

Central Bedfordshire Council
Priory House
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CONSTITUTION ADVISORY GROUP

DATE: 1 June 2010

TITLE	Review of consultation and negotiation arrangements with Professional Associations (JCNC)
REPORT OF	Director of Customer and Shared Services

PURPOSE	To propose an amendment to the Constitution to remove the Joint Consultative and Negotiating Committee for Primary and Secondary Education as a sub committee of the General Purposes Committee.
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ORIGIN OF PROPOSAL	This proposal has come from discussions held between the Portfolio holder for Children's Services, the Chairman of the Constitution Advisory Group and the Director of Children's Services.
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RECOMMENDATION: That subject to endorsement by the General Purposes Committee, the Council be recommended to amend Sections E2 (7.1.5) and E2 (10) and remove the Joint Consultative and Negotiating Committee for Primary and Secondary Education (JCNC) as a subsidiary body of the General Purposes Committee.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Background

The current consultation and negotiation framework with the professional associations for schools based employees within Central Bedfordshire has been in operation since 1 April 2009 and is based on the former County Council framework.

It is noted that in the original terms of reference for the JCNC there would be a review after 12 months, when there would be a better understanding by Members, officers and professional associations of the effectiveness and appropriateness of the sub committee.

In addition to the formal JCNC there are a number of working parties that meet each term:

- JCC (Joint Consultative Committee) Working Party
- JNC (Joint Negotiating Committee) Working Party
- WAMG (Workforce Agreement Monitoring Group)
- Soulbury Working Party
- EJC Health & Safety Committee

In recent months discussions have been held to review the existing consultation and negotiation framework for schools, (formal JCNC and working parties) with a view to streamlining them and making them more efficient and effective.

Business case for the proposed change to JCNC

There is a need to reflect the changing environment:

- To broaden the current framework to reflect the wider children's workforce and the Team around the Child and Family agenda.
 - To recognise and acknowledge that terms and conditions of the children's workforce (especially schools based employees) is largely nationally negotiated.
 - Following the creation of Central Bedfordshire and also the Senior Management Review there is a reduction of officer capacity to be able to attend the number of meetings currently held.
 - To ensure that the issues raised by the professional associations and trade unions are considered and dealt with at the appropriate level within the consulting and negotiating framework.
 - To ensure that GMB and Unison who represent the views of non teaching employees in schools and other employees within the wider children's workforce are included in all decisions that affect their members.
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- Discussion of key strategic matters are held at Executive, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Council and between the Director of Children's Services and Head Teachers and Governors through the Schools Forum. We need to ensure that following appropriate decision making, these matters are not by default subject to further review and consideration through JCNC arrangements.

Proposal

It is recognised that there is a need to provide an interface between Members and the professional associations and trade unions and it is proposed that JCNC is replaced by a Joint Consultative and Negotiating Forum involving the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services, and representatives of relevant trade unions and Professional Associations.

Details of the framework including the working parties and a brief summary of their terms of reference are set out on the attached Appendix A. These details have been discussed by the Director of Children's Services with all the professional associations and trade unions and they are fully supportive of the proposed changes.

Any matters that remain unresolved by the Joint Consultative and Negotiating Forum will be referred to the General Purposes Committee to resolve/determine.

Employee Partnership Committee

The terms of reference for this Committee will also be reviewed in the forthcoming months and it is likely that a proposal similar to the one outlined in this report will come for consideration to a later meeting of the Constitutional Advisory Group following further discussions between Members, officers and trade unions.

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Key Background Papers:
None