
REPORT TO:	FINANCE & MANAGEMENT	AGENDA ITEM: 9
DATE OF MEETING:	22 NOVEMBER 2001	CATEGORY: DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	SINGLE STATUS STEERING GROUP	OPEN PARAGRAPH NO:
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	JOY WILLOUGHBY EXT. 5729	DOC:
SUBJECT:	SINGLE STATUS JOB EVALUATION - PROJECT PLAN	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 To note the progress made to-date by the Single Status Steering Group.
- 1.2 To approve the project plan outlined in Annexe A.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The report sets out the progress to-date of the Single Status Steering Group, and recommends a project plan to this committee.

3.0 Executive Summary

- 3.1 Since the last report to this committee, the Steering Group has met twice and further progress has been made. This progress is being presented to members for their information. Members are also being asked to consider a project plan for the implementation of Single Status. This gives a final implementation date of 1 April 2004.

4.0 Detail

4.1 Single Status Project Plan

- 4.2 Members will recall that at the last meeting of this Committee on 11 October 2001, a number of delegated powers were approved for the group to enable Single Status Job Evaluation to be implemented.
- 4.3 These key tasks have now been translated with timescales, into a project plan and are presented for members' approval.
- 4.4 The key tasks that are listed down the side of the project plan have been taken from that approved Committee Report. Across the top is the timescale in two monthly slots. The date in a shaded box is the task completion date.

- 4.5 The joint marketing task and financial planning will be ongoing, throughout the life of the project. Finance and Management Committee dates have been inserted for information purposes only. The tasks highlighted in bold are those the group will need to bring to this Committee for approval.
- 4.6 The preparatory tasks continue until the end of April 2002 taking the process to the benchmarking and evaluation stage. Allowing time to agree conventions, develop the IT software, agree the help text, determine the evaluation process and how it will work and who is to be involved. This is all to be brought to the Finance and Management Committee on 18 April 2002.
- 4.7 The training will then take place for all steering group members, and for those involved in the analysis process which includes trade union representatives.
- 4.8 We would identify the benchmark sample and have gathered relevant information by the end of June 2002. The benchmarking stage will include the computer and paper-based assessment. A benchmark sample of 25% has been estimated, but this may need to be increased, depending on the consistency of results at this stage. Greater time has been allowed per evaluation for these posts, as both processes will be used. It is therefore estimated that 4 (dual process) evaluations per week, for 16 weeks will be needed. This will require Trade Union representatives, employees affected, relevant managers, Personnel and Development staff, and Members time. Should the sample require to be extended it should hopefully not affect the end date, as there will be less posts for the remaining evaluations at the next stage to complete, and possibly less appeals. These will then be moderated before the main evaluations will commence.
- 4.9 The remaining evaluations will take place from April 2003, to end July 2003. With moderation complete by the end of September 2003. They have been estimated on 9 per week over 21 weeks, with the same range of people involved.
- 4.10 Appeals have been estimated at 30%, and taking until March 2004 to complete. This has allowed for a one-stage appeal process to an appeals panel, and allows for 3 appeals per week to be heard over a 6-month period. Clearly if more appeals are submitted this will extend the final implementation date. Therefore the implementation date is estimated to be 1 April 2004.
- 4.11 The plan identifies long periods of time where the group will progress the project, but will not require any involvement from other members or employees outside of the group, during that time. Therefore, communication is very important with both employees and Members. To ensure effective communication the group will distribute progress reports every three months, or at key stages when pieces of work have been done.
- 4.12 Also alongside the work being undertaken on evaluations existing policies pay related benefits, and opportunities for savings to contribute to funding the scheme will be reviewed and considered by the group, so that a final package to fully achieve Single Status will be complete by April 2004.
- 4.13 This project will require dedicated time and support at all stages from Members, Trade Union representatives, Managers and employees at all levels in the organisation if it is to be successful.

.14 Other Progress

- 4.15 The group has prepared an initial leaflet to market the implementation of the scheme. This will be sent to all employees, when committee approves a project plan, as the leaflet identifies key stages and timeframes. Future articles in the employee newsletter - Inside Out will then follow this as the group has information to provide. All information circulated will be joint articles/leaflets from members and trade union representatives, to demonstrate the joint working approach of this project.
- 4.16 National Joint Council Job Evaluation Scheme Seminar - Councillor John Wilkins and Kevin Mason (UNISON) recently attended this seminar. There were many key points to be considered from the seminar.
- 4.17 The three key words to remember were **Planning** – It is important to have a clear view and a timetable that is realistic; **Communication** – Everyone involved should be aware of what is happening and when; **Transparency** – Openness at all stages.
- 4.18 The JE software that is to be purchased should be compatible with the current payroll/personnel database that is used (CHRIS); otherwise it will present problems.
- 4.19 Many authorities are running the computerised and a paper system at the same time at the early benchmarking stages, as there had been difficulty in inconsistency of results. It was recommended to benchmark a fairly large sample to help address these issues and also to seek to reduce the possibility of the number of appeals, which would add time later in the process.
- 4.20 There were positive messages coming through from the delegates at the seminar. The key point that was emphasised was to spend as much time early in the process, and train all relevant parties including trade union members, and effective and continuous communication to all employees.
- 4.21 Regional Network - The EMRLGA have 2 network user groups, one for officers, and the other a joint officer/TU representative group. Nominated persons attend from the Steering Group as members. These network meetings continue to provide support and best practice guidance for the authority and are reflected in the work to-date.

5.0 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The terms of reference identify that “the project will be managed within the financial resources of the Authority.”
- 5.2 Clearly members will be aware of reports of additional costs of implementing single status in other authorities.
- 5.3 No extra budget provision has been made for implementing single status. Effectively this means that any proposals are assumed to be cost neutral with any additional costs covered by savings elsewhere in staff related budgets.
- 5.4 As the project progresses, future reports will identify the necessary action that needs to be taken to achieve this position, and the project plan clearly identifies the ongoing role of financial planning throughout the life of the project.
- 5.5 In addition every attempt will be made to accommodate the cost of undertaking Single Status reviews within existing budgets.

6.0 Corporate Implications

- 6.1 The implementation of Single Status Job Evaluation, and review of associated policies will affect a wide range of employees directly, and all employees of the Council indirectly.
- 6.2 It will require the commitment of members, management, employees and their representatives, if it is to be successful.

7.0 Community Implications

- 7.1 None identified

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 The key tasks and arrangements for delegation to the group approved by this committee have now been translated with timescales, into a project plan and are presented for members' approval.
- 8.2 The plan estimates a final implementation date 1 April 2004.
- 8.3 Regular communication on progress is essential, and will be provided at least every 3 months to members and staff.
- 8.4 Continued learning and research has and will continue by the group, to undertake best practice and guidance, to support the project's implementation.

9.0 Background Papers

- 9.1 Notes of Meetings - Single Status Steering Group