

Shetland Islands Council
Employee/Trade Union Consultation
Directorate Consultation Forums

Shetland Islands Council is committed to maintaining effective partnership with the Trade Unions and supports the role of Unions in the workplace. The aim of this informal consultation is to ensure that communication and consultation with employees and trade unions is adequate, meaningful and consistent.

In doing that the Council recognises the Trade Unions right to represent the interests of their members in order to ensure that effective communication takes place that encourages the participation of all its employees.

Shetland Islands Council will work with the Trade Unions in the spirit of trust, respect and co-operation to the mutual benefit of employees and service delivery.

Proposal

- A Directorate Consultation Forum (DCF) for communication and consultation is constituted for each Directorate.
- The DCF will meet at least 4 times a year.
- An agreed Terms of Reference is in place which is consistent with the Council's Trade Union Facilities Agreement
- A calendar of meetings is agreed that allows reasonable time for meaningful consultations on proposals that progress to EJCC and service Committees.
- Each Directorate Forum must be chaired by the relevant Director (or nominee) and the Group should include Trade Union representatives and employees from a variety of functions and grades.
- Trade Unions and Services are expected to ensure two way communication of issues to be raised and issues discussed at these meetings with their members/staff.
- In certain circumstances, for example, restructuring, it may be necessary to set up cross functional forum consultation meetings to focus on a specific issue.
- Corporate/strategic issues will be discussed by the Human Resources Partnership Group (HRPG).
- Reports to the Council's formal consultation committees i.e. EJCC, LNCT, and College Lecturers JCC wherever possible must have completed an informal consultation stage.

Terms of Reference

Aim:

The aim of the Directorate Consultative Forum (DCF) is to provide a method of regular consultation between the Services and staff/ Trade Unions. The focus of these Forums is matters of concern and/or interest including Health and Safety. The Forum may reach agreement on such matters that can be implemented or resolved within existing policy and/or procedures. No question relating to the salary, conditions of service, promotion or efficiency of a specific individual shall be referred to or considered by the Forum.

Membership

- The Directorate Forum will have membership drawn from employees and Trade Union representatives of all employees concerned.
- The Director may invite an appropriate person(s) to attend the meeting to act in an advisory capacity.

Procedures

- The Directorate Consultative Forum will meet at least four times a year, assuming there are relevant matters to discuss. Additional meetings on particular issues can be requested by either side.
- The DCF may form Joint Working Groups for the purpose of examining any particular issues.
- Where appropriate the issues raised and the outcome from the discussions is communicated to employees on a regular basis.

It is not intended that these arrangements take the place of essential day-to-day formal and informal consultation between Services and Trade Unions. They are intended to provide a more formalised mechanism for dealing with major issues affecting the Directorate.

Conflict Resolution

Where matters cannot be resolved within existing policy or procedures, or the Trade Union Side are in disagreement with a course of action being implemented, this may result in the matter being referred through the formal consultation process.