

MINUTE of MEETING of the AVOIDANCE OF DISPUTES COMMITTEE held within CONFERENCE ROOM 3, WEST LOTHIAN CIVIC CENTRE, LIVINGSTON, EH54 6FF, on 6 MARCH 2023.

Present – Councillors Lawrence Fitzpatrick (Chair), Kirsteen Sullivan, Tony Boyle (substituting for George Paul), Janet Campbell (substituting for Andrew Miller), Tom Conn and Mary Dickson

Apologies – Councillor Damian Doran-Timson, Andrew Miller and George Paul

In Attendance:-

On behalf of Unite - Graeme Turnbull (Unite Regional Officer) Robert Brown (Building Services Convener), Tam Brown (Branch Secretary); and Ryan Morecombe (Branch Chair)

On behalf of the Council – Graeme Struthers (Depute Chief Executive), Julie Whitelaw (Head of Housing, Customer and Building Services), Grant Taylor (Building Services Manager); and Claire Wallace (HS Services)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- Councillor Lawrence Fitzpatrick stated a connection as a Unite member;
- Councillor Kirsteen Sullivan stated a connection as a GMB member;
- Councillor Tony Boyle stated a connection as a Unite member;
- Councillor Janet Campbell stated a connection as a Unison member and a former NUPE Shop Steward; and
- Councillor Tom Conn stated a connection as a lifetime member of Unison

2. PROCEDURE FOR AVOIDANCE OF DISPUTES COMMITTEE

The Legal Adviser to the committee explained the procedure (a copy of which had been circulated) that would be followed.

3. PRIVATE SESSION

The Committee resolved to exclude members of the public from the meeting in terms of Paragraph 11 of Part 1 of Schedule 7A to the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973

4. SUBMISSION BY UNITE

The committee considered a submission by Unite (copies of which had

been circulated) setting out the position in relation to the subject of the dispute and heard a presentation by its representatives and comments with regard to further negotiations with management that had taken place.

The committee then heard the Depute Chief Executive set out the background to the dispute and the outcome of further negotiations that had taken place following the last meeting of the Avoidance of Disputes Committee.

The members of the committee then asked a number of questions of all parties present.

The Chair thanked those present for their contributions and invited them to leave the room while the members of the committee considered their submissions in private.

After concluding their private deliberations, the committee made its decision.

All parties were then called back in to the meeting room to hear the decision of the committee.

Decision

1. To agree an adjournment of three months (until approximately late June 2023).
2. For Unite to suspend any industrial action pending the outcome of further discussions between all parties.
3. To ask both sides to consider as part of those discussions craft workers' pay and conditions including interlinked duties and the modernisation programme for Building Services.
4. To look at job evaluation procedures at neighbouring local authorities.