

Notes of the Joint Consultative Panel

8th November, 2010, at 1.00 pm
at the Fire Service Headquarters, Birmingham

Present: **Members of the Authority**

Councillor O'Neill (Chair);
Councillor Chambers (Lead Member Human Resources)
Councillors Jones, M Hill and Stevenson.

Employees Side

Fire Brigades Union (FBU)

A Dennis (representing M Bell) and R Moore (observing);

UNISON

J Foster (accompanied by M New, Regional Officer).

Apology: A. Tranter (Fire Officers' Association)

13/10 **Submission of a matter referred from the Joint Consultative Committee relating to Facilities Time for Unison**

The Panel resumed consideration of the above matter which had been adjourned on 11th October, 2010.

The Panel had now had the opportunity to consider the report previously circulated and additional papers submitted by UNISON in relation to a decision by management to allow UNISON 18.5 hours facilities time in the current financial year under the procedure set out in the Employee Relations Framework. UNISON had raised its dissatisfaction with this decision at the Joint Consultative Committee. The matter had been referred to the Joint Consultative Panel because of the sensitivities around facilities time and to inform the revision of the Employee Relations Framework which was currently underway.

The employer's side heard from the UNISON representatives that their representations were as set out in the papers now before the Panel

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which included papers relating to their original submission that they felt should have been included in the report to the Panel; additional comments that they wished to make on the report; and an update on developments in the matter since March 2010 relating to time off for national duties.

The FBU representatives indicated that the same arguments that had been put forward by UNISON with regard to time off for trade union duties applied to their union, for instance, increasing workloads.

The management representative indicated that the arrangements for time off for trade union duties had been implemented in accordance with the provisions set out in the Employee Relations Framework. The hours that had been determined in respect of UNISON represented a minimum amount, and that trade union officials were allowed additional paid time off in excess of this allocation. There could be implications for all trade unions from the deliberations today.

The Panel thanked the UNISON representatives for their comprehensive report.

Following an adjournment, the employers' side indicated that it had given careful consideration to the representations of UNISON in this matter. It recognised the regional and national contribution of Judy Foster, the UNISON representative. In addition, the employers' side needed to ensure that there was equitable treatment between the trades unions.

The employers' side indicated that in its view, the decision on facilities time was a matter for management under the Employee Relations Framework. On this occasion, the employers' side had considered UNISON's case. The employers' side noted that the Employee Relations Framework was currently being reviewed.

The employers' side indicated that after careful consideration it had decided to recommend to the Authority that provided UNISON was prepared to pay 50% of the cost, UNISON be allowed one full-time post for this financial year.

<p>Resolved to recommend to the Authority that provided UNISON is prepared to pay 50% of the cost, UNISON be allowed one full-time post for this financial year.</p>

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(The meeting ended at 2.00 pm following an adjournment between
1.10 pm and 1.58 pm)

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