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Mr Mark Noble
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Dear Mr Noble

RE: (DRAFT) HR BUSINESS CASE, GMB RESPONSE

GMB, Leicester Services Branch have the following concerns regarding the (Draft) HR Business Case

One of the main drivers for change in the business case is the use of Resourcelink. Can Resourcelink deliver the improvements required within the timescales laid out in the (Draft) HR Business Case, those affected by this review and who use Resourcelink the most, do not think so

The business case quotes other authorities and the benefits they have achieved; yet no evidence has been provided to substantiate this. The one constant theme throughout the business case is the poor and non-existent evidence to back up the claims. Where data is used, the methodology and collection is flawed or inconsistent.

The business case states that recharging costs will be overhauled or abolished, which is it to be? If recharge costs are not abolished and we are moving to a "hotline" for HR administration what happens to recharges (who pays). Will it be based on individual calls or will there be a set amount that each department pays? How will departments be recharged for health and safety advice under the new system? There is no mention in the business case of the recharge implications for departments. Surely, departments have a right to know this information.

Health and Safety, it is often difficult to get managers to comply with Health and Safety Standards. Forms that should be returned e.g. regarding asbestos, are either late or never sent to the Health and Safety Officers. The Departmental Health and Safety officers are the "eyes and ears" of Departmental Health and Safety. Their diligence protects the Council from Health and Safety prosecutions. If they are subsumed into a large corporate Health and Safety section this will lead to health and safety become remote from the departments. Shouldn't Health and Safety be linked with Risk and Emergency

Management rather than H R? How does the business case fit in with Leicester City Council's Safety Policy, which states, "The approach adopted in the safety policy is that Directors of Departments will bear personal responsibility for safety management within these management arrangements."

The business case also fails to say how BS8800 (Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems Guide – 2004) will be integrated into a Corporate Health and Safety section and how this will link up with the departments.

Five of the authorities that have been held up as exemplars in the draft business case have been prosecuted by the Health and Safety Executive.

Meetings and Minutes

The third meeting will held on the week commencing 5th June 2006 yet the terms of reference, and the minutes of the meeting on the 10th May have not been agreed.

The minutes of the 10th May did not reflect the discussion that took place. One piece of evidence of how poor this review has been was the request from the chair for individuals to submit their own minutes!

The meeting on the 15th May 2006 the chair agreed that Health and Safety and the training functions lacked detail in the business case. When will we get a more detailed business case for these two services?

Summary

This business case has been badly compiled and the evidence presented in the business case is inconsistent and flawed. The business case focuses on HR and has little mention of the other two functions of Health and Safety and training. Meaningful consultation with those immediately affected and those outside the review who will be affected i.e. managers, ranges from poor to abysmal. If business cases and Protocol Reviews had been run in the departments like this one has been run, the Council would have been in chaos.

We have a bizarre situation where the third meeting has been arranged to ask for feedback from those representing their sections, yet the terms of reference from the first meeting and the minutes of the second meeting (10th May 2006) have not yet been agreed!

This review needs to be brought to a halt immediately. There is no evidence that the model used in the business case has been **extensively** used in other local authorities. The authority needs to careful when trying to follow the latest fashion in Organisational Management especially when there is no strong evidence that the particular model chosen, works.

GMB Leicester Services Branch request

- The proposed business model be withdrawn.
- That the review starts again and the Protocol is adhered to like all other reviews in the City Council
- That a discussion takes place with Health and Safety Officers and employees within the Health and Safety sections to decide if Health and Safety should be reviewed / linked to Risk and Emergency Management, rather than H R.

Yours sincerely

Steve Barney
Employee Union Representative (GMB)

Paul Heatherley
Branch Secretary