

REPORT OF GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE

(Meeting held 21 April 2008)

1. PAY NEGOTIATIONS (REPORT A)

The Committee has considered a proposal that the Council moves from local to national pay negotiations.

The Council participates in national negotiations, but reserves the right to determine its own award if the national award is detrimental to the Council's pay structure. The Council has defined its own pay structure which is based on its business needs and the local pay market. In practice the Council has generally undertaken local pay negotiations informed by the national position.

Local negotiations take place through the Pay Panel which comprises of three Council Members, namely; Cllrs Kendal, Mrs Holding and Mrs Robinson, and three employee side representatives.

Discussions have taken place over the last few years at the Pay Panel and the Industrial Relations Committee on whether the Council should continue with the Local Pay Negotiations.

The Committee was informed that the Employee side recently undertook a ballot of employees (members and non-members of Unions). The ballot resulted in a large majority (88%) in favour of a move to National negotiations.

The Committee noted that, since following local pay negotiations, the local pay award has often been above the national award. However, over the past few years the Council's award has mirrored the national award, due to budget pressures.

The Committee has been informed that the Employers' side would always favour a local approach, but in the light of the overwhelming support by employees for national pay negotiations, the Employers' side supported the move. The Committee endorses this approach. The Committee has recognised that if the national pay award is above this Council's budget provision, the necessary financial approvals would need to be in place before the national pay award could be implemented.

There will continue to be local negotiations on all other terms and conditions of employment.

The General Purposes and Licensing Committee will consider changes to the Pay Panel's Terms of Reference at its next meeting.

RECOMMENDED:

That the Council moves to national pay negotiations with effect from 1 April 2008, and all necessary contractual documentation be updated accordingly.

**Councillor L R Puttock
CHAIRMAN**