

*joining up  
journeys*



committee minute

## **Strathclyde Partnership for Transport**

### **Minute of Personnel Committee meeting**

**11 February 2011**

held at: Consort House, Glasgow

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## Minute of the meeting of the Strathclyde Partnership for Transport's Personnel Committee held in Consort House, Glasgow, on 11 February 2011

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- Present** Councillors Denis McKenna (Chair), David Fagan, Jonathan Findlay, Archie Graham, Mark Griffin, Kaye Harmon, Alan Moir, Bobby McDill, Marie McGurk, James McNally, George Roberts and Chris Thompson and appointed member Alan Malcolm.
- Apologies** Councillor David Wilson and appointed members Niall McGrogan and Ronnie Mellis.
- Attending** Valerie Davidson, Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)/Secretary; Gordon Maclennan, Chief Executive; Eric Stewart, Assistant Chief Executive (Operations); Neil Wylie, Director of Finance & HR and Pamela Millar, Head of Corporate HR.

### 1. Declaration of interest

The Committee noted that there were no declarations of interest.

### 2. Minute of previous meeting

The minute of the meeting of 8 October 2010 (issued) was submitted and approved as a correct record.

Arising from the minute with regard to page 3, paragraph 6, the committee noted SPT's sickness absence policy which was tabled at the meeting for information.

### 3. SPT structure and stage 3 proposed changes

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With reference to the minute of 8 October 2010 (page 1, paragraph 4) when the committee had

- (1) approved a revised structure in the Projects (including transport planning, project delivery and property), HR and Communications departments which had taken account of the need to reduce costs, reflect the revised working portfolios and concentrate on customer service and delivery; and
- (2) noted that similar reviews would be conducted within the Subway and Bus Operations department to ensure that staffing levels were matched to operational need to remove areas of duplication and to review working methods,

there was submitted a report (issued) of 2 February 2011 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

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- (a) appending
  - (i) the final structure for the Projects, HR and Communications departments which had now been implemented;
  - (ii) a proposed structure for Operations Management which would introduce a more cohesive management structure covering the main area of Subway and Bus, namely Customer Services, Operations, Engineering, Safety, Security, Bus and Agency Services; and
  - (iii) a proposed structure for the Information Technology Team which would introduce a unified Corporate IT department, combining the currently separate corporate and Subway IT functions which would eliminate any single points of failure and provide a flexible skills base within the team;
- (b) advising members
  - (i) that, in addition to the above proposed changes, an opportunity had also been taken to assess the operation of SPT's switchboard; and
  - (ii) that, as SPT had the technology to implement an automatic call system to divert callers to the appropriate area, it was proposed to implement this and remove the need for switchboard attendance;
- (c) informing members
  - (i) that the current proposals, which would result in a reduction of up to 15 posts, required consultation with both staff and respective unions and that due consideration would be given to any issues raised during that process, together with any comments or views expressed by the Personnel Committee; and
  - (ii) that SPT operated a staff policy which, in circumstances of structural changes, sought to use redeployment, re-training of staff and accommodation within other vacant posts throughout the organisation and it was proposed to utilise these measures throughout the planned changes to departments together with the Voluntary Severance scheme; and
- (d) intimating that it was necessary to review the staff structures and staffing levels to take account of the budget pressures, together with the need to streamline the organisation, focusing on customer service and delivery, whilst maintaining strong and robust governance arrangements.

After discussion and having heard Mrs Davidson and Mr Stewart in answer to members' questions and having noted that savings of up to £440,000 on a full year effect basis could be achieved, the committee approved

- (A) the proposed revised structures, subject to the conclusion of formal consultation with affected staff; and

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- (B) the proposal to withdraw the post which currently supported the switchboard operation.

**4. Staffing report to 1 January 2011 (period 10)**

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There was submitted and noted a report (issued) of 2 February 2011 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

- (1) appending staffing statistics for the period from 1 April 2010 to 1 January 2011 (period 10) which included headcount, sickness absence and equalities data;
- (2) explaining that the key movements to date were a reduction in total headcount of 41 and a marginal increase in the level of sickness absence of 0.1% to 4.6%; and
- (3) intimating
  - (a) that the managed reduction in SPT's total headcount had shown significant progress and was contributing to the planned employee cost savings for 2010/11; and
  - (b) that effort continued to be focused on managing sickness absence to reduce the overall sickness absence level and achieve savings.

**5. Learning & Development investment to 1 January 2011 (period 10)**

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There was submitted and noted a report (issued) of 26 January 2011 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

- (1) appending details of SPT's Learning & Development expenditure for the period from 1 April 2010 to 1 January 2011 (period 10) which had shown a committed spend to date of £84,000;
- (2) explaining that expenditure to date during 2010/11 had decreased overall on 2009/10, in line with a substantial reduction in headcount and ongoing internal restructuring; and
- (3) informing members that SPT was continuing to make a significant investment in learning and development with the aim of producing an ongoing positive impact on SPT's performance.

**6. Review of Discipline, Grievance and Bullying and Harassment Policies and Procedures**

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There was submitted and approved a report (issued) of 2 February 2011 by the Assistant Chief Executive (Business Support)

- (1) advising members

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- (a) that within SPT, individual groups of staff currently operated under different terms and conditions which included a number of outdated employment policies, making it difficult to ensure a consistent and modern approach to employee relations; and
  - (b) that a review of all HR policies and procedures had been instigated and would be submitted to future Personnel Committees on a rolling basis;
- (2) appending updated Disciplinary, Grievance and Bullying and Harassment Policies which would be applicable to all staff and ensure consistency and fairness across the organisation;
  - (3) explaining that, due to some confusion as to what procedure should be used currently to deal with a complaint, it was proposed to remove the Employee Complaints Procedure, which had been utilised in some instances for allegations of bullying, harassment or victimisation and to refer any of these items to be dealt with through the new Grievance Policy;
  - (4) informing members that the amended policies were in compliance with the relevant Code Of Practice, clear and understandable, met current legislation and provided a modern streamline approach to addressing disciplinary, grievance and bullying and harassment issues; and
  - (5) recommending approval of the revised policies as detailed in the appendices to the report and the removal of the Employees Complaints Procedure, subject to consultation with the recognised trade unions.