

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PERSONNEL PANEL
HELD AT FOLLATON HOUSE, TOTNES ON THURSDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2006**

MEMBERS

* Cllr M F Saltern - Chairman

* Cllr J A Westacott - Vice-Chairman

* Cllr R F Croad

* Cllr R O Yonge

* Cllr J O'Connell

* Denotes attendance

Also in attendance but not participating:

Cllr J W Squire

Officers and representatives in attendance:

All Agenda Items: Chief Executive, Head of Financial Services and Head of Personnel and Payroll;

Item 5: (Minute PP.13/05 below) – Strategic Director (Operations), Head of Operations, Temporary Personnel & Employee Relations Officer, Ian Andrews (Unison), Pete West (Unison), Trevor Pearce (GMB) and Paula Bleasdale (Unison)

PP.11/05 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Panel held on 8 December 2005 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PP.12/05 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare any interests in the items of business to be considered during the course of the meeting but none was made.

PP.13/05 **SINGLE STATUS – UPDATE REPORT**

The Panel considered a report which updated the progress made to date with Single Status and requested Members to approve in principle the Job Evaluation Scheme to be used and to agree to the early implementation of a number of draft policies so far developed by the Joint Management and Trade Union Single Table negotiating group.

The report covered a number of important policies and procedures from work being done by the joint negotiating group. It was noted that work continued on developing further policies which would complement the jointly stated aim of making South Hams an employer of choice.

In discussion, the following points were raised:-

- (a) For clarity, officers advised the Panel that the approximate costs of £5,000 (as detailed in the presented report) related solely to the cost of bringing in the Job Evaluation Scheme and was not the cost of the Single Status project;
- (b) It was noted that whilst the four recognised Trade Unions had been represented during discussions by the Joint Management and Trade Union negotiating group, regrettably one union was not supportive of the proposals. It was therefore the intention of the negotiating group that the Council and the other three recognised Trade Unions would be in a position to sign an 'in principles' Single Status Local Collective Agreement during April 2006;
- (c) The Panel was informed that the joint negotiating group had recommended moving away from the Hay Scheme. This recommendation had derived from concerns in the Scheme regarding its suitability for particular posts, it not being fully equality proofed and it becoming a minority scheme in the South West. The group was recommending the Greater London Job Evaluation Scheme be used due to it being fully equality proofed, slightly easier to implement and it having the support of both the Employer and Staff Side of the Regional Employers' Organisation. The Panel accepted that there were potential advantages in neighbouring local authorities using the same scheme. A union representative advised that he was fully supportive and endorsed the comments made in moving away from the Hay to the Greater London Job Evaluation Scheme;
- (d) Union representatives welcomed the fairness and cost benefits of the Council using one job evaluation scheme for all staff;
- (e) Officers confirmed that in the eventuality of a local government re-organisation being driven by local authorities themselves, a common approach towards a Job Evaluation Scheme could transpire. In accepting this point, the Panel stressed the need and its wish to progress as quickly as possible with the Single Status project, to both comply with national deadlines and improve the conditions for employees;

The Head of Personnel and Payroll proceeded to summarise and highlight the main aspects of each policy proposed to be adopted under the first tranche of Single Status.

In discussion on the policies, particular reference was made to:-

- (i) a competency framework in the Policy for Managing Performance. The Panel was comforted when advised that a discussion paper for implementation of a competency framework around managing performance was being progressed;

- (ii) amendments to the draft Managing Attendance Policy. The Panel agreed to the following amendments (highlighted in italics) to the draft Policy as presented to Members:

Definition of Managing Short Term, Frequent and Persistent Absence (page 26 of the published agenda):

‘This is absence through illness which is of a short term duration (e.g. a day or a few days) but happens at regular *and/or frequent* intervals. It is normally self certified and it is likely that there is *possibly* no possible underlying medical cause.’

The final sentence of paragraph 8.8 (page 31 of the published agenda):

‘NB. Under the Councils provisions for occupational sick pay, individuals *do not* have the *automatic* right to exhaust their sick pay before they can be dismissed.’

- (iii) the definition of dependants in the Carers Leave Policy. The Panel felt that the definition of dependants should be extended to include the in-laws of an employee;
- (iv) proposed review dates of the Policies. Union representatives questioned whether wording could be included whereby the proposed twelve month review for policies could be brought forward should the need arise. In response, the Panel felt that reviews should remain at twelve months but that there was provision for the opportunity (should it be deemed necessary) to have a review earlier.

RESOLVED

1. That the use of the Greater London Job Evaluation Scheme for purposes of carrying out the Pay and Grading Review required under the Single Status Agreement be approved and for the scheme to be used for grading reviews thereafter;
2. That salary protection arrangements (as detailed in the presented report) be agreed;
3. That the implementation of the 6 policies with the indicated operative dates (as detailed in the presented report) be agreed subject to any amendments being incorporated (as recorded above).

PP.14/05 **EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS**

RESOLVED

“That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business as the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act is involved.”

PP.15/05 **FINANCIAL SERVICES RESTRUCTURE – REDUNDANCY**

Members considered an exempt report on a potential redundancy arising from the second phase of reorganisation in Financial Services.

RESOLVED

That the redundancy be agreed as detailed in the report presented before the Personnel Panel.

PP.16/05 **FINANCIAL SERVICES RESTRUCTURE – REDUNDANCY**

Members considered an exempt report on a potential redundancy arising in Financial Services.

RESOLVED

That the redundancy be agreed as detailed in the report presented before the Personnel Panel.

PP.17/05 **REQUEST FOR EARLY RELEASE OF PRESERVED PENSION BENEFITS**

Members considered an exempt report which advised of a request received from a former employee. The request sought the Panel's agreement to the early release of the former employees' Preserved Pension Benefits.

RESOLVED

That the Panel does not agree to the request as detailed in the presented report.

(Meeting commenced at 2.15 pm and concluded at 3.20 pm).

Chairman