



FCTU WALES COMMITTEE MEETING **19th November 2009, 10.00 – 15.00**

COED Y GORORAU FOREST DISTRICT, WELSHPOOL

1. Present: Antony Griffiths (AG), Chair PCS
Paul Finch (PF), PCS
StJohn Ashworth (SA), PCS
Barbara Anglezarke (BA), Prospect
Chris Tucker, (CT), UNITE
John Williams (JW), UNITE
Andy Phillips (AP), UNITE

2. Apologies: Chris Edwards (PCS)
Eric Williams (UNITE)
Emma Felkin (Prospect)
Rhian Evans (PCS)
Mike Kennet (UNITE)
Alan Hubbock (PCS)

3. Minutes of Last Meeting – 26.8.09

Accepted as an accurate record.

4. Matters Arising

5. *Staff Council Actions* – done

8. *Contact Centre Re-location* – BA representing FCTU on the Integration Project Group – has not yet been contacted however.

9. *Restructuring of Teams* – CT to ensure that finance team posts have been submitted for evaluation.

11. *Business Sustainability* – AG still to talk to CL about the potential role of the FCTU.

12. *Key/Non-Key Posts* – the issue of not having received the structure charts still continues.

14b. *FCTU Website* – status to be queried with Sue Gillingwater, Allan MacKenzie and Sam Telford. At present, up-to-date Staff Council and FCTU Wales Committee Meeting minutes are not available on the site.

14c. *Modern Apprenticeships* – current programme is being evaluated with a view to a second round being launched in 2010. The scheme will be included in the 'Education, Skills and Life-long learning' programme being developed by the policy team for consideration by the MB in April 2010.

14i. *Review of Forest Estate* – Trefor Owen, Director FCW, isn't considering the involvement of FCTU in the review process, although the FCTU feels that it would be able to make a positive contribution. AG to raise with TO again on 30.11.09 – details of review objectives and proposed process to be requested.

5. Staff Council 21.9.09

Minutes had been circulated.

- *WHAM* – there are no undue concerns with the Fleet Review since all those involved/affected have been well informed of the changes. However, we will need to monitor this and be confident that Members interests remain key within the changes proposed.
- *Resource planning for Windfarm Programme* – additional District staff to be appointed to the Windfarm Team. If these vacancies are filled by existing staff, then re-appointments need to take place promptly to ensure that workload is covered and there is not undue pressure on remaining team members.

ACTION:

- AG to discuss with Trefor Owen and/or HR the need for advance planning by HR to ensure that staff remaining within Districts aren't unduly affected by carrying additional workloads due to delays in back-filling any successful internal appointments.

6. Health and Safety - Report back from meeting 15.10.09

CT reported back on FCTU meeting with management. Relevance of training on offer was discussed. Basic union training is valuable, but FC would benefit from a tailored course in time.

H&S representatives are needed in workplaces where there are vacancies – this recruitment drive will need management support. Letter will go to all Unit Managers to this effect emphasising that increased efficiency is the result of good H&S management.

ACTIONS:

- AG to contact Eric Williams to confirm whether or not he wishes to continue in his H&S role.
- CT to forward action points from meeting to FCTU.

7. Built Asset Review

Peter Garson met with AG and CT earlier in November to discuss actions and recommendations for all four Districts to date, and the previous lack of consultation with FCTU. Notes on proposals were tabled for FCTU members' information.

There is now a clear commitment to bring any future proposals to FCTU for comment at an early stage and acknowledgement that this is an important part of the process. It was agreed that the 'terms of reference' for any reports, projects, etc, would be shared with the FCTU before any were written/started. Staff do need to be informed and involved in the decision making process.

ACTIONS:

- AP to confirm that there is now ongoing consultation now in Clawdd Newydd and that staff are happy with it.
- If a clear process is not yet in place, AG to discuss again with PG.

8. Mandatory Retirement Date

Information for members was tabled by AG. By March 2010, retirement at 65 will no longer be mandatory in all departments and agencies. At present, a formal request to continue is required.

Although this flexibility may affect efficient succession planning, this does not appear to be in place anyway. Need to ensure consistent approach across FCW to avoid local interpretation.

ACTION:

- Members to read information and send any comments to AG.

9. Welshpool Office – Administrative Services Review

The review Project Initiation Document had been circulated.

A WSO Admin Officer business case had been approved subject to ensuring that there is a joined up administrative service of the Welshpool office with the PB 5 office manager providing leadership and management of the administrative staff to meet the needs of MES, the District and WSO. This is a reaffirmation of what was agreed when the office manager business case was approved back in 2007. For various reasons this has not come into effect but it is recognised that the change should be implemented, albeit there are some sensitivities that will need to be recognised and carefully handled. Any changes to be implemented in April 2010 – job losses are not anticipated.

FCTU pleased to see that a robust process is in place to take this forward. It will be strongly recommended that FCTU needs to be formally represented on the Project Team and fully involved in the process, taking forward members' views.

ACTION:

- AG to recommend to Steve Cresswell that FCTU is represented on the Project Team.
- SA to represent FCTU on the Project Team, and keep staff informed of progress.

10. Restructuring of FCW Central Recreation and Planning Teams

The new structure chart has now been circulated. The three-member recreation team appears to be working in isolation, with no formal links to the recreation staff working in Districts. It's currently unclear how the teams are linked. The resource appears to be disconnected and fragmented.

FCTU was informed about the new structure rather than consulted at review stage.

ACTION:

- Situation to be monitored.

11. Modern Apprenticeship Scheme

Hayley Evans is currently evaluating the current programme. Funding is in place for a continuation of the scheme next year should the review be favourable. FCTU will be consulted when the review is completed – this was agreed at the last Staff Council meeting. Recruitment needs to be concentrated spatially in the areas where there are likely to be vacancies in future / where the needs are greatest.

Woodlands for People Policy Team will be co-ordinating the development of an Education, Learning and Skills Programme for presentation to the MB in April 2010, and will involve representatives from all areas of the organisation in this. FCTU will also be consulted.

ACTION:

- AG to ask Trefor for timetable, details of review process and implementation of a second phase ASAP.

12. Contact Centre

AG and PF met with Clare Lewis and Derek Stephen to discuss the situation with the move to the new building in Aberystwyth.

The FCTU was invited to undertake the User Assurance role in relation to the relocation and BA has offered to be the representative.

ACTION:

- Barbara to request an update.

13. Firewood

No firewood will be available to FCW staff under the new system - however they will be able to purchase firewood by the lorry load (25t minimum) at the going market rate for firewood sales. This will be no less than the minimum price within the framework and providing that the full requirement of the framework contract holders has already been met. If there is a shortfall of firewood, sales to staff cannot be offered.

A new tender process has been designed and will be launched on 4th December 2009.

14. Planning PB5 ops FTA post – Coed y Gororau

TUS will monitor the appointments progress.

15. FCW HR Business Partner

Interviews for this externally advertised post were held on 12th November 2009. When the new Business Partner starts in post, FCTU to offer meeting ASAP, to talk about and clarify TUS issues and concerns and to agree a way forward.

16. Key and Non Key Post Structure Charts

Structure charts are only accessible by software held by ~~two~~ HR staff in Aberystwyth. It is, therefore, currently not possible to have/receive this data electronically. Clare should be ensuring that the intranet version of the staff chart at least is up to date (though of course this doesn't show key/non-key post designations).

ACTION:

- AG to ask Liz Cookson to provide all charts ASAP so that we can see current situation and track changes over time.

17. Operational posts – part-time working

HR staff have clarified that as long as there is a good reason, operational staff can go part-time.

18. CSCR (Civil Service Compensation Review)

A discussion took place as there was concern that many Members were not really aware of the impact that the changes proposed by Government would have on them should they be made redundant or wish to retire early.

ACTION:

- All to raise awareness with members.

19. Public Opinion of Forestry 2009, Wales

AG to recommend to Trefor Owen that the report is shared with all staff.

21. FCTU Action Plan – Draft

AG to forward to all committee members for information.

22. Dogs in Offices

No action.

23. AoB

- All Staff Meetings – AG to ask TO for feedback from the last meetings and enquire about possible future meetings.
- Training for FCTU on new disciplinary and grievance procedures – AG to keep Committee informed of developments.

The next meeting will be held on 21st April at Coed y Gororau FD Office, Welshpool.