

STAFFING POLICY COMMITTEE

9th September 2009

NATIONAL PAY NEGOTIATIONS

Purpose

1. To inform the Committee of the negotiations taking place at national level on the 2009/2010 pay claim.

Background

2. The pay scales of staff within local government are almost all determined at national level within a National Joint Council (NJC) or Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC). These are joint bodies comprised of employer representatives nominated by the LGA and trade unions representing staff. The largest negotiating body (other than the one for Teachers) is the National Joint Council for Local Government staff. It covers staff in most other occupations.
3. The annual settlement date for this group is the 1st April. A few months ago the Employers' Side of the NJC made an offer to the trade unions of an increase from the 1st April 2009 of 0.5% and sought acceptance by the trade unions by the end of May 2009. The trade unions rejected this offer.
4. The Employers' Side of the NJC have now made an improved and final offer which has been set out in detail in a letter to the trade unions. The elements of this offer which are relevant to Wiltshire Council are an increase of 1% on spinal points 11 to 49 and 1.25% on spinal points 4 to 10 (5 to 10 for Wiltshire Council).
5. This offer represents the final position and the Employers' have told the trade unions that they are not prepared to negotiate any further. If the offer is rejected councils will not implement unilaterally, so there would be no pay increase for 2009/10.
6. The trade unions have indicated that consultations with their members will be concluded by Friday 11th September 2009 and that they will respond to the Employers' Side by that date.
7. In making their offer, the employers recognised the financial situation facing local authorities and the affordability of a pay increase. They also took account of the economic position in local government and acknowledged that this is likely to worsen before it improves, and that a significant number of local authorities may be unable to afford any pay increase at all next year. As a result the Employers' Side considered it appropriate to seek to achieve an agreed increase with the trade unions this year.

The Local Position

8. The annual pay bill for this category of employee is about £125m for staff outside of schools plus about £45m for school based support staff.

9. The Employers' have estimated that if this offer is accepted by the trade unions the pay increase will add a further 1.029% to the annual pay bill. There is no reason why this estimated increase would be any different for Wiltshire Council and as a result the total annual pay bill for these staff will increase by £1.75m if the offer is accepted.

Conclusion

10. The Committee is asked to note the report. A further report will be brought as negotiations progress.

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The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report: None.