

## **EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE - 31 MARCH 2004**

#### **SINGLE STATUS UPDATE**

##### **Report by Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources**

### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To update the Committee on the Council's response to the Scottish Joint Council's Single Status Agreement.

### **2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1** The Single Status Agreement relates to the Local Government Employees pay award body, which encompasses the former APT&C and Manual workers groups. The Agreement aims to harmonise pay and conditions of service arrangements for Local Government Employees and ensure equality of treatment in pay and grading matters.
- 2.2** To support the development of local pay and grading structures to integrate former APT&C and manual employees, a job evaluation scheme was developed jointly by the Scottish Joint Council (SJC), which the Council is using along with the majority of other Councils. An underpinning principle of job evaluation is that it focuses on the tasks and responsibilities within the job, not the performance of the person undertaking the job.

### **3. NATIONAL POSITION**

- 3.1** Members are advised that a recent survey of Scottish Councils has shown that the timescale for the majority of Councils' implementation of the Single Status Agreement is likely to be 1 April 2005, with a few indicating that it will be 1 April 2006. No Council has indicated that they will be implementing the Single Status Agreement by 1 April 2004. This collective response reflects the Council's position of aiming to achieve implementation in the course of 2004/2005 but more probably at 1 April 2005. This delay was agreed with Trade Unions.
- 3.2** Councils have not implemented the Agreement by the revised implementation date of 1 April 2004 for a number of reasons, including internal reorganisation, costs, national changes to the job evaluation scheme, ongoing discussions with Trade Unions on the impact of job evaluation and harmonisation of Conditions of Service.

#### **4. JOB EVALUATION - PROGRESS REPORT**

- 4.1** The Council's Job Evaluation Team have almost finalised the information gathering exercise to obtain job related information and to date have met with approximately 850 jobholders. This information is now being discussed with Senior Managers as part of the evaluation process to produce a collective outcome that accurately reflects jobs. There remains the Nursery Nurse group to gather information for job evaluation purposes as the Trade Unions have been unwilling for the Nursery Nurse group to provide job related information until the current industrial dispute is resolved.
- 4.2** Members will be aware that under the Single Status Agreement, local authorities will develop their own pay and grading structure, with the job evaluation scheme producing a rank order of jobs to support the new grading and pay structure for the Council. The Council are currently working with Link Pay and Reward Consultants, who have worked with local authorities in England and also other local authorities in Scotland, to assist our development of a new grading and pay structure.
- 4.3** The feedback from the Link Consultants is that the trends in our preliminary job evaluation outcomes is similar to that experienced elsewhere, namely that the status quo will be challenged and there will be movement in the current hierarchy.

#### **5. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE**

- 5.1** Proposals for the package of harmonised terms and conditions of service and pay and reward strategy, developed by the Single Status Steering Group, involving Senior Officers representing all Council services, have been tabled for negotiation with Trade Unions. A number of negotiating meetings have taken place since November 2003 and the Trade Unions are currently considering their position on the draft package tabled to them. Their response is expected in late March/early April.

#### **6. COMMUNICATION**

- 6.1** The Council remains committed to ensuring regular communication to employees covered by the Single Status Agreement. Single Status Update #11 was issued in Autumn's edition of the Council's in house magazine Eastwords and a circular was issued in January 2004 advising of the agreement reached with Trade Unions to delay implementing the Single Status Agreement beyond 1 April 2004.

#### **7. LEGAL/AUTHORITY/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1** As previously reported, the financial implications arising from the Single Status Agreement cannot yet be fully quantified. However, the Director of Finance is monitoring the potential impact of the agreement and this has included the Council setting aside budgetary provision as part of the 2004/2005 budget setting exercise.

## **8. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **8.1** The Committee is asked to:

- (a) note this report updating the Committee on the Council's response to the Single Status Agreement for Local Government Employees; and
- (b) ask the Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources to continue to provide future update reports.

**Fiona Lees**

**Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Resources**

11 March 2004

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Previous Single Status Updates/reports to the Corporate Sub-Committee

Anyone wishing further information on this report should contact Graham Haugh, Head of Personnel, telephone (01563) 576092.