



## **JOB EVALUATION PROJECT UPDATE**

### **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 In accordance with the terms of reference for the Staff Appointments and Review Panel (SARP), the purpose of this report is to provide an update and oversight on the progress of the Council's Job Evaluation (JE) project.

### **2 LINKS TO COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES AND OBJECTIVES**

- 2.1 This item has links to all Council priorities and objectives.

### **3 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Panel reviews and notes the contents of this report.

### **4 INTRODUCTION**

- 4.1 The Council commenced the Job Evaluation (JE) project in June 2023. The most recent JE update was brought to SARP in February 2024 with a commitment to provide an update on progress later in the year.
- 4.2 The purpose of the JE work is to ensure the Council implements a single status agreement with the trade unions. Single Status is a national agreement between council employers and the trade unions. It was introduced in 1997 as part of the pay settlement and amended by the 2004 settlement. Councils were required to implement this agreement at local level with any local variations agreed upon through local negotiations with trade unions.
- 4.3 Currently the Council is believed to be the only council in the country without single status in place.
- 4.4 A comprehensive JE scheme is integral to achieving single status and means that the Council assesses the relative value of all job roles and ensures that there is a fair and equal pay structure in place.

**5 JOB EVALUATION PROJECT PROGRESS**

- 5.1 The JE project has progressed as planned and in accordance with its timeline and, in April 2024, all staff were advised of the provisional outcome with regard to pay and grading for their role within a proposed grading structure.
- 5.2 Since then, the HR team has facilitated a robust informal and formal appeals process to enable staff to raise any concerns with their provisional outcomes.
- 5.3 Following the conclusion of the appeals process a final grading table for all roles in the Council has been shared with staff (Appendix 1). It is intended to implement the new grading structure with effect from 1 September 2024, subject to ongoing negotiations with the trade unions.
- 5.4 The outcome of JE following the appeals process is as follows in year one (2024/25):
- 63% (150) staff seeing an immediate pay increase (an increase from 51% prior to appeals)
  - 28% (67) staff seeing no immediate change to pay (a decrease from 29% prior to appeals)
  - 9% (21) staff seeing pay decrease (a decrease from 20% prior to appeals); it is proposed that pay protection will be in place for a period of 12 months to mitigate the impact for these staff.
- 5.5 By the financial year 2025/26, 86% of staff will see an increase to pay; this is due to increased headroom in their proposed pay grade allowing them the opportunity for salary progression where currently they are at the pay ceiling for their role. By 2026/27 this increases further to 88% of staff.
- 5.6 The current proposals and outcomes for JE are a significant investment in the Council's pay structure. In year one (2024/25) the additional cost of implementing the changes to salaries will be £256,000 assuming a September implementation date.
- 5.7 For those staff that see a decrease to pay, a proposed period of 12 months full pay protection from date of implementation is proposed, which means their current salary would be protected and see no change until 31 August 2025, assuming an implementation date of 1 September 2024.
- 5.8 The key steps and milestones in this project are illustrated below:



5.9 This timetable remains subject to ongoing negotiations with the recognised trade unions, UNISON and GMB, to work towards a signed Single Status collective agreement.

5.10 It is anticipated that the trade unions will want to ballot their members on whether to accept or reject the Council's proposals and we anticipate this ballot taking place throughout July / August 2024.

5.11 Any delay to the implementation of the new grading structure may be due to ongoing negotiations.

5.12 A revised Pay Policy Statement is scheduled to be taken to Full Council on 9 October 2024, assuming agreement is reached by that date.

## **6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The forecast cost of the new pay and grading structure, including Employers National Insurance and Pension Contributions, is £256,000 in the current financial year, assuming a September implementation, increasing to £506,000 in 2025/26 and increasing further to £613,000 in 2026/27. This therefore represents a significant investment in the workforce.

6.2 The figures above assume a 5% pay award in 2024/25, and 3% thereafter. The current pay offer made by the National Employers to the unions is lower than this, meaning forecast costs would drop to £244,000, £482,000 and £585,000 in 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27 respectively.

6.3 Within the budget, provision for the impact of job evaluation was made, but only for £100,000 in 2024/25 and £200,000 each year thereafter. Consequently, the higher costs represent a pressure to the budget and a widening of the budget gap in the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

- 6.4 It is hoped that as a result of higher pay, retention of staff will be higher and therefore recruitment costs are expected to be lower. Additionally, lower turnover will lead to improved service delivery.
- 6.5 Whilst it is an entirely separate exercise, each Assistant Director is currently undertaking a service review. The service reviews seek to ensure that we have the right people in the right job doing the right thing. Inevitably there will be changes minor changes to staffing as a result of these as well as changes to other assumptions and therefore the eventual changes to staffing budgets will likely differ to the figures above.

**7 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

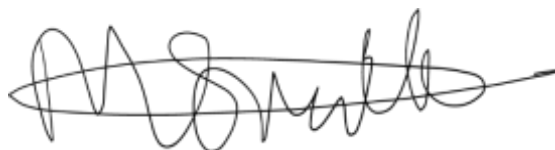
- 7.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

**8 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 The Job Evaluation projects impacts all directly employed staff in the Council.

**9 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The existing equality impact assessment undertaken for the Transforming Together Programme gave due consideration to Job Evaluation and remains relevant.
- 9.2 A full Equality Impact Assessment is being undertaken on the basis of the proposed final grading structure and pay outcomes for staff, subject to ongoing Trade Union negotiations.



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**Background Papers:-**

Transforming Together – Corporate HR Update Report, Staff Appointments and Review Panel (Agenda Item 3, 27 February 2024)

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