

KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL

Human Resources Committee – 11th September 2008

SOUTH WEST PROVINCIAL COUNCIL MEETING 27TH JUNE 2008

Report by Head of Human Resources

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report to Members items of note arising from the South West Provincial Council meeting held on 27th June, attended by the Chairman of Human Resources and the Head of Human Resources.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Members will be aware that there are two meetings each year of the South West Provincial Council, which is attended by the Chairman of Human Resources, accompanied by the Head of Human Resources. The Annual General Meeting of the Council is held each year in June or July. These meetings are held jointly with the regional union representatives and form an opportunity for both sides to air and discuss issues that may be raised within individual councils or to inform the national bodies of both sides.

3. FINANCIAL, STAFFING, LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no financial, staffing, legal or risk implications arising from this report.

4. THE PRINCIPAL AGENDA ITEMS FROM THE EMPLOYERS' SIDE

- 4.1 As you would expect at an annual general meeting there are the usual items of making appointments and receiving reports of the financial position of the Provincial Council. There was nothing of concern in any of these issues.
- 4.2 The main area of concern by Members in their Employers' side meeting was the annual pay review. Members received an update from Phil White of the Local Government Employers. He gave members a very useful presentation on the national picture for pay reviews. In this he advised Members of the forthcoming strike action, which took place in July, and that the LGE were standing firm on its final offer of 2.45%. As things stand currently we seem to be in a stalemate situation with no progress being made on either side. Talks recommenced on the 13th August, and a further meeting took place on 22nd August, but at the time of writing this report there has been no outcome.

5. PRINCIPAL AGENDA ITEMS FROM THE JOINT MEETING

- 5.1 The main items put forward by the trade unions for discussion at the joint meeting were around local government reorganisation, car mileage and shared services. Each of these items was fully discussed by both sides.
- 5.2 With regards to local government reorganisation, the staff side were seeking a commitment to no compulsory redundancies, no detriment where harmonisation takes place and robust and timely consultation. Whilst there was general sympathy with the view of the unions, no firm commitment was made other than to take back these points to our respective authorities for consideration. Wiltshire County Council representatives were present at the meeting.
- 5.3 The paper on car mileage allowances referred to inland revenue rates (which are not currently applied within Kennet District Council except for lease cars) and was asking the SWPC to apply pressure on the LGA and Inland Revenue to review these rates to a more realistic level given the recent high level of price rises for fuel. There was general sympathy for this and feedback would be given to the LGA.
- 5.4 Finally there was concern expressed by the staff side on the development of shared service units within Councils and the increase in outsourcing such areas of work. Their concern was the potential lack of future staff representation through unions if this continued. The report was noted.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 Attendance by the Chairman of Human Resources at this regional meeting is of value to the Council in keeping it abreast and informed of national HR issues. The next meeting of the Council will be on 30th January 2009 and it will be the last that this Council will attend.

7 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 The Human Resources Committee is recommended to note the contents of this report.

Anne Ewing
Head of Human Resources