

Public
Key Decision - No

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Title/Subject Matter: Pay discussion update and Pay process

Meeting/Date: Employment Committee – 17 April 2024

Executive Portfolio: Cllr Lara Davenport Ray (LDR)

Report by: Strategic HR Manager (NB)

Ward(s) affected: N/A

Executive Summary:

We are pleased to share with the committee an update around the successful conclusion of the 2024/25 pay discussion process, where we have been able to agree a positive pay award for our employees and have this processed in their April pay, at the point the pay award is due.

We are also sharing the new pay discussion process that has been formulated between HDC management, UNISON and ERG with the support of ACAS. This process gives a framework to allow for positive and timely discussions working in line with the budgeting process.

Process is attached for your information.

Recommendation(s):

The Committee is asked to note the report and consider and endorse the pay discussion process.

2.1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The report shares with the committee the pay award process for 2024/25 and asks for the committee to endorse the pay discussion process for use going forward.

2.2 WHY IS THIS REPORT NECESSARY/BACKGROUND

- a. Following the signing of the agreement between HCD and UNISON it had become apparent that a process is required beyond the parameters set in the agreement. As part of the last years pay discussions it was agreed that HDC, UNISON and ERG would meet with ACAS as the facilitators to detail a process for pay discussions going forward. This new process sets out a framework for all parties to follow and allows for sufficient time for discussions but also fits in with the budget timeline.
- b. Due to the timing of the work with ACAS it was not possible to use this framework in full for the 2024/25 pay discussion process but it is expected to be used in future years. Despite this the principles and ethos of the approach informed this year's discussions.
- c. Through collaboration and open and constructive discussions we have been able to arrive at an agreed pay award for 2024/25 in a timely manner allowing for us to have this pay award in peoples pay in April 2024. This was a positively received pay award, which has also helped us to move toward paying the real living wage.

2.3 KEY IMPACTS / RISKS

- a. By having this pay process in place it means that each year there is an agreed process for agreeing pay awards, with key milestones in place. This is hoped to facilitate pay awards being made to our employees in a timely manner and reduces the risk of dissatisfaction and dispute with awards.

2.4 WHAT ACTIONS WILL BE TAKEN/TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- a. The process will be added as an addendum to the agreement in place with UNISON and will be used each year for the pay process by HDC Management, UNISON and ERG.

2.5 LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

[\(See Corporate Plan\)](#)

- a. To have an engaged and motivated workforce, as part of being a more efficient and effective council – through clear pay discussion processes that are completed in a timely manner and have taken all views into account before being made.

2.6 CONSULTATION

- a. This document was agreed between UNISON, ERG and HDC management through a facilitated conversation with ACAS.

2.7 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS

- a. Adoption of the process will ensure that there is a clear path for pay discussions documented and agreed.

2.8 LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED

Appendix 1 – Pay award process

CONTACT OFFICER

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Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC)
Pathfinder House, Huntingdon
And
Unison
Unison Centre, 130 Euston Road, London NW1 2AY
And
ERG Employer Representative Group
Huntingdon District Council

Appendix agreement to voluntary recognition agreement specifically covering the agreed pay discussion process.

Pay award process

1 Early October

- 1.1 HDC will provide both Unison and ERG with the funding assumptions and inflation assumption figures alongside emailing the information around the pay settlement envelope.
- 1.2 Unison and ERG will meet shortly after receipt of the above information to discuss and seek any clarification, if required and discuss implications relating to 'pay settlement envelope size'.

2 Mid to end of October

- 2.1 Unison and ERG to jointly raise a pay survey covering all staff.

3 November

- 3.1 Once the survey response data is returned Unison and ERG will collate the data and from that build a pay claim.

4 December

- 4.1 HDC will send any further relevant budget information it has to Unison and ERG to be considered in the construction of the pay claim.
- 4.2 No later than the 31st December Unison and ERG will submit a pay claim to HDC. This will then trigger the start of the meeting process.

5 Agreed meeting process.

5.1 Meeting one

To take place in the first full week of January of the pay cycle year.

This meeting will cover the presentation of the pay claim to HDC from Unison and ERG and allow for discussion from all parties.

If further meetings are required, then:

5.2 **Further Meetings** will be scheduled in at the end of meeting 1 to allow for further talks. These will be scheduled in up to the end of February and for up to a maximum of three (excluding meeting one).

5.3 All parties to this agreement have agreed that if all are in agreement a meeting can be adjourned and reconvened on a different date to allow for further information gathering. This will not trigger the meeting count to rise to the next one in the process.

Once an initial agreement has been reached between Huntingdonshire District Council, Unison and the Employee Representatives Group, this will be communicated to staff via all staff emails, the council's intranet and other forms of offline communication, such as meetings, for those staff who are not desked based. As is their requirement, Unison will conduct a ballot of their members in respect of acceptance or not.

The Employee Representatives Group will also look to engage all staff and will be available to answer questions from staff on the proposed agreement and will arrange drop-in sessions at locations including at Eastfield House and One Leisure facilities.

Next steps

6 Dispute process

6.1 If, by the first week in March (allowing for all the above meetings to have taken place) if the parties are still in dispute, they will voluntary refer themselves to ACAS for collective conciliation. All parties accept that this a voluntary and independent process and they can remove themselves from it at any point.

6.2 No formal ballot of either Unison member or ERG members will take place until ACAS collective conciliation has been attempted.

6.3 Once a formal ballot has been conducted and the parties consider themselves to be in formal dispute the parties agree to refer themselves back to ACAS collective conciliation for further assistance in talks.

6.4 If it has not been possible to resolve the dispute through conciliation the parties may agree jointly to refer the matter to ACAS binding arbitration, whose function will be to consider each parties case and to reach a decision on the pay dispute.