

JOINT APPOINTMENTS AND IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE – 24 SEPTEMBER 2012

HARMONISATION OF TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) JAIC note the outcome of the informal staff consultation, and note and comment on the revised organisational change policy.**
- (2) JAIC consider the proposed way forward of engaging in a dialogue with the staff representatives: Staff Side and UNISON, of the two organisations.**

Purpose of report

- 1 To update Members in relation to the process for reviewing terms and conditions for the joint arrangements

Introduction

- 2 The JAIC on 26 July agreed the need to review terms and conditions for posts below Head of Service level to avoid issues with differential terms when compared with the workforce falling outside the scope of the joint arrangements.
- 3 This report sets out the progress to date and the outcome of the initial consultation period.
- 4 Unison at Chiltern (CDC) and Staff Side at South Bucks (SBDC) have received papers proposing a draft organisational review policy, the comparison of terms and conditions and, in relation to Unison only, a discussion paper addressing augmentation. These papers were all based on those submitted to the last JAIC and Chiltern's Personnel Committee on 4 July and were developed as a basis for a conversation with Staff Side and Unison in order to develop a joint action plan and agree a timescale for addressing the differences. The documents for what effectively form an informal consultation were made available for transparency purposes via the intranet to all employees.

Terms and Conditions

- 5 The reaction from Staff Side at SBDC, Unison at Chiltern and individual employees has raised concerns in relation to potential loss of benefits and a perception voiced that the joint arrangements are leading to an undermining of employee benefits overall rather than harmonisation.

- 6 A first meeting with Unison at Chiltern on 15 August only addressed augmentation though it was suggested that Terms and Conditions would be handled at the regular MT/Staff Side meetings.
- 7 A summary of staff comments are attached at **Appendix 1** which highlights that augmentation for Chiltern and salary protection for both are major concerns – depends on staff briefings and further comments received. Detailed comments are included in **Appendix 2** and the UNISON/Staff Side comments received are included in **Appendix 3**.
- 8 Staff briefings are scheduled at CDC on 13 and 18 September and at SBDC on 12 September when the issues raised by individuals will be addressed, and assurances given that both Councils continue to wish to be seen as good employers. To this end harmonisation is about fairness and consistency along with simplification of administration rather than about undermining individual terms and conditions.
- 9 A key point highlighted at the sessions will be the fact that the salaries of the shared posts to date and the terms offered have compensated for any perceived loss. Once we can agree a JE scheme, we can begin to look at new shared posts in a consistent manner and many of the issues raised will potentially be addressed through the new pay policy.

Organisational Change Policy

- 10 This has been the subject of detailed comments and a further draft is at **Appendix 4**. It will need further amendments depending on the outcome of the negotiations on augmentation at Chiltern. What is now needed is a dialogue with staff representatives considered in the next steps.

Job Evaluation Scheme

- 11 Although this has been given an initial airing in terms of the consultation, the volume of the material means that staff will need further time on this and the same comment in terms of setting up a dialogue applies.

Risks

- 12 If the Councils are to avoid increasing the risks of change (disputes, litigation, employment tribunals, slowing down of the programme etc), then we should seek to achieve agreement with the respective staff organisations on harmonisation. At Chiltern this is UNISON, at South Bucks there are staff representatives who are regularly consulted but are not a negotiating body. Ideally we would combine these to take the discussion forward.

- 13 There will be inevitably some staff on different terms and conditions for some time, and the new Terms and Conditions will be brought in progressively as shared services are introduced. At a date in the future we will reach a critical mass point where it is worth moving all staff on to the new Terms and Conditions.

Next Steps

- 14 Whilst any changes to Terms and Conditions are emotive, it is important that an action plan is agreed jointly to ensure fairness and equity of approach across both Councils.
- 15 The augmentation policy will be addressed at a further Member/Staff Side meeting on 20 September and by CDC Personnel Committee on 24 October.
- 16 The best way forward for the remaining Terms and Conditions, Organisational Change Policy and choice of Job Evaluation scheme would be for Management Team (with personnel advice), Staff Side and Unison to be established to:-
- agree terms of reference for the group;
 - review the proposal for a joint organisational change policy;
 - compare key differences in Terms and Conditions and propose a basis and timetable for harmonisation;
 - compare the existing JE schemes (Hay at SBDC and GLPC at Chiltern) and make proposals for a future scheme.
- 17 Soundings have taken place with the respective Staff Side/Unison representatives which will be reported to the meeting.
- 18 Final decision-making would rest with the JAIC subject to any decisions that have to be taken back to the individual Councils (eg augmentation).
- 19 Member support for the transparent approach taken and the ethos behind the review:-
- resilience
 - fairness
 - consistency
 - good employer

will be crucial to the impact on staff morale and the success of the joint approach.

20 The report will be updated at the meeting as further comments are expected w/e 21 September.
