

Report of: Finance Scrutiny Committee

To: Executive Board

Date: 16th. April

Item No:

Title of Report : Progress on Job Evaluation and Single Status



Summary and Recommendations



Purpose of report: To report to the Executive Board the recommendations of Finance Scrutiny Committee conclude part of their discussions on the progress towards single status



Key decision: No

Portfolio Holder: Councillor John Goddard

Scrutiny Responsibility: Finance Scrutiny Committee



Ward(s) affected: All

Report Approved by:



. Price – Chair of Finance Scrutiny Committee

Lindsay Cane – Legal and democratic Services



ah Fogden – Finance and Asset Management



icy Framework: No



ommendation(s): The committee recommendations are those detailed in the minutes at 1 below. The Executive Board is asked to respond to the Scrutiny Committee:

1. If it agrees or disagrees with the recommendations outlined.

2. If it agrees when will the recommendations be implemented and who will take the lead.



it disagrees why.



4. If more information is required from other officers when that will be considered

1. Finance Scrutiny Committee Minutes and Recommendations

FINANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 29TH MARCH 2007

PROGRESS ON JOB EVALUATION AND EQUAL PAY AUDIT

The Human Resources Manager submitted a report (previously circulated and now appended).

Sue Shutter told the Committee that the target date for completing the job evaluation exercise was the end of May. She said that she was confident that this deadline would be met. In relation to structures and grades, she told the Committee that consideration needed to be given to how to convert points into terms and conditions. Initial work on this had started and should be completed in June. It was intended that a report concerning local pay and conditions and a reward strategy would be submitted to members in December or January. She told the Committee that there was a significant level of risk associated with this aspect of the exercise as the project team did not have the expertise or experience to carry out this work. Consideration needed to be given to how the level of risk could be overcome. She said that she would like to employ an employee relations specialist to provide the expertise needed to carry out the work.

Mark Luntley referred to the other work Human Resources was currently involved in and said that he agreed that there was a need to employ external support to ensure that the exercise was completed successfully. He said that he would discuss with Sue Shutter and then the Interim Chief Executive the demands on Human Resources and then submit a report to members. In relation to the cost of implementing equal pay, Mark Luntley explained that the final cost would depend on decisions made regarding how far pay was backdated and arrangements for protecting salaries. He said that the amount included in the budget was the absolute minimum for implementing equal pay.

Finance Scrutiny Recommends to the Executive Board that they:

- **Support Finance Scrutiny in expressing concern about the serious risks involved to the Council in not delivering on Single Status;**
- **Recognise the very short time available to the organisation to complete the significant tasks still outstanding;**
- **Agree that the extra work to be done is not only for Human Resources but requires engagement and input from Senior Managers and Members and it therefore becomes an organisational priority;**

- **Agree that the Human Resources Business Unit Manager does not currently have the capacity or expertise within her Unit to deliver to target and funding needs to be found to secure this significant risk.**

(Suggestions are made in the background to this report on the sources for this funding)

2. Background

2.1 As part of its planned work programme the committee considered information on:

- Progress being made in the evaluation of jobs;
- The timetable for the completion of this work;
- The timetable for the completion of the further work required to complete negotiations and grading structures delivering single status

These are attached at appendix 1

2.2 The job evaluation work is now scheduled to be complete at the end of May this year but the committee heard and debated the significant amount of work, negotiations and decision making that is required after this to deliver single status by the deadline of April 2008

2.3 The papers at Appendix 1 outlines in detail the work still to be done but in brief covers:

- Appeals within the job evaluation scheme;
- Pay Structures;
- Pay Scales;
- Pay Protection;
- Harmonisation;
- Back pay; and
- Equal pay claims

All of these require detailed negotiations between the Council and staff and their representatives. The work will be time consuming, complex and specialist.

2.4 The Human Resources Business Unit has a significant change agenda to deliver in this and other areas and the committee had significant concerns that the Unit was in danger of not delivering this key milestone without resources and expertise. The risks to the authority of not achieving in this area are significant both financially and in terms of staff and union relations.

- 2.5 Because of these significant risks the committee wishes the Executive Board to consider carefully its request for extra one-off funding to deliver on this project and employ employee negotiations specialists to support and secure delivery in this area. These skills do not exist within the Council workforce currently. Finance Scrutiny suggests that funding for the posts is found from expected under spending in 06/07 that has not been allocated within the budget agreed recently.

3. Portfolio Holder comments

As portfolio holder I can agree with the four bullet points of recommendations. I can assure the FSC that the work that needs to be done will be done professionally and in good time; and that the resources needed will be provided.

The Chief Executive, the Strategic Director and the Business Manager have been working up the precise needs for additional help and how this might be best provided. This work should be completed shortly. As soon as officers are able to advise me and the Executive Board on exactly what is required by way of advice and resources and how best to meet these needs a report setting out costed options will be brought forward to the Executive Board.

4. Strategic Director comments

It is important that we deliver the job evaluation and single status project, as it is a key task for the Council in the 2007-8 financial year. The Strategic Management Board is monitoring progress in this area on a weekly basis.

By mid April 2007 I will have worked out what additional support the Human Resources Business Unit needs to deliver on this key project alongside the other tasks it needs to achieve, and will have advised the Portfolio Holder accordingly.

By the end of April 2007 I will be in a position to advise on the Council's end of year financial position. At that point I will be able to advise if there are resources available to support this, or other, potential areas of spending by way of a report to Executive Board.

Name and contact details of author:

**Pat Jones on behalf of Councillor Price
Chair of Finance Scrutiny Committee**

Background papers: None

