

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting7th June 2007

1. Title of Item/Report

Single Status Update

2. Record of the Decision

Cabinet was provided with a report that updated Members on the progress made towards the implementation of Job Evaluation and the Single Status Agreement.

Members noted that in view of the complexity of implementing a job evaluation scheme and single status for such a large and diverse workforce, the project had been broken down into three distinct elements:

- a. Phase 1 which includes all posts graded up to SO1
- b. Phase 2 for post graded SO1 and above
- c. The rationalisation of certain conditions of service

Phase 1

It was explained that this phase of the project was almost complete. There were a very small number of evaluations outstanding and consistency checks were being undertaken to ensure the final results were correct. Within schools where approximately 2,500 employees were affected, the majority were being slotted into nationally agreed job profiles. The few non-generic jobs were being scored in the same way as other posts falling within Phase 1.

Phase 2

Cabinet noted that although the same job evaluation scheme had been adopted for posts graded on SO1 and above a simplified process had been used in order to move things forward more quickly. A benchmark sample of posts had been selected and evaluated. Profiles of similar posts were being created and the remaining posts evaluated against the benchmark.

Both phase 1 and 2 would be completed by the end of June. However, it was important that both phases were complete to allow pay modelling to

take place.

Conditions of Service

Members were informed that a number of changes to conditions of service were being considered. Some of the conditions contravened equal pay legislation and would have to be changed or removed. These included the payment of certain bonuses, and the calculation of working time and holiday payments for many support staff in schools. In addition, the opportunity would be taken to rationalise and simplify the multiplicity of premium payments, which were currently in operation.

Consultations were continuing with the Trade Unions but they had now indicated that in view of the current equal pay case (*Allen v GMB*) they would not be able to enter into a collective agreement with the Council. Although the Council would continue to consult with the Unions, the timescales for implementation would have to be adjusted to take account of the requirement for a formal consultation period of 90 days once 'in principle' decisions had been reached on the new pay and grading structure plus a 12 week notice period for all employees. In addition, formal notification would be issued to the Trade Unions indicating that there was a possibility of collective redundancies following consideration of this report by Cabinet. It was suggested that the earliest date for implementation would therefore be 1st April 2008. A summary action plan setting out proposals for implementation was provided to Members.

Members were provided with details of financial and legal implications associated Job Evaluation and Single Status. Additionally it was noted that Risks relating to these issues had been included in the Council's risk register within the 'high' category.

Members requested that a short briefing note be provided to all Members of the Council describing the background to Single Status/Job Evaluation and the processes involved. It was suggested that this would be of particular assistance to new Members.

RESOLVED that

1. the report be noted and a briefing note be provided to all Members of the Council
2. the 1st April 2008 be agreed as the date of implementation of the Single Status Agreement.

3. Reasons for the Decision

In common with many local authorities, the Council was maintaining certain historical pay practices, which contravened Equal Pay legislation. It had already dealt with a number of equal pay claims through legal settlements but those agreements had expired and until a new, equality proofed pay and grading structure had been implemented a high risk of further legal action remained.

Cases had been brought against local authorities and union officers and as a consequence the Unions were also becoming increasingly sensitive to delays and were pressing for early implementation on new grading structures. At the same time, the collective bargaining process was being further undermined by recent employment tribunal decisions and making agreements increasingly difficult to negotiate. Locally the unions had now indicated that they were unable to enter into a collective agreement with the Council. It was therefore, imperative that the Council implemented a fair and no-discriminatory grading structure as soon as possible.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not later than Midnight on Friday 15th June 2007

Proper Officer
29 June 2007