

**CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF  
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

**Employment Conditions Committee: 24<sup>th</sup> April 2006**

**Report of Assistant Chief Executive**

---

**‘21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY SCHOOLS’ – CITY WIDE INVESTMENT PLAN:  
HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

---

**Background**

1. On 27 April 2006 the Council will formally consider proposals for consultation on the long standing problem of surplus school places and falling pupil numbers by way of a city wide investment plan. Whilst the plan will see substantially increased capital investment in schools, it also means some reorganisation of schools, including some closures, amalgamations and other changes of status.
2. These proposals will result in significant Human Resources issues which will need to be effectively managed during the initial and statutory consultation periods, should the Council decide to proceed, and up to the implementation of the proposals as they affect individual schools.
3. In the region of 1800 school staff will be affected by the main proposals i.e. closures and amalgamations in some way over the 10-15 year lifetime of the proposals. Around 500 of these staff are employed in infant and junior schools which may be amalgamated and in the main they would transfer to the new primary school. Although these staff will require support, and may experience a change in role, their employment, apart from the Headteachers, would continue.
4. The purpose of this report is to highlight some of the most important Human Resource issues arising from the proposals in preparation for a further report to the Employment Conditions Committee in July 2006.

**Issues**

5. (i) Impact on Staff  
The age profiles of staff in potentially affected schools, excluding amalgamations, have been analysed and of the 1300 staff affected, just over 600 will be aged over 50 at the date of closure. Of these staff, around 280 will in fact have reached age 60 or over.
6. The initial consultation phase ends on 21 July 2006. If the Council then decides to proceed with the statutory consultation phase, the preferences of staff in potentially affected schools will be sought, in terms of redeployment, VES, or retirement. This exercise is likely to commence towards the end of 2006.
7. An analysis of school posts advertised over the last 2 years has helped identify the potential redeployment pool in each year of the plan and detail of this will be provided in a future report. Provided we have the support of Headteachers and governing bodies for a partnership approach to redeployment we anticipate a good deal of success in minimising compulsory redundancies and

offering suitable alternative employment opportunities for a large proportion of the affected staff. This would include appointment to vacancies in the proposed new schools.

8. (ii) Voluntary Early Severance  
Inevitably however, with such large numbers of staff potentially affected it is essential that the Council is able to achieve additional staff reductions through voluntary means and Voluntary Early Severance is part of this process. The application of the Council's Voluntary Early Severance schemes however must take account of any future changes to the national pension regulations.
9. To date a series of information meetings have been held with Headteachers and trade union representatives who are keen to ensure that the Human Resource issues associated with the proposals are managed effectively. As part of this they have specifically requested the payment of added years to those staff who are made compulsorily redundant. Elements of the teachers Voluntary Severance Scheme are already more advantageous than the standard Council scheme. If proposals are brought forward to enhance the teachers Scheme then other staff within the Council may apply pressure to have their schemes enhanced as well. This matter will be given detailed consideration and the Council's position stated fully in a future report, to include the necessary financial considerations.
10. (iii) Recruitment & Retention  
The majority of Headteachers in affected schools will be aged 50 or over at the point of the school closure. Although it is hoped that the senior management of the school in many cases will be secure until the point of closure, circumstances will arise where the Headteacher will secure a post elsewhere, or indeed retire. In such circumstances consideration will be given to the acting up of the Deputy Headteacher. If this is not possible, the post will be advertised on a ring fenced basis within Cardiff as a fixed term appointment. It is hoped that this might attract a serving Headteacher who may be seeking early retirement but whose school is not affected. The offer of a fixed term appointment with access to voluntary early retirement/severance at the end may therefore be attractive.
11. In the event of a ring fenced advertisement not resulting in an appointment the fixed term post will be advertised nationally. If an appointment is not made then alternatives will need to be considered which might include alternatives such as consultancy arrangements.
12. Across all school staff, other movements will be inevitable but it is hoped that by identifying those staff who wish to access VES at the point of school closure, a school can be assured of a core group of staff. Appointments will then be made on a fixed term basis where there is a genuine need to replace the departing staff.
13. Should appointments prove difficult then the Council may need to consider the payment of recruitment incentives and information on this will be provided in a further report. Clearly, in order to maintain proper service provision and maintain best standards of achievement, there will be a need to staff schools in the most effective manner over the period to closure.
14. (iv) Salary Protection  
It is recognised that redeployment to posts in other schools may be to a post of lesser responsibility and a lower grade. School Teachers' Pay & Conditions allow for the payment of protected salaries for up to a 3 year period. Salary protection will also apply in circumstances where leadership salaries change as a result of a reduced school size. The cost of salary protection is paid by the Council rather than from an individual school's budget.

15. The Council does not have an established scheme for protecting the salaries of other staff and as a consequence support staff in schools will not access the same benefits as teachers. In order to operate consistently in relation to affected staff, further recommendations on this matter will be made in a future report.
16. (v) Support for Staff  
Human Resources staff have worked with service managers and trade unions to develop a Frequently Asked Questions document. All staff have been provided with this document to address many of the immediate concerns they may have. This document will be available on the Intranet and will be regularly updated. A dedicated email address has been set up to receive further questions from staff for which responses will be added to the document.
17. At appropriate times staff will have access to a structured programme of visits/surgeries where Human Resources will visit schools to provide information, support and guidance.
18. Finally it is the intention that further support will be provided in the form of pre retirement courses which will be available to those staff who will be retiring and also consideration given to career guidance which could be made available. This will be provided externally to the Council through a procurement process.
19. (vi) Impact on Human Resources  
Overall the proposals present a significant challenge to the Human Resources Service in terms of providing support, advice and guidance throughout the lifetime of the plan. The service will undertake the organisation and coordination of a redeployment pool and work closely with schools in order to minimise the need for compulsory redundancies. A large proportion of time will be committed to attending staff meetings and holding ‘surgeries’ for staff. The resource implications will need to be carefully considered to ensure that full support is provided in this priority area.

### **Investment for Reform/Benefit to service user**

20. The Council, like many other local authorities, faces surplus school places, falling school numbers and ageing school buildings. The investment for reform and benefit to service users will be that the proposed £300m investment plan is designed to create a consistent and sustainable pattern of community focused schools for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Such schools will build on current best practice and provide high quality, innovative and inclusive educational opportunities for all pupils, ensuring that they are able to reach their full potential.

### **Council Policies Supported**

21. This report is the direct result of “21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools: City-Wide Investment Plan”, the Council’s proposal for the largest city-wide schools investment programme in its history.
22. This report has been prepared in consultation with relevant Corporate Directors and reflects their advice. It contains all the information necessary to allow Members to arrive at a reasonable view, taking into account the following advice.

### **Legal Implications**

23. Every proposal contained in this Report has some legal implications - either contractual or through statutory employment rights. However, through taking the proper approach to the issues, the proposals are legally achievable. Further advice will be given as detailed proposals and

recommendations are developed. There is likely to be an additional call for legal advice from legal services staff which may need additional resources.

## **Financial Implications**

24. The proposals for a city-wide plan has a material impact on the Council's school based staff and this in turn has significant financial implications. To date a financial model has been prepared on the city wide plan which includes organisational restructure costs. These costs are based on a number of assumptions around the redeployment of staff and the resources required by HR to support the city-wide plan.
25. If the Council takes the decision to proceed with the city wide plan on the 27th April then further reports will be submitted to the Employment Conditions Committee and these should include the financial implications of any proposals being put forward.

## **Human Resource Implications**

26. The proposals for a city wide plan will potentially have a significant effect on a large number of the Council's school based staff, who will require extensive support from the Human Resources Service. This report highlights some important issues which need to be the focus of a detailed report to be submitted to the Employment Conditions Committee once the Council takes its decision to proceed with consultation at its meeting on 27 April.

## **Trade Union Comments**

27. Regular meetings have taken place with the trade unions but to date these have mainly comprised information meetings and have not yet considered the detailed Human Resource implications arising from the proposals. Significant concern has been expressed on the potential numbers of job losses and the trade unions are looking to the Council to minimise the need for compulsory redundancies. Specific reference has been made to the standard Voluntary Early Severance package the Council offers and there is a clear expectation by the trade unions that the Council will review this situation and ensure that those staff who are made redundant are financially supported.
28. The Trade Unions for support staff in schools have called for equality of treatment, with particular regard to salary protection for redeployed staff. Now that the proposals have been made public the trade unions expect full and detailed discussion on the Human Resources issues.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

29. It is recommended that:-
  - (i) the issues highlighted in this report are the subject of a further detailed report to this Committee in July with clear recommendations for decision.

**JO FARRAR**  
**ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE**