

**WILTSHIRE COUNCIL**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE  
27 MAY 2010**

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**PAY HARMONISATION - PROGRESS REPORT**

**Purpose**

- 1.1 To report on the progress of developing and agreeing a new set of pay and terms and conditions to replace those which applied in the previous five councils in Wiltshire to staff who come under the remit of the National Joint Council for Local Government Services.

**Background**

- 2.1 In November 2009 Cabinet authorised the Service Director for HR/OD to negotiate a collective agreement with the unions on harmonised terms and conditions which assure Equal Pay across the new Council.

**Progress**

**Project Governance**

- 2.2 The planned project governance structure of an Executive Board and Steering Board is operating and additionally the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) is actively engaged in determining the negotiating stance to be taken with the recognised unions on behalf of the Council. Cllr Ricky Rogers is representing Scrutiny on the Executive Board.

**Project Support**

- 2.3 An HR project team has been established to support pay harmonisation. The main activities of this team to date have included:
- Developing computer based training for managers on pay harmonisation
  - Providing a managers' communications toolkit so that they can communicate the aims of the exercise to staff
  - checking that the records of staff who perform each distinct job are complete and correct – so that information used for modelling the impact on staff of various options for pay and other job related terms and conditions is robust
  - analysing the total spend within the current pay bill on the various terms and conditions eg total spend on unsocial hours allowances, in order to identify terms and conditions which might be “traded” to arrive at an overall acceptable harmonised package of terms and conditions
  - modelling the impact of possible options for the major terms, to assess likely impact on staff, and on costs

- considering the draft recommendations of the Business Travel strand of the Workplace Transformation project, and the implications these have for the harmonisation of terms and conditions
- through liaison with line managers, checking understanding of how some current payments - particularly those received by TUPED staff - work in practice and any related service issues eg Refuse and Leisure services.
- Consulting the Steering Board, Executive Board and CLT on options to be pursued, including presenting the likely impact.
- Undertaking market pay research in order that we can position the proposed pay line at the median for Local Government pay (as directed by Cabinet): Details of a wide range of local government jobs and their rates of pay are being collected. The job content for these jobs is being evaluated. This is enabling a Local Government market pay line to be plotted, which can then be used as a reference point for any pay lines we consider.
- Equal Pay Audit: A quick equal pay audit was conducted shortly after vesting day which revealed some potential vulnerability to Equal Pay claims. A fuller Equal Pay Audit with refreshed information is now being undertaken so that we can ensure that the new package of terms and conditions does address any vulnerabilities
- Preliminary negotiations with the recognised Unions (UNISON, GMB, UNITE)
- Planning the later stages of the project, including personal notifications to staff of the outcomes, implementation through payroll, calculation and payment of back pay due

### **Re-structuring of jobs and services**

- 2.4 A number of service restructurings across the Council are set to happen within the lifespan of the Pay Harmonisation project although full information on the new structures and jobs is not yet available. This poses a challenge for accurately modelling how different pay and grading structures will in practice impact on staff, and also means that a large proportion of the data collected to date will need to be refreshed and updated as we progress through the project towards implementation.

### **Negotiations**

- 2.5 Preliminary negotiations began as planned in late February. To date they have been contained to information sharing and discussions of principle, pending the CLT decision on a proposed package. The Pay Harmonisation project also awaits the recommendations of the Business Travel strand of the Workplace Transformation project (due in early June).

### **Project Scope**

- 2.6 A project risk which was identified in the report to Cabinet in November 2009 has just become a reality. Non teaching school staff were due to transfer from the National Joint Council for Local Government Services to a new national School Support Staff Negotiating Body (SSSNB) this month, and consequently were not included in the plans for a local agreement on pay harmonisation. However, the timescale for their move to SSSNB pay and conditions has been relaxed to 1 April 2012, and it is also judged that there is a heightened risk that the SSSNB will be disbanded by the new Government.

- 2.7 For the period until 1 April 2012 (or longer if the SSSNB is further delayed or disbanded), those school support staff who are employed at Community and Controlled schools (where the Council is the employer) will be able to compare their pay with the pay received by staff employed elsewhere across the Council, and vice versa.
- 2.8 As a result, school support staff must now come within the scope of pay harmonisation. The headcount of Council employed school support staff is estimated at around 5,000 (with many of these staff having more than one job).
- 2.9 Pay modelling work is urgently being expanded to include school support staff and the next set of information considered by the CLT on 7 June will include modelled impact on school employees and costs on school budgets.
- 2.10 Steps are being taken to brief Headteachers and the Schools Forum and to add school representation to the project Executive Board..
- 2.11 Work has begun on reviewing the project plan in order to accommodate the inclusion of school support staff, which amounts to a doubling in the number of staff affected although the number of terms and conditions to be reviewed does not change.

### **Conclusion**

- 2.12 The Committee is asked to note this report.

**Name and title of Director** Barry Pirie, Service Director, HR & OD

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**Report Author** Tricia Glover

**Name, title and contact details** HR Project Manager (Pay Harmonisation)  
[triciaglover@wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:triciaglover@wiltshire.gov.uk); 01225 756550

**Date of report** May 2010

**Background Papers** None