



Note of Meeting

Joint Consultative Group for the City of Edinburgh Council

Edinburgh, 25 November 2008

Present:-

The City of Edinburgh Council – Councillors Gordon Mackenzie (Convener), Burns (substitute for Councillor Ewan Aitken), Chapman, Dawe and Rose.

Joint Employees' Side Representatives – Kevin Duguid, Duncan Smith and Agnes Petkevicius (UNISON); Stephen MacGregor and Tom Bell (UNITE); Andrew Cottle (GMB), Colin Mackay, Linda Scotland and Seonaid Lynn (EIS) Callum Maclean (SSTA), Neil McLean (NASUWT).

In Attendance – Philip Barr (Head of Human Resources), Lorraine Mutigli (Council Employee Relations Manager), Margaret Bryce-Stafford and Raymond Simpson (Observers), and Jan Macrae (Committee Services).

1 New Pension Scheme Presentation

Ken Thomson, Assistant Pensions Manager, gave a presentation on the new Local Government Pension Scheme. He provided details of the following:

- Drivers for change.
- Shaping the new Local Government Pension Scheme.
- Key changes.
- Scheme costs.
- Next steps.

Decision

To note the presentation.

2 Note of Meeting of Joint Consultative Group 19 August 2008

Decision

To approve the note of meeting as a correct record.

3 Matters Arising from Note of Meeting

3.1 Personnel Appeals Committee – Procedures for Consideration of Employee Grievances and Appeals Against Disciplinary Action (Minute item 3.1)

Decision

To note that a further report on progress in addressing the backlog of appeal cases would be submitted to the next meeting of the Group on 10 February 2009 and thereafter to the Council at its meeting on 12 March 2009.

3.2 Travel Expenses for Car Users (minute item 3.2)

Colin Mackay advised that although teachers had no objection to being part of the Council-wide agreement, they reserved the right to pursue this matter through the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers.

Decision

- 1) To note that this issue would be discussed at a meeting to be arranged with the Head of Human Resources.
- 2) To request the Trade Union to provide details of all the outstanding issues they wished to discuss direct to Philip Barr and that a meeting be organised in the near future.

3.3 e-HR (minute item 4.3)

Colin Mackay asked if e-HR would be available on remote access in the future and was advised that there were no plans to do this.

Decision

To request a briefing note on the proposals to issue the majority of employee pay slips electronically.

4 Human Resources Strategy - Update

Philip Barr, Head of Human Resources, provided oral updates on the following areas:

4.1 Modernising Pay

Ian Truscott, QC, would provide a written opinion to the Council on the matter of pay protection in January 2009. The three year pay protection was still part of the agreement but alternative options were being examined in the event that this could not legally be implemented.

During discussion on this item the following responses were provided to questions from members:

- That it was not possible to negotiate other elements of the Modernising Pay package until the matter of pay protection, and how much it would cost, had been resolved.
- That it was hoped to conclude negotiations on Modernising Pay in January 2009.

Decision

To note the update given.

4.2 Equal Pay (minute item 4.2)

Philip Barr informed the Group that there had been a take up of over 90% of the compromise agreements issued to women in predominantly female manual worker groups and this figure was expected to rise further following the 'signing event' scheduled for 13 December 2008.

Decision

To note the current position on equal pay.

5 Autumn Budget Statement

The Group had been provided with the Autumn Budget Statement report considered by the Council at its meeting of 20 November 2008 and the Revenue Budget 2009-12 report that would be considered by the Policy and Strategy Committee at its meeting of 2 December 2008.

Joint Consultative Group for the City of Edinburgh Council
25 November 2008

The Council at its meeting had agreed:

- a) To note the impact of economic and demographic changes on the Council's financial position and that this would largely drive the budget for the forthcoming period.
- b) To note that in order to deal with these changes it would be necessary for services of a lesser priority to be reduced or provided in a different and more efficient way.
- c) To approve the Autumn Statement as a guiding document for the more detailed budget deliberations which would follow.
- d) To agree to consult on the issues raised in the Autumn Statement.

Councillor Gordon Mackenzie provided the following responses to questions from the Group:-

- The Finance and Resource Committee had asked for an Action Plan to be rolled out to all departments of the Council with the aim of reducing energy and fuel consumption levels.
- That overall savings of 2% had to be achieved by all departments of the Council.
- That a significant reduction in spending on fees for external consultants had been achieved in 2006-07 and 2007-08. Each situation was looked at individually to assess whether the employment of an external consultant was required. There was a role for employing external consultants for specific jobs.

Decision

To note the reports.

(References – report by the Council Secretary 10 November 2007, submitted; report by the Policy and Strategy Committee 2 December 2008, tabled.)

6 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 10 February 2009 at 2.00 pm in the City Chambers, High Street, Edinburgh.