

Report to Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Subject: Current staffing issues (Standing Item)

Date: 6 June 2023

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1. Purpose of the Report

This is an information item highlighting to the Committee, any issues of particular interest that relate to the Council's workforce.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note this report.

3. Summary of current issues

3.1 National pay

National pay award changes apply from 1 April each year. It is often now the case that settlement is achieved some months after the application date.

On 30 January this year a pay claim for NJC employees (most employees of our Council) was tabled by UNISON, GMB and UNITE for an award of:

- RPI (10.7%)+2% on all grades; so a pay rise of 12.7%
- A minimum rate of £15 (our current local minimum is £11.18)
- Other changes to terms and conditions including a reduction in the working week by two hours, additional welfare leave and application of a home working allowance.

The JNC for Chief Executives has also submitted a pay claim for a rise in salary not less than the equivalent to the percentage award that will be applied the top pay point in the national NJC scale.

For the JNC for Chief Officers the claim was for a pay rise of RPI+2% and an additional two days' leave.

Currently, settlement has not been achieved for any of the groups other than Chief Officers (for our Council this means Directors and Heads of Service) for whom a national pay offer of 3.5% has been accepted by the Employees' Side.

The Employers' Side has made a "full and final offer" to NJC employees of an increase of £1,925 per annum (pro rata for part time). For NJC employees unions are now conducting ballots to determine what action to take. GMB members have rejected the pay offer (64% to 36% against) and the union has indicated that unless negotiations are not reopened and a revised offer made then they will move to

industrial action ballot in some areas. UNISON is currently conducting a ballot to determine if members are supportive of industrial action. If action is taken, it could commence as late in the year as September.

3.2 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Earlier in the year the Council commissioned an external training provider to produce a bespoke on-line training course to update employees on current thinking in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. This will be a mandatory training programme and almost all office-based employees have now completed the course. During the coming year the HR Team will be working with managers of front-line services to identify appropriate methods of training delivery for those teams that do not have ready access to a computer.

The training material is also open for use by Elected Members.