



County Council – 21 July 2016

**Recommendations from the Staffing Committee meeting held on 4 July 2016**

**Officer Pay, Terms and Conditions**

46 The Committee considered a report by the Chief Executive which provided members with further information to inform a decision in respect of the proposed new pay structures for Heads of Service and the Assistant Chief Executive, following a request from members at the County Council meeting on 21 April 2016 for the Staffing Committee to reconsider its recommendation.

Members were advised that there had been significant changes in the number and roles of many staff across the Council in the last ten years and Job Evaluation (JE) had been used to assess the new roles and job expectations. However, the roles immediately below Directors had not been re-evaluated although the roles had significantly been extended in scope and responsibility and had a much closer association to the reduced number of Directors.

Members noted the process followed to develop the proposals for a change in respect of terms and conditions and job evaluation for Heads of Service as previously agreed by this Committee. The Chief Executive advised members that JE and the consistent application of pay scale was core to the operation of this authority and was maintained across all the workforce. JE had been used to re-evaluate most roles which had resulted in significant increases in responsibility levels. 13% of those staff that had gone through a restructure in the last financial year had seen their grade increase. There had been discussions with unions regarding this review in the form of informal consultation. Formal consultation had taken place only, as required, with the individual officers potentially affected.

Members also noted the additional information in respect of salary comparisons in order to support reconsideration of its recommendation to the County Council.

Members from green book Trade Unions had been invited to attend the meeting for an opportunity to let members know their views about the review, over and above those previously expressed. Jeffrey Andrews from Unite attended and thanked the Chief Executive for the opportunity to speak, albeit this had been received at short notice. He understood about pay rates being agreed at a national level and the amount of work for the Heads of Service but this pressure of work also impacted on the rest of the workforce. Staff at the lower end of the pay scales were lucky to receive a pay rise and they were all taking on more work. The Chairman recognised the challenging times for all the workforce. The Chief Executive made reference to the discussions that had taken place with the Unions. They were understanding of what had been done in that it was not unreasonable or unfair, but were against the principle of a pay rise for the top end of the organisation.

Following a question from a member about the number of staff who had their salaries reduced, the Chief Executive advised that 9% had been reduced as a result of a restructure for which 18 months' pay protection was applicable, 13% had been increased. The remaining 78% stayed on the same grading. However, it was noted that a large number of staff were on the top of their pay grade. The Chief Executive confirmed that there were 15 people in the Heads of Service group compared with 31 in 2004.

In response to a question from a member about the number of views expressed by staff via Sharepoint, the County Council's intranet site, the Chief Executive advised that there had been a number of views but they were more moderate than the previous time. It was felt that this was because staff had access to the report this time and there was now more information and understanding of the roles taken on by the Heads of Service.

There were no comments regarding the change to terms and conditions, the principle of more money going out to those on a higher level of pay was the main cause for concern. She reiterated that the JE scheme was available to those staff that had their roles changed significantly. The representative from Unite commented that Sharepoint was not easily accessible to all staff and at present he was dealing with one of his members who felt they had a valid point to make but was fearful of making a comment in case of repercussions. The Chairman hoped that everyone felt able to contribute.

The Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee highlighted that these issues had the ability to generate emotion. For that reason he had offered to convene a meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee to review this issue if appropriate. The principal factor for him was the Trade Unions having a short notice invitation to make their representations to this meeting, although it was recognised that this had been provided through the report. Regarding the Trade Unions' collective view there appeared to be no fault and they were content with the process, it was just that they felt that the outcome was wrong. He was concerned that not all of the Trade Unions had had the opportunity to put their formal points forward at the meeting.

One member commented on the feelings of members of the public in that they felt that a lot of services were currently being cut i.e. bus services, and that this group of staff should not get a pay rise when the authority could not afford it. The Chief Executive advised that reductions in the Head of Services in post had contributed more than £600k toward savings to offset cuts in services. The Heads of Service were no longer just leading their own professional areas, there was a more significant level of risk that they were being held accountable for. Dorset still remained a small county and at the lower end of pay rates with comparable authorities.

One member highlighted that it was crucial that communication to the public needed to be very carefully managed to get the right level of information out in the shortest possible way. The Chairman recognised public concern with the proposed higher salaries.

The Vice-Chairman highlighted the risk of losing a Head of Service who wanted to progress and further their career, and felt they would go where they could to achieve this. The greatest strength for the authority was its staff and they should get the just rewards and he felt this proposal would benefit the County Council in the long run.

Following a comment from the representative of Unite regarding equal pay needing to be reflected throughout the authority, the Chief Executive noted that there had been a 50% reduction in senior management as opposed to 30% across the Council.

The Chairman of the Audit and Governance Committee requested that it be recorded that he would be abstaining from the vote on the pay proposal on the basis that he would be considering the need, and may call, a meeting of the Audit and Governance Committee.

Following a vote, members agreed the recommendation contained in the Chief Executive's report.

**RECOMMENDED**

That the County Council at their meeting on 21 July 2016 be asked to approve:-

1. That the current Heads of Service be offered access to a new pay structure on acceptance of the associated Chief Officer terms and conditions, noting that members will continue to appoint to posts at this level and that any changes will be reflected in the Council's Pay Policy Statement; and
2. a revised pay structure for the Assistant Chief Executive.

**Reason for recommendations**

To confirm the next steps in respect of the review of Senior Manager roles given the committee's remit in respect of employee terms and conditions of employment.