutes of any meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee, subject to prior approval by the Chair of the Employer Side and the Chair of the Staff Side, shall be reported to the Executive of the Stevenage Borough Council and at the same time be circulated to all Staff Side Members of the Committee and published on staff notice boards by the Staff Side Secretary.
- 5.10. In the event of any matter arising upon which the Committee cannot agree (or if the Authority does not accept the Committee's recommendation and where no local settlement can be achieved between the authority and officials of the Trade Union or Unions concerned), the matter may thereafter be referred by either side to the Regional Council provided it is a matter which falls within scope of the latter's constitution as a matter which may be referred to it.
- 5.11. This Constitution may only be rescinded or amended by agreement between the two sides of the Joint Consultative Committee.