

Minutes of: CORPORATE JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 4 February 2026

Present: Councillors R Gold, M Hayes, R Bernstein, S Arif and C Birchmore

Also in attendance: K Waterhouse, Executive Director, (Strategy & Transformation)
Catherine King, HR Business Manager
Claire Kirke, HR Business Specialist

Union in Attendance: Tony Beesley (in the Chair) , Peter Cookson, Marcia Hancock, David Sharples.

Apologies for Absence: Councillor A Quinn, Councillor E O'Brien, Councillor B Ibrahim and Councillor K Simpson

21 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Shirley Allen Councillors Ibrahim, O'Brien, A Quinn and Simpson

22 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was agreed:

That the minutes of the last meeting held 17 December 2025 be approved as a correct record.

23 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising

24 WORKFORCE POLICIES

The Executive Director (Strategy & Transformation) presented a report setting out proposals for a number of new, changed, reviewed and replaced policies.

It was reported that Trade Union Colleagues had been fully engaged in the work.

It was reported that the reports had been presented to the last meeting of the Employment Panel and had been approved and forwarded to the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee for endorsement.

1. Family Leave Policy

The Family Leave Policy was created in July 2023 and combined into one document provisions relating to maternity, paternity, fostering, adoption, shared parental leave, parental bereavement and IVF. It was amended in February 2025 to include neonatal care leave provisions.

Small changes have been made to the Family Leave Policy, in response to the Employment Rights Act 2025, to ensure that the Council is compliant with legislation with effect from April 2026. These include:

- Making paternity leave a day one right
- Removing the need to take paternity leave before taking any shared parental leave
- Making parental leave a day one right

2. Working Time Regulations Policy

The Working Time Regulations Policy sets out the Council's commitment to providing safe working conditions, and details how it will take all practical measures possible to operate within the Working Time Regulations 1998 (as amended). It was last reviewed in April 2009.

Changes have been made to generally update the Policy and also to strengthen Policy wording to ensure that staff, in normal circumstances, with more than 1 internal contract are not permitted to work above the 48-hour limit. This is in line with the Council's approach to supporting staff welfare and wellbeing.

3. Job Evaluation Procedure

The NJC Job Evaluation Procedure and supporting documents were last reviewed in 2015. This procedure is used to evaluate the jobs of the vast majority of Council employees, who are on NJC 'green book' terms and conditions.

Although there are no changes to the NJC scheme itself, the HR Team and Unison are now using a new Sharepoint based system to record, monitor and report upon evaluations. The Procedure has been amended to reflect this, and also the opportunity has been taken for a general update and to pull into one document the evaluation and appeals procedures.

The Executive Director (Strategy & Transformation) thanked the HR Business Management Team and the Unions for their work on updating the relevant policies.

Members present were given the opportunity to ask questions and make comments and the following points were raised:

- Councillor Birchmore referred to the Family Leave Policy and reference to IVF treatment and the employee speaking with their manager. Councillor Birchmore asked that if the employee wished, could they speak to an alternative such as occupational health as it could be a difficult conversation to have with a direct manager.

It was explained that this would definitely be an option and each employee would be considered individually based on their needs and support required.

It was agreed:

1. That Corporate JCC endorse the proposed changes which were approved by Employment Panel on 3 February 2026.

2. That the documents be published on the Council's intranet pages and communicated to staff.

25 COUNCIL'S 2026/2027 REVENUE BUDGET AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Councillor Thorpe, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation gave an overview of the Council's 2026/27 Revenue Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2027/28 through to 2028/29. Councillor Thorpe, gave thanks to Neil Kissock, Director of Finance and the Finance Service for producing the documents presented before the Committee.

Members were advised that the reports are based on many variables including income through Council Tax, Fees and Charges and other Grant monies available. Members were given an overview of budget saving measures, such as internal transformation, investing in commissioning expertise and proposes increase income from Place Directorate.

Members were invited to ask questions and the following points were raised:

- In response to a member question it was explained that there were a number of areas to consider when looking at projected demand growth assumptions such as comparison with other GM authorities, past trends and national issues and these were factored in when looking ahead.
- Discussions took place regarding the projections for 2027/2028 and further ahead and concerns around the figures reported were raised. It was explained that demand in certain areas was very high but that options were being considered to try to bring some of the costs associated with these areas down by providing in house provision, looking at partnering with other organisations efficiencies available through technology. It was also explained that work would be starting on bridging these gaps straight away.
- In response to a question relating to rising construction costs it was acknowledged that inflation costs would always be built into any project's contingency.

It was agreed:

That the report and appendices be noted.

26 ANNUAL HRA BUDGET & RENT SETTING

Councillor Thorpe, Deputy Leader Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation presented the report that was circulated in advance of the meeting. The report provided the proposed rent levels and increases for various charges. The report proposes a 4.8% increase for Council Housing, Dwelling and Garage rents, Sheltered Support, Management, Service and Heating charges, and Furnished Tenancy charges.

It was agreed:

That the report be noted

27 URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business

28 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 25 March 2026 at 5.00pm and will be held virtually

**Tony Beesley
Chair**

(Note: The meeting started at 5.00 pm and ended at 6.00 pm)