

## Minutes of a Meeting of the Joint Staff Consultative Group on 3 February 2022

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- Cllr Graham Tapper (Chairman)  
+ Lynn Smith (Vice Chairman)

- Cllr Rodney Bates	+ Keiran Bartlett
+ Cllr Sharon Galliford	+ Andrew Edmeads
+ Cllr Josephine Hawkins	+ Joe Fullbrook
- Cllr Rebecca Jennings-Evans	+ Kathy Lindsay
+ Cllr David Mansfield	Gillian Riding
+ Cllr Charlotte Morley	+ Anthony Sparks
+ Cllr Helen Whitcroft	- Karen Wetherell

+ Present

- Apologies for absence presented

In Attendance: Louise Livingston, Julie Simmonds and Rachel Whillis.

### 33/J Notes

The notes of the meeting held on 13 January 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

### 34/J Pay Settlement 2022/23

The Group was updated on the current progress of pay negotiations for 2022/23. It was reported that an offer of a consolidated increase of £350 on all pay scale points had been made to Staff Representatives. In response, Staff Representatives had requested a consolidated increase of £650 on all pay scale points.

Staff Representatives delivered a presentation detailing the rationale for the group's counter request. A table was presented, setting out how a pay rise of £350 compared to a pay rise of £650 in relation to a percentage increase. The table also provided information on the percentage of staff on each pay grade. It was advised that, with a £350 pay rise, staff on pay scales up to grade SH5 would receive a pay increase of 1% or more, with members of staff on grades SH6 and above receiving less than a 1% increase. A pay increase of £650 would mean all staff on grades up to SH9 would receive an equivalent increase of 1% or more; only staff on grade SH10 and above would receive an increase equivalent to less than 1%. The table also demonstrated how the upcoming National Insurance increase would affect each pay grade: with a pay increase of £350, the NI increase would effectively be a real-term pay decrease for staff on grade SH7 or above. A pay rise of £650 would mean that only staff on grade SH10 or above would receive an award that was less than their increase in NI contributions.

In addition, Staff Representatives made reference to factors affecting cost of living pressures, current rates of inflation, the Council's need to demonstrate investment in its staff, staff morale, and recruitment and retention issues being experienced. Staff responses to a consultation were also shared with the Consultative Group. Staff Representatives also indicated a wish to see the pay increases factored into

the budget planning and the Medium Term Financial Strategy in order to provide proper forward planning for the negotiations. Clarity on Christmas closure and maintaining the practice undertaken in recent years was also requested. Staff Representatives also requested a review of the pay negotiation procedure with a view to making it a more efficient process.

Having considered the presentation, Member Representatives proposed an alternative offer of a consolidated £500 increase on all pay scale points. Members acknowledged the issues raised by Staff Representatives and suggested that an increase of £500 would demonstrate a balance between those concerns whilst also recognising the Council's financial position. They also stated support for the representations made about the budget planning process and linking pay awards to the Medium Term Financial Strategy, and indicated they would work with Staff Representatives on improving the pay negotiation process. However, any discussions on Christmas closure for 2022 would be undertaken separately at a future meeting.

Staff Representatives discussed the offer of a £500 increase to all pay scale points and thanked Members for their response. The implications of a £500 were reviewed: when compared to the Staff Representatives' request for a £650 increase, 12% more staff would receive an award under 1%; furthermore, staff on grade SH8 or above would have a real-term pay decrease when factoring the NI increase. For comparative purposes it was also noted that the national pay offer was understood to be 1.75%, meaning all staff on grade SH5 or above would receive less than the anticipated national offer. In addition, Staff Representatives referred to being mindful of the staff feedback they had received. Whilst it was recognised that an increase of £650 would have a greater impact on the budget, it was felt that the difference between a £500 and a £650 increase was unlikely to substantially alter any impact on savings required to fund the pay award. Staff Representatives therefore decided to continue with their original request for a consolidated increase of £650 on all pay scale points.

As no consensus was reached, both options were put to the vote. Neither option achieved a majority of both staff and member representatives voting in favour of that option, as required by the Group's Constitution. Consequently, in accordance with the Annual Pay Settlement Procedure, both options would be presented to the Employment Committee for consideration.

**RESOLVED that the Employment Committee be advised to recommend to Full Council either**

- (i) A consolidated increase of £650 on all pay scale points, as proposed by Staff Representatives; or**
- (ii) A consolidated increase of £500 on all pay scale points, as proposed by Member Representatives.**

Note: It was noted for the record that any pay award affected all members of staff present at the meeting.

Chairman