

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 13TH JUNE 2002

SCOTTISH LOW PAY UNIT

Report by Director of Community Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise the Committee of the outcome of a review of funding for the work of the Scottish Low Pay Unit.

2. DISCUSSION

- 2.1 At the meeting of the Council on 7th March 2002 it was agreed that:-

- A grant of £4267.30 be made to the Scottish Low Pay Unit for the financial year 2001/2002; and
- A review on future funding for the work of the Unit be considered by this Committee in light of the services provided more locally by the Citizens Advice Bureau.

- 2.2 Using various strategic policy documents produced by the Unit and in particular their Workplan for 2002/03, a high level review of their planned activities has been undertaken. This Workplan indicates that their main objectives for the year will be:-

- Maximising the income of low paid workers through wages, benefits etc.
- To protect income sources for low paid workers in the longer term through the promotion of greater job security based on individual legal rights and collective organisation
- To tackle poverty and inequality based on discrimination and the promotion of equality within employment, training and economic development
- To promote greater work life balance in Scotland and to secure family friendly environments for people on low incomes

There are also sixteen sub-objectives to support the four main objectives.

- 2.3 Having regard to the above, it is evident that the work of the Unit is largely duplicated by work carried out by the Citizens Advice Bureau locally and also by the Council and its partner organisations. It is therefore suggested that the Committee may wish to consider not to provide grant funding to the Scottish Low Pay Unit and alternatively make an additional award of

£4,400 for 2002/03 to the CAB in recognition of the additional work they are undertaking in respect of those on low incomes.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 If the Committee approve the additional grant of £4,400 to the CAB, the grant can be met from existing budgets held by the Policy and Resources Committee.

4. LEGAL/POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The award of external funding for this purpose is consistent with Council policy and statutory obligations.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 Having carried out a review of the Scottish Low Pay Unit it is felt that much of the work carried out by the Unit is duplicated by the CAB locally and therefore the Committee may wish to consider refocusing the support given to the Unit.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Committee:-
- (i) consider not to provide financial support to the Scottish Low Pay unit for 2002/03;
 - (ii) consider making an additional grant of £4,400 to the CAB in East Ayrshire in respect of any additional work which will be undertaken on behalf of those individuals on low income;
 - (iii) Remit to the Director of Community Services to advise the organisation accordingly and;
 - (iv) Otherwise note the contents of this report.

William Stafford
Director of Community Services

WS/JS

8th May 2002

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Report to East Ayrshire Council Meeting on 7th March 2002 entitled "Request for Grant Assistance : Scottish Low Pay Unit"
2. Draft Scottish Low Pay Unit Business/Work Plan 2002-03
3. Report on Analysis of Kilmarnock Job Centre Survey

4. Security and Progression in the Labour Market – A discussion paper for stakeholders and funders of the Scottish Low Pay Unit dated October 2000
5. Letter from Scottish Low Pay Unit to Welfare Rights Manager, East Ayrshire Council “Tackling Low Pay in Scotland – the Next Step”
6. Letter dated 19th July 2001 from Scottish Low Pay Unit to East Ayrshire Council “Scottish Low Pay Unit Employment Rights Leaflets”
7. Towards a Living Wage? – An analysis of Low Pay in Scotland

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers above should telephone 01563 576023 and ask to speak to William Stafford, Director of Community Services.

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AGENDA