

## EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS COMMITTEE

26 JANUARY 2005

Present: County Councillor Berman (Chairman);  
County Councillors Neale, Percy, Salway, Sheppard,  
Stephens and Walsh

Apology: County Councillor English

### 14 : MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairperson.

### 15 : PAY AWARDS 2004/05

The Committee was informed that since its meeting on 24 November 2004, when it had noted the pay settlement that had been agreed for all employees who come under the Single Status Agreement, agreement had now also been reached by the JNC for Chief Executives and Chief Officers of Local Authorities, and the JNC for Local Authority Craft & Associated Employees. Similarly to the settlement for employees who come under the Single Status Agreement a three-year deal had been agreed as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Percentage Award</u>
2004/5	2.75%
2005/6	2.95%
2006/7	2.95% (or the rate of the RPI at October 2005, whichever is the greater)

In implementing the national pay awards, the Council had honoured its commitment as a signatory to the national agreements, and would maintain good employee relations within the Council.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted.

## 16 : INVESTORS IN PEOPLE – FRAMEWORK

Investors in People (IIP) was the national Standard which set a level of good practice for training and development of people to achieve business goals. The Standard provided a nationally-recognised framework for improving business performance and competitiveness, through a planned approach to setting and communicating business objectives and developing people to meet these objectives.

The Standard was based on three key principles:

- Plan – developing effective strategies to improve the performance of the organisation for its people;
- Do – taking effective action to improve the performance of the organisation through its people;
- Review – evaluating the impact of its investment in people on the performance of the organisation.

In July 2003, the Chief Executive had written to the Chief Executive of ELWa to explore the possibility of extending the Council's current Investors in People accreditation to cover all the Council's services over the next four to five years. As a 'people-based' organisation with over 18,000 employees, the Council had always been committed to developing the skills and abilities of its staff as the primary way of improving the services that it delivered to the public.

The Council had agreed that its staff development systems needed to be under-pinned by a corporate and recognised framework. Several services had already achieved Investors in People, and others had made a commitment and were adopting the key principles to support people development.

ELWa was insisting that a cohesive approach be adopted to ensure that a clear strategy was in place to develop people in line with the Council's aims and objectives. A draft strategy statement was submitted as appendix A to the report which reflected the key objectives that the Council wished to achieve. The strategy should be supported by a

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transition plan. Although the timescales within the transition plan would need to be discussed and agreed by Corporate Directors and Chief Officers, it was proposed that all service areas would have achieved full accreditation by no later than 2010.

Once the Corporate Strategy was in place, ELWa would be approached to fund part-costs of the external advice and guidance. This would vary across all service areas and Council costs would need to be negotiated and identified.

The trade unions were anxious that any money received from ELWa for IIP should be ring-fenced for that purpose. They also felt that it was important that IIP should be properly linked in with other plans, initiatives and business plans, and were keen to be included as partners in the IIP process.

The adoption of IIP would require service areas to think in a wider context and provide equal opportunities to training for all employees.

RESOLVED – That

- (a) the draft Corporate Strategy Statement, attached as Appendix A to the report, be agreed;
- (b) the Chief Executive be authorised to formally contact ELWa to advise of a Strategy and Council commitment to securing the Standard;
- (c) a Transition Plan, using the format or similar to the attached at Appendix B to the report, identifying realistic timescales, be developed and agreed for all Services to achieve full IIP accreditation by 2010;
- (d) the detailed arrangements of working towards the Standard be developed by Chief Officers and an Implementation Group be established, to monitor the process in due course;
- (e) each Service Area identify, if they have not already done so, a Lead Officer to progress matters.

17 : CARDIFF CONSULTANCY AND AGENCY REGISTER  
(CCAR)

On 20 January 2005, Council had approved a report relating to major infrastructure projects which had incorporated an Audit Commission report. The latter report had recommended that a review of the use of consultants be undertaken. The Executive had also requested that a report be prepared which would lead to a 10% reduction on consultants.

Consultants were defined as management advisors, specialist advisors, technical and professional advisors, and external agency employees. The submitted report addressed a framework for these consultants which would enable a 10% reduction in cost to be achieved during 2005/06.

Senior Managers had agreed that the Council would benefit from establishing its own consultancy and agency register through which rates could be established more in line with public service costs than private sector costs. The cost of employing consultancy and agency workers under the current arrangements was a concern at a time when financial budgets for service areas were continually being squeezed. It was proposed that the Council establish its own register of consultants and this could be achieved through utilising the existing Cardiff Works initiative as the basis. To ensure that this initiative would become a fully-fledged Consultancy and Agency Worker Register (CCAR) it was proposed that the function, and all existing resources be transferred to the Chief Human Resources Officer with effect from 1 April 2005.

The CCAR could become in 2005/06, the first choice agency for the Council for consultants and agency workers. To make the arrangement work effectively there would need to be a phased implementation of CCAR during 2005/06, and in the first instance CCAR would be the first choice provider of staff for manual, clerical and administrative jobs, and would extend its work into more senior staff as the project and the market permitted. An immediate start could be made through requesting staff who leave the employment of the Council under voluntary severance to be included on the CCAR for project tasks and one-off tasks for which they have direct knowledge and experience.

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The Chief Human Resources Officer would need to prepare a business plan and establish a project team to develop an agreed specification as to how a CCAR would operate and be integrated fully into the Supporting Business Project.

Whilst this development was ongoing the Council would need to have the fall-back position of turning to a select list of private sector consultants and agency workers if CCAR could not supply the needs of service areas.

Establishing the CCAR would provide a real platform to re-position the approach the Council would take to engaging consultants which would reduce the costs of consultants.

The trade unions were supportive of the aim of reducing the costs of consultants and supported the report provided that the arrangements did not displace existing jobs.

A Member expressed concerns regarding the marketing of the proposals to ensure that the best person was employed for a temporary contract, and with no discrimination. In response, Steven Phillips (Corporate Director) reported that details were still to be firmed-up but he emphasised that those employed under this arrangement would be for specific jobs, and that there would be no blocking of staff progression.

**RESOLVED** – That the Chief Executive be authorised to implement:

- (1) the principles contained in this report regarding the establishment of a Cardiff Consultancy and Agency Register (CCAR);
- (2) the development of an approach to the implementation of CCAR that reflects a commitment to the New Deal initiative;
- (3) a consultancy element in the CCAR that could include suitable former employees of the Council who have left the employment of the Council by reason of retirement/severance/redundancy who may be engaged to provide specialist services/advice to the Council;
- (4) a system that ensures that pay rates offered to individuals on the CCAR would be based on Council pay rates and individuals would need to enter into temporary employment contracts with the Council that would address pension arrangements and the employment status of the individuals;

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- (5) a process whereby all individuals listed on the agency would need to be pre-vetted to ensure that they were capable of discharging their required roles, and offer maximum flexibility in working arrangements including working from home on set tasks and projects and also working flexibly regarding working hours and location;
- (6) arrangements for the engagement of consultants/agency workers that are consistent with existing practices in relation to managing and authorising staffing requirements within service areas, achieved through appropriate delegation to the Assistant Chief Executive and Chief Human Resources Officer.

*(Councillors Sheppard and Walsh asked that their opposition to resolution 3 above be recorded in the minutes.)*