

WIRRAL COUNCIL

SCHOOLS FORUM - 6th JULY 2011

REPORT OF INTERIM DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

HARMONISATION IN SCHOOLS - UPDATE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report summarises the current position and progress to date implementing job evaluation and harmonisation for school support staff.

2.0 UP-DATE

In line with the contractual requirement to job evaluate and harmonise conditions of service for all school support staff, the Council have been in consultation with the recognised unions. The proposed timeline for implementation of Job Evaluation and Harmonisation is:

- Completion of Consultation with Unions – July 2011.
- Prepare communication materials to be provided to school support staff – August 2011.
- Issue booklet and individual statement to school support staff of the individual impact of job evaluation and harmonisation on pay and conditions of service. Early Sept 2011.
- Provide the opportunity for school support staff to attend briefing/drop in sessions – Late Sept.
- UNISON to ballot school support staff on the proposal – Early October 2011.
- Result of UNISON Ballot – Mid October 2011.
- Implementation of Job Evaluation and Harmonisation – 1 November 2011.

3.0 FUNDING

Previous reports have indicated that the backdated costs of harmonisation and job evaluation up to 31st March 2011 are £5.5m. The exact costs will be subject to decisions taken in schools when agreement is reached.

The on-going costs are anticipated to be £1.8m pa. Of this amount £1.1m has been included within schools delegated budgets. An average school has received the following :-

Primary	£5,200
Secondary	£22,700
Special	£8,900

However, there is no separate element within the funding formula and so these amounts cannot be identified within School Budgets.

Back Pay

The agreed proposals to fund back pay costs of £5.5m were :-

Schools Budget	£4.5m
Local Pay Reserve	£1.0m

The Schools Budget contribution of £4.5m was discussed as part of the budget for 2011-12. £2.5m was identified in school budget reserves / underspends, requiring the balance to be funded by a loan of £2m from the Council, to be repaid over 4 years

The School Budget Harmonisation Reserve at 31st March 2011 is as follows:-

	£
Accumulated Harmonisation Contributions @ £300,000 pa	900,000
DSG reserve carried forward from 2008	784,951
Schools budget underspend 2010-11	1,058,910
Excess balance reserve	138,444
Harmonisation Reserve @ 31.03.2011	<u>2,882,305</u> =====

Taking account of the contribution of £1m from the Local Pay Reserve, the Council loan required is £1,617,695. This is an improved position resulting from an increased school budget underspend at the year end. The loan would be repaid (£450,000 pa) in 3.6 years.

4.0 RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

David Armstrong
Interim Director of Children's Services