
Meeting: General Purposes Committee

Date: 10 February 2010

Subject: Update on Harmonisation Project

Report of: Acting Assistant Director, Human Resources & Organisational Development

Summary: This report provides Members with an update on the progress of the Harmonisation project.

Contact Officer: Catherine Jones, Head of HR Strategy & Policy

Public/Exempt: Public

Wards Affected: none

Function of: Council

Key Decision No

Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate) n/a

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

Moving all employees onto the same pay and conditions of employment is a key aim for Central Bedfordshire; however employment legislation does create some challenges to this which need to be carefully considered within this process.

Financial:

None arising from this report.

It is still too early to project the financial implications of the movement in pay and the three year pay protection that will apply for some employees, together with the harmonisation of terms and conditions of employment.

Details of the number of job evaluations (undertaken to date) where the CBC grade provides an increase in salary, the number that decrease, and those likely to remain unchanged will be reported to CMT on 3rd February 2010.

Legal:

The approach to harmonisation that the Council is proposing to take will need to comply with the relevant employment legislation.

Risk Management:

None resulting from this report.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

Trade Unions will be consulted on the details of the proposal.

Equalities/Human Rights:

Will be taken into account.

Community Safety:

n/a

Sustainability:

n/a

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

- This report has not been considered by Overview & Scrutiny.

RECOMMENDATION(S):**1. that the Committee**

- (a)** Notes the issues impacting on the completion and implementation of the project;
- (b)** Notes the timetable for completion of the job evaluation of legacy district posts;
- (c)** Notes the legal context for the implementation of harmonisation.

Reason for Recommendation(s): To keep the Committee updated on this project.

Background

1. The Harmonisation project covers three main elements of work (set out below) required to help move employees who transferred from three different legacy authorities to Central Bedfordshire Council on 1 April 2009 onto one pay and grading scheme and one common set of terms and conditions of service.
 - Job Evaluation
 - Terms and Conditions of Employment
 - HR Policies and Procedures

2. At previous meetings, Members have considered and approved HR Policies and Procedures which have then been adopted for all employees regardless of their previous legacy authority. Some further policies will come forward to the next meeting of the Committee.

Other information regarding the project has been provided by verbal updates to the Committee.

Issues

3. There are a number of significant issues which are impacting on the completion and implementation of this project:-
 - the completion of the job evaluation work when this requires full co-operation of employees and managers, the impact of the delays caused by the BPR work in Sustainable Communities and some restructuring now impacting on work already completed
 - our approach to the implementation of any changes to terms and conditions of employment given the strong employment legislation surrounding TUPE
 - the expectation that full harmonisation of terms and conditions of employment for all staff is achieved with effect from 1 April 2010.

Job Evaluation

4. The deadline for completion of job description questionnaires to be returned to HR was revised from 31/12/09 to 31/1/10 to reflect more realistically the pressures on services.
5. Whilst many of the job evaluations have been completed, there are still a number of outstanding areas, including a large number in Sustainable Communities (due in part to the BPR work).

In addition to the work on job evaluation for harmonisation, a further 280 job descriptions have also been written and evaluated.

6. Appendix A (to follow) provides a summary of the number of posts completed and those still outstanding as at 1 February 2010. The posts are split between those that are evaluated under the Hay job evaluation scheme and those under the NJC job evaluation scheme.

An updated position will be provided to Members at the meeting. The timetable below is tight, and relies on senior management support and pressure.

7. Key dates for the next phases of the project are as follows:-

1-12 th February –	completion of outstanding JDQs excluding agreed posts in Sustainable Communities
15 -19 February –	completion of job evaluation by HR
22 - 26 February -	completion of moderation within HR
1 - 19 March –	Advise ADs and HoS of results and adjust as necessary based on feedback
24 March – 31 March	Issue report to CMT (excluding some SC posts)
1 April	Advise trade unions of outcomes
26 April	Report to CMT on job evaluation outcomes of remaining SC posts.

8. The completion of this element of the project will provide information as to the best strategy to adopt on how we can then implement any changes to terms and conditions given the constraints of TUPE, and to understand all the associated costs.

Terms and Conditions

9. The initial work on analysis and costing of terms and conditions has been completed and following a detailed review of a number of options, work is now progressing in preparing a report for CMT on 24 February 2010 with firmer proposals to consider.

HR Policies and Procedures

10. Four further policies were approved by General Purposes Committee on 17 December 2009.

Subject to consultation with the trade unions three further policy documents should come to General Purposes Committee on 4 March 2010; these are:

- Home working
- Recruitment and Selection
- Market Supplements, Honoraria.

Legal Context impacting on the harmonisation process

11. Implementation of harmonisation for all employees who have transferred from the legacy authorities is unlikely to be achievable at 1 April 2010. Whilst we will wish to utilise the opportunities that arise under the economic, technical and organisational change umbrella, it is likely that there will be a number of employees who will remain on their legacy terms and conditions for a period of time
12. Where the new grade and salary provides for an increase in salary the employee will be given the choice to accept the new pay and associated CBC terms and conditions. However it is their choice and they may choose to remain on legacy pay and legacy terms and conditions.
13. Where there is no increase in pay or the job evaluation outcome results in the commencement of pay protection, there will be no means of implementing any changes to the terms and conditions of employment unless there is an economic, technical or organisational reason which provides a legal opportunity/reason to implement a change and move the employee onto CBC terms and conditions.

Background Papers: (open to public inspection)

Location of papers: