

LOCAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Denbighshire Local Joint Consultative Committee held in Conference Room 1a, County Hall, Ruthin on Wednesday 7 Jan 2009 at 2.15 pm.

PRESENT

Employer's representatives

Councillors G C Evans, M LI Davies (Vice-Chair), I Gunning, R W Hughes, Corporate Director: Social Services and Housing (Substitute for Acting Chief Executive) and Head of Personnel

Employee's representatives

UNISON – K Evans, B Stokes
GMB – J Drummond, K Wiggans (Chair)
UNITE – C Edwards

ALSO PRESENT

Human Resources Manager (CR) and Administration Services Manager (RD)

APOLOGIES

Employer's side – Acting Chief Executive

Employee's side – A Wasik (UNISON), G Edkins (UNISON Regional Officer), M Jones (GMB Regional Officer), P McNaught (UNITE Regional Officer)

1 URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items

2 MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2008 be approved

3 SINGLE STATUS PAY AND GRADING REVIEW

The Corporate HR Manager tabled a report, with appendices, which updated the Committee on the latest position on the Single Status Pay and Grading Review. The report reminded Members that at the last meeting of the LJCC and at full Council in October a revised pay structure had been agreed (copy attached as Appendix A to the report). At the same time, the Council implemented the Teachers Workload Agreement within schools which involved developing generic job descriptions for all school support staff. That exercise had now been completed but as a result had significantly increased the costs associated with Single Status and in addition, the implementation of the Foundation Phase within the schools had increased the number of employees by a 100 which again had added significant costs in year one and cumulative over 5 years.

(A summary of the costs associated with the above and the impact on reds/greens detailed in appendix b to the reports).

The HR Manager outlined the current position indicating that there was a separate budget allocated to schools to cover the costs of implementation of the Teachers Workload Agreement and the Foundation Phase and Officers were currently meeting with all Head teachers to explain the costs associated with the exercise and to understand the impact of this on their budgets. She reported that if the increased costs could be allocated to either the Workload Agreement or the Foundation Phase budgets then the overall costs of the new pay Structure was still as reported in October and was still affordable. However if this was not the case, then the matter would need to be referred back to Full Council for approval.

The HR Manager further reported that:-

- Unison and GMB had withdrawn all their Rated as Equivalent Claims which meant that the White Book Case would not be progressing but both unions were however continuing to pursue Equal Value Claims against the authority
- Following legal advice the authority, at the present time, was not now proposing to approach employees directly via Sign Up Days to offer compensation for potential equal pay claims. This would be kept under review
- It was still unclear whether there was an issue with the pay protection arrangements until the authority submitted the revised package to national. However due to the fact that the arrangements were very similar to those of another authority outlined in the report it was very likely that National would not accept the revised package.

In response to a question from K Evans (UNISON) the HR Manager indicated that it was anticipated that discussions with Headteachers would be completed by 23rd January and hopefully a much clearer picture would emerge as to whether the costs associated with the Teachers Workload Agreement and Foundation Phase could be met from schools' budgets or whether the matter would need to go back to full Council in February for approval.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

4 EFFICIENCY PROGRAMME

The Head of Personnel submitted a report (previously circulated) which informed Members of the progress of the Efficiency Programme recently advertised to employees. She referred to the need for the Council to make significant reductions in the cost of services over the next three years and the decision taken by CET to proceed with an Efficiency Improvement Strategy that aimed to deliver savings with the minimum impact upon front line services and maintain the customer focus as far as possible.

The Head of Personnel indicated that there were two areas of work being progressed to assist in meeting the targets:-

- reduction of core office accommodation which would result in more efficient and flexible ways of working whilst reducing the cost of running buildings and
- reducing staffing costs

With regard to reducing staffing costs the aim was to reduce those costs by 10% over the next 3 years and volunteers were being sought who might be interested in applying for one of the following options:-

- Voluntary Redundancy
- Reduction in hours
- Flexible Retirement

The Head of Personnel reported that by the closing date of 5 January 2009, 190 "Expressions of Interest" had been received and the next task was to draw all the information together. Following that exercise, discussions would take place with Managers as to the feasibility of granting any of the requests. Any applications for voluntary Redundancy would be assessed against a set criteria which took into account skills, cost, performance and the area of work. It was anticipated that any successful applicants would be given formal notice mid to late March 2009.

In response to the various questions raised by Members the Head of Personnel reported that:-

- the Council was looking to reduce the number of posts by 50/60 which would be assessed by a strict criteria
- staff reductions covered all Directorates and there would be an opportunity for Managers to look at different ways of providing services
- the majority of the applications related to Voluntary Redundancy and a large proportion covered the 50+ age group
- budget reductions would be made against any successful applications (including Reduction in hours) and those budgets would not be re-instated in the future
- the existing pension scheme allowed former employees to be re-employed but not in the same position if they were made redundant
- the employment of Consultants via agencies would be managed through the new MATRIX arrangements with Flintshire and Wrexham

B Stokes raised concerns over the possible impact of the Efficiency Programme on home carers in Rhyl and felt that there were insufficient hours available to those carers due to the number of agencies working in the area. The Corporate Director: Social Services and Housing indicated that any applications from home carers would need to be looked at carefully as there was an increased demand for services particularly for elderly residents. She indicated that she would be happy to pursue any specific issues with the Unison representative.

RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

The meeting concluded at 2.50 pm.

REPORT TO: LJCC
REPORT OF: CORPORATE HR MANAGER
DATE: 15TH JULY 2009
SUBJECT: SINGLE STATUS PAY AND GRADING REVIEW

BACKGROUND

During May and June a number of roadshows and surgeries were held throughout the County to inform staff of the revised Single Status package and to answer individual queries that staff had. Following this, the trade union ballot was held during the period 15th June 2009 and 29th June 2009. The results of the ballot were:

UNISON

% of Ballot Papers returned	34%
% of Votes accepting the package	64%
% of votes rejecting the package	36%
Number of spoilt papers	1

GMB

% of Ballot Papers returned	46%
% of Votes accepting the package	68%
% of votes rejecting the package	32%
Number of spoilt papers	0

UNITE

% of Votes accepting the package	88.4%
% of votes rejecting the package	11.6%
Number of spoilt papers	0

This means that the Single Status package has been accepted by Denbighshire employees and can now be implemented. A draft Collective Agreement is currently out for consultation with the above unions which once signed will formalise the Single Status Agreement.

IMPLEMENTATION

The next stage of the process is the payroll implementation. In an ideal situation everyone's pay would be corrected in one go at the next pay day, but due to the complexities of Single Status this will not be possible. It is difficult at this stage to give a realistic timescale for full implementation. However, regular updates on progress and future project end will be given to both members and employees.

With regards to how it will be approached, employees who are facing a detriment either because of reduction in salary or the increment issue will be implemented first, on a departmental basis. The next group will be the greens

per department and the final group will be those employees who have no impact on their pay, again done per department.

Once a person's pay has been adjusted they will be advised of this via a message on their payslip.

COMMUNICATION

All staff will be written to in the next few weeks formally advising them that will be on the Single Status Terms and Conditions and enclosing a copy of the package for their information.

RECOMMENDATION

That the above be noted

REPORT TO: LJCC
REPORT OF: CORPORATE HR MANAGER
DATE: 15TH JULY 2009.
SUBJECT: JOB EVALUATION MAINTENANCE PROCESS

BACKGROUND

The Single Status Project has ensured that all post within Denbighshire County Council have been evaluated in accordance with the Greater London Provincial (GLPC) Council Job Evaluation Scheme. Following completion of evaluations under the Single Status Project there is now a need to ensure that the process of evaluation under the GLPC Scheme continues to ensure equality of pay continues in Denbighshire County Council.

CURRENT POSITION

A Job Evaluation Maintenance Process has been drafted to ensure that Denbighshire County Council has a process for evaluating the grading of new posts within the authority and to enable existing posts to be re-evaluated where there has been a change of duties and responsibility to the post since the original evaluation.

A copy of a draft Job Evaluation Maintenance Process is attached.

CONSULTATION

Feedback has been sought from Trade Unions, Heads of Service and both Corporate and Directorate Personnel and any comments taken into account and amended where appropriate.

Overall feedback has been positive and guidelines for this process are necessary and would ensure consistency when evaluating new and existing posts.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Job Evaluation Maintenance be agreed and adopted with effect from 1st August 2009.

INTRODUCTION

Denbighshire County Council has a process to evaluate the grading of new posts within the authority and to enable existing posts to be re-evaluated where there has been a change of duties and responsibility to the post since the original evaluation.

EVALUATION OF NEW POSTS

Process

1. A job description and Job Evaluation Questionnaire must be completed for the post using the Job Description Template which describes the new post. An organisation chart must be completed to show where the post fits into the organisation and also a person specification to demonstrate the knowledge and experience required for the post. Your Directorate Personnel Team can help you in completing the job description and JEQ.
2. The completed job description and JEQ should be sent to the Head of Service for their approval.
3. The Job Description, JEQ, Person Specification and the Organisation Chart must be sent to your Directorate Personnel Team, who will forward the documentation to the Pay and Reward Team for evaluation. The Pay and Reward Team will not accept Job Descriptions or JEQs direct from Managers.
4. The Job Analyst will evaluate the post and contact the relevant person if more information is needed or to ask specific questions about the role.
5. Within four weeks of submission to the Pay and Reward Team the new post will be taken to the Validation Panel, which consists of a Management representative from each Directorate, a representative from each of the three Trade Unions and a Job Analyst.
6. The panel will discuss the factor scores awarded and reach an agreement based on the evaluation by the Job Analyst.
7. The panel may on occasion decide that they require further information. The Job Analyst will contact the relevant Officer to gather the information required. Dependant on the extent of the information required they may adjourn and reconvene at a later date.

8. Once the factor levels and overall score and grade are agreed by the Validation Panel then this information will be sent to the relevant Directorate Personnel Officer, who will inform the appropriate Manager or Head of Service of the outcome.
9. If the manager disagrees with the outcome, he/she will need to provide a justification to the Rewards Team who consider this and refer back to the validation panel if appropriate. If the evaluation stays the same but the manager is experiencing difficulty with recruitment and retention, he/she may need to apply the Market Supplement Policy.

RE-EVALUATION OF EXISTING POSTS

Criteria

For a post to be considered for a re-evaluation it must be demonstrated that there has been a significant increase or decrease in the responsibilities and duties, which would be enough to warrant a change in factor level score and overall score.

Normally, the postholder must have been in post for at least six months before a post can be re-evaluated and there must be a period of 12 months since the post's previous evaluation.

Process

1. An employee can ask for their post to be re-evaluated if they consider their duties and responsibilities to have changed since their post was last evaluated.
2. A Manager can also decide to revise the job description and JEQ if they consider the posts duties and responsibilities to have changed since the post was last evaluated.
3. Employees need to approach their Line Manager who will discuss the issues with the employee and decide if there is a significant increase and also agree on a date for implementation of the new job description and JEQ signing the documents to confirm.
4. If an employee cannot get the agreement of their Manager to have their post reassessed and they believe there is a significant change they should approach their Line Manager's Manager for resolution. If the employee is still dissatisfied they can submit a grievance following the Corporate Grievance Procedure. The aim of the grievance will be to determine whether there are significant changes to the post to justify it being submitted for reassessment.
5. If the Line Manager agrees with the employee then an amended Job Description, Person Specification, Job Evaluation Questionnaire and

Organisation Chart are to be submitted to the Directorate Personnel Officer, who will assess the information and if there is evidence of a significant increase submit to the Pay and Reward Team.

6. If agreement cannot be reached between the Line Manager and the employee on the contents of the Job Description, Person Specification and Job Evaluation Questionnaire then the matter should be referred to the Line Manager's Manager for resolution.
7. The Job Analyst will evaluate the post and also contact the relevant person if more information is needed or to ask specific questions about the role.
8. Within four weeks of submission to the Pay and Reward Team the new post will be taken to the Validation Panel, which consists of a Management representative from each Directorate, a representative from each of the three Trade Unions and a Job Analyst.
9. The panel will discuss the factor scores awarded and reach an agreement based on the evaluation by the Job Analyst.
10. The panel may on occasion decide that they require further information. The Job Analyst will contact the relevant Officer to gather the information required. Dependant on the extent of the information required they may adjourn and reconvene at a later date.
11. Once the factor levels and overall score and grade are agreed by the Validation Panel this information will be sent to the relevant Directorate Personnel Officer.
12. The postholder will be notified in writing of the decision by the Directorate Personnel Officer and reminded of their right to appeal. If the evaluation of the post results in a reduction in salary then protection will be awarded in line with the County's pay protection policy.

Group Evaluations

Should the re-evaluation request effect more than one postholder the Directorate Personnel Officer will identify and inform all those included in the review. A Copy of the JEQ will also be sent to postholders for their comments before it is submitted for evaluation.

APPEALS

Appeals for New Posts

The decision of the Validation Panel may be appealed against after the new post holder has been in post for six months. The appeal must be submitted within three months of the appellant being in post for six months (i.e. before nine months of being in post).

Appeals for re-evaluation of existing posts

The decision of the Validation Panel may be appealed against within three months from the date of receipt of their re-evaluation notification.

Appeals Process

Appeals will be dealt with in accordance with the Job Evaluation Appeal Process.