

Item 5(b) – Proposed Changes to Staff Terms and Conditions

Cabinet’s Recommendation to Council

At its meeting on 15 September 2011, the Cabinet considered the matter as follows:

“The Cabinet considered a report which set out proposals to achieve the savings included in the 10 Year Budget arising from changes to staff terms and conditions. The changes would be introduced on a phased basis to mitigate the impact on productivity and to ensure that residents continued to receive high quality, value for money services whilst delivering the level of savings required over the life of the 10 Year Budget. The proposals had been subject to extensive consultation with staff who had broadly understood the need for savings to be made and were supportive of the proposal as the “least worst option”. However a number of concerns had been raised about the impact of the proposals on staff pay, motivation and morale. The report outlined the consultation timetable and briefings which had begun in April 2011 with a view to the changes being introduced in April 2012. The proposed changes came in addition to earlier savings identified which had included the removal of market supplements, no national pay awards from 2010/11 to 2012/12 and the removal of a leased car option. It was noted that in addition to briefings the staff most directly affected by the proposals had received one-to-one meetings.

The proposed changes to staff terms and conditions were outlined in Appendix A to the report and attention was drawn to the comments received from staff in response to the consultation process which ended on 6 September, which were summarised in Appendix B to the report along with the management response to those comments. The Head of Finance and Human Resources informed Members that two further comments had been received after the agenda had gone to print which related to how the changes would affect career progression and incremental progression through the salary scales in April 2012.

The Cabinet noted that the proposals had been developed by staff with the savings target in mind and had been subject to widespread consultation with officers at different levels across the Council. Members particularly welcomed the opportunity to read the detailed comments from staff and the general support for the proposed changes. It was felt that it would be important to ensure that there was clarity about the impact of the changes and how they would impact upon career and salary progression. Members noted that the proposals would deliver the savings required in full over the 10 year period of the budget but provided some protection for affected staff up-front whilst giving greater flexibility in terms of the delivery of the 10 Year Budget.

Resolved: **That it be recommended to Council that:**

- (1) The changes to staff terms and conditions set out in the report and in Appendix B be implemented from 1 April 2012; and**
- (2) The 10-year budget be amended as shown in Appendix C to the report to take account of the phased introduction of these changes”.**

Text in bold relates to the Cabinet recommendation to the Council.

Services Select Committee’s recommendation to Cabinet on 13 October 2011

At its meeting on 20 September 2011, the Select Committee considered the matter as follows:

“The Committee noted the tabled minute extract from Cabinet which considered the report on 15 September 2011. The Head of Finance and Human Resources introduced the report which set out proposals to achieve the savings included in the 10 Year Budget arising from changes to staff terms and conditions. The proposals had been subject to extensive consultation with staff who had broadly understood the need for savings to be made and were supportive of the proposal as the “least worst option”. The report outlined the consultation timetable and briefings which had begun in April 2011 with a view to the changes being introduced in April 2012. The proposed changes came in addition to earlier savings identified which had included the removal of market supplements, no national pay awards from 2010/11 to 2012/12 and the removal of a leased car option. It was noted that in addition to briefings the staff most directly affected by the proposals had received one-to-one meetings.

The proposed changes to staff terms and conditions were outlined in Appendix A to the report and attention was drawn to the comments received from staff in response to the consultation process which ended on 6 September, which were summarised in Appendix B to the report along with the management response to those comments. Comments from this Committee would be fed back to the meeting of Cabinet on 13 October 2011 and then be submitted for consideration at full Council.

Members were impressed with the amount of work carried out, and the result was a credit to all the officers involved in the process. Members were very impressed with the reaction of the Staff and appreciated their input and consideration of this matter, and were particularly impressed with by the petition received in favour of the proposals from staff working at Dunbri. It was noted that although there had been a two year freeze on the national pay award, other pay increases such as pay scale increments had still been

awarded. The Head of Finance and Human Resources clarified Members queries on the figures set out at Appendix C.

A Member expressed concern at Staff perception of Member Allowance increases in comparison to these proposals. He was advised that the recommendations of increases in Members' Allowances were made by an Independent Remuneration Panel, and that Members had actually accepted a significantly reduced amount than that recommended by the Panel. This had also been frozen for the past year.

Members were concerned as to the possible effect on staff of the removal of the leased car option, especially for those that might not be able to afford the car loan. The Head of Finance and Human Resources advised that as well as the car loan scheme they were speaking to local car leasing companies, and staff were being met on a one to one basis to explore all their options. The Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Corporate Resources advised that Cabinet had looked at this very carefully and had also been concerned by the effect and possible loss of the 'best performers' due to the proposed changes. In response to a question on recent staff turnover and whether it was noticeably increased since the proposals were put forward, the Head of Finance and Human Resources advised that during the last couple of years turnover had been lower. However, it was noticeable that in the last few months three Service Managers had left and it had been difficult to recruit suitable applicants to the vacant posts. One post was being delivered in an alternative way, one had been filled and efforts to recruit to the third had been ongoing since June. With reference to concern expressed on losing potential pay savings from the removal of the lower banding, she advised that each vacancy would be reassessed as it arose, and that there were still enough options to remain flexible.

Resolved: That the proposed changes to staff terms and conditions to meet the saving included in the 10-year budget be noted and that the Committee feedback its comments to the 13 October 2011 Cabinet meeting".

