

RETENTION POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The period of working towards the establishment of One Council For Wiltshire will inevitably bring uncertainty and instability to the workforce of all five councils. This will be the case to some degree despite any efforts to minimise impact which may be undertaken.

A result of this is likely to be a higher than usual turnover rate; a heightened awareness amongst employees of the local labour market and opportunities; a volatile resourcing situation with each authority vulnerable to disruption; and a significantly reduced ability to compete effectively within the labour market to fill specific posts.

This needs to be kept in perspective as in parallel with such changes, opportunities will be created for staff and as plans for the new unitary emerge, some stability will be returned for some groups of staff. For many staff there may be enhanced career development opportunities within the new, larger organisation.

It would, however, be prudent to introduce measures which will give Salisbury District Council the ability to manage its resources flexibly, fairly and within agreed boundaries.

2. OBJECTIVES

To enable the council to:-

- Secure the consistent delivery of key services to the public which may be at risk by giving managers the tools to enable them to retain key postholders.
- Recruit the best possible staff for each post. Enable the council to mitigate against any adverse impact on their ability to compete in the local labour market by looking at market forces supplements.
- Enable the council to cover duties and responsibilities in the interim period prior to the establishment of the new unitary, by allowing additional payments to be made to staff who may take on additional duties and responsibilities which may not necessarily attract a higher grade.
- Facilitate flexibility, whilst ensuring compliance with equal pay legislation, achieving transparency and best practice in reward policy.

3. THE LEGAL POSITION

3.1 The following legislation is relevant and has been taken into account in the drawing up of this policy:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (amendment Regulations 2005)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975 (amendment Regulations 2005)
- The Race Relations Act 1976
- The Race Relations Act 1976 (amendment Regulations 2000)
- Employment Equality (Religion or Belief) Regulations 2003
- Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations 2003
- The Data Protection Act 1998
- Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006
- Equal Pay Act 1970

4. OPTIONS AVAILABLE

- MARKET FORCES SUPPLEMENTS

A Market Forces Supplement (MFS) is paid in addition to salary for a specific individual post. It will be paid where a post has been identified as 'hard to fill' and the council is prevented

from being able to recruit and/or retain existing staff on the salary determined by the council's job review scheme.

Full details of the scheme can be found in the council's Market Forces Supplement Policy document.

- DISCRETIONARY ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS

There are a number of options available to managers to reward employees under this policy including acting up, taking on additional duties and recognition of sustained effort or achievement as well as non-financial rewards.

Full details are contained in the council's Discretionary Additional Payments policy and the associated guidance which has been issued as part of the 'People Support Strategy' action plan.

- ACCELERATED INCREMENTS

Under national terms and conditions of service increments can be accelerated within an employee's scale at management discretion on the grounds of special merit or ability, subject to the maximum of the scale not being exceeded.

- PREMIUM AND OVERTIME PAYMENTS

Salisbury District Council has adopted the national scheme in relation to overtime and premium payments. This arrangement applies to employees on scale point 29 and below. Details of the scheme are given in the Premium and Overtime Payments Guidelines. Separate arrangements are in place for such payments to senior staff (see below)

- OVERTIME FOR SENIOR STAFF

The normal requirement of the Council is that employees do not work excessive hours. Therefore, in most cases, it is expected that time off in lieu (TOIL) of work done outside of normal hours be taken rather than paid overtime claimed.

It is recognised, however, that, in certain limited circumstances, TOIL will be an inappropriate or impractical option. In these circumstances and, with the prior agreement of the relevant manager, the Council will, in addition to complying with the National Scheme of Conditions in respect of overtime for staff paid below SCP 29, pay overtime for staff on salary points 30 to 50 where they are required to work in excess of full time standard weekly hours.

Full details of these arrangements can be found in the related policy, Overtime for Senior Staff.

- FLEXIBLE WORKING

It may not always be appropriate to use financial incentives to reward employees and the council has introduced a range of flexible working patterns, leave provisions and supporting policies which aim to assist employees in achieving work-life balance.

This can include flexitime, job sharing, part-time working, compressed, term-time or annualised working arrangements, home or remote working.

Full details are contained in the Work Life Balance and Flexitime Scheme policies.

- FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT

Flexible retirement may be used as another incentive to retain staff with valued skills and/or extensive experience. This is a new scheme which is part of the pension regulations and the council has introduced guidance on this.

- APPRECIATION OF ACHIEVEMENTS

As mentioned previously it will not always be appropriate to offer financial rewards. In some circumstances non-financial forms of recognition are more appropriate and some examples of these are given below:

- public (or private) recognition of achievement in the form of thanks from an appropriate manager
- identifying individuals/teams as role models
- giving prizes or awards eg nomination for a SmartIdeas award
- offering a period of secondment
- arranging a function to celebrate achievement
- offering the opportunity for further personal development.
- offering non-recurring additional leave

The individual's/teams' circumstances should always be considered when deciding what form of reward to make. If this is not suitable then it may be demotivational rather than have the desired effect.

- ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE AND VALUES

Where you are aware that a valued employee is beginning to consider seeking employment elsewhere, it may help to raise the issue with him/her and talk about what is motivating that person to consider a move. Often, an employee feels that the 'grass is greener' on the other side. As well as pointing out that salary alone is not the only thing to consider and that 'non-pay' benefits of public sector employment often go a long way to filling any perceived gap, it may also be worth inviting the individual to consider the cultural difference between private and public sector organisations. The tangible ways in which we demonstrate that we value people and are prepared to put in place policies and procedures to ensure that people are treated well. You may chose, within this context to refer to:

- The focus that public sectors generally and SDC specifically place upon issues relating to equality and diversity
- The support mechanisms that are in place in relation to 'dignity at work'
- The approach that the council takes towards trying to find flexible working solutions for people who have caring responsibilities
- The raft of policies designed to help people understand their rights at work including time off for various activities and caring functions.
- The policy and associated training relating to workplace stress
- The People Support Strategy and action plan that has been put in place to help people to deal with concerns that have arisen from local government reorganisation.
- Our approach to fair and open competition for vacancies and secondments with the council

You may wish to contrast this with your own or other people's experience of working in the private sector. There are probably many more examples that you could draw on of differences which may make anyone thinking of leaving think again.

- OTHER BENEFITS

There are also a number of automatic benefits which staff received as part of the remuneration package at Salisbury District Council. More details can be found in Appendix 1.

- FURTHER INFORMATION

Full details of all these options and policies and how to implement can be found in the A-Z on the council's intranet or by speaking to a member of People and Organisational Development who will be happy to advise.

Salisbury District Council - Employee Benefits

Pensions

All employees can elect to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. The rate of contribution is 6% of salary. The scheme provides inflation linked benefits based on final salary, death in service provision and ill health enhancement. In some cases it is possible to arrange for transfer value payments from other pension schemes to the Wiltshire County Council Pension Fund. Employees may also elect to opt out of the scheme. The normal retirement age for employees at Salisbury District Council is 65.

Annual Leave and Special Leave

The council has generous annual leave allowances, increasing with seniority and length of service to recognised loyalty. In addition to this the council offers leave for other reasons including maternity, paternity, parental and public service. Full details are contained in the relevant policies.

Green Travel Scheme

Assistance is provided where the council requires an employee to travel as part of their role. Bike and season ticket loans can be applied for where appropriate. Employees who live more than two miles from the main council offices at Bourne Hill are entitled to a parking permit which allows them to use a park and ride site on their route to work. Park and Ride sites are operational at Britford Road (A338), Wilton Road (A36), Beehive (A345) and London Road (A30). Employees travelling from the A36 (Southampton Road) will be issued with a city centre permit until a park and ride site becomes available on this route. As part of the council's commitment to protecting the environment, it is likely that in future more use will be made of pool cars for essential journeys.

Professional Fees

For certain posts, the council will pay your membership fee for one particular institute related to your job.

Relocation Package

Assistance with the cost of relocation may be offered depending on individual circumstances. This will be discussed at the interview, in accordance with the council's Relocation Policy.

Training and Development Opportunities

The council holds the Investors in People award and is committed to training and developing its workforce. Employees undergo an appraisal on an annual basis. The council offers a comprehensive range of training and developments programmes for all staff at all levels. This includes senior management and team leader development, plus a suite of other programmes that are open to everyone to attend.

Employees can book onto a course, access e-learning or book a resource using the Development Zone (which is accessed via the intranet). Alternatively the Training and Development Team can be contacted on extension 278.

Details of current course are communicated regularly using LinkUp and Service Unit Training Co-ordinators.

Child Care Vouchers and Information

The council operates the 'Busy Bee' voucher scheme which supports employees in meeting child care costs. Parent Information Packs from the Wiltshire ASK service are also available for applicants who are interested.