

PROPOSED CHANGES TO TERMS AND CONDITIONS
SUMMARY OF FORMAL STAFF CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Further to a 45 day formal consultation period, which ended on 17th November, all feedback received has been collated and reviewed. Feedback was received at 11 drop-in sessions and also on an individual basis.

The table below details the consultation response in terms of numbers attending the 11 sessions and numbers who sent in feedback either in hard-copy or via e-mail.

Area	CFW	T&R	EGP	ETO	Anon	Total
Attended road show	92	37	12	83	0	224
Individual Feedback received	25	19	17	6	3	70
Total	117	56	29	89	3	294*

**This doesn't necessarily indicate the number of employees that have given feedback, as some may have attended a session and also sent in individual feedback.*

Shortly following the launch of consultation all employees in scope for the changes were e-mailed or written to, advising them that formal consultation had been launched. They were also asked to complete a survey to indicate whether they would be willing to sign up to the changes, if the current proposals were to be implemented. 1086 employees completed the survey which is 38 % of the workforce. Of those that responded 74% (802) stated that they would sign up to the proposals and 26% (284) stated that they would not be prepared to sign up to the proposals.

The table below details the response to the survey by Directorate.

Response	CFW	T&R	EGP	ETO	Total
Would agree	30%	37%	29%	13%	26%
Would not agree	15%	6%	21%	2%	9%
No Response	55%	57%	50%	85%	65%

Key themes occurring relating to the proposals

General

- There is a big risk of the loss of goodwill of employees, many of which have been working additional hours. The Council already makes savings from employees who work additional hours with no reward.
- The measures aren't protecting all jobs as restructures are still happening.

- Once terms and conditions have been reduced, even with an economic upturn they won't be increased again, and benefits are lost forever. There should be a review of all of them in future, not just unpaid leave.
- There is a big risk around delivering safe, effective services.
- Need more clarity on how the proposed saving on agency spend has been arrived at.
- Suggestion that some changes amount to constructive dismissal, i.e. if an employee cannot afford to run their car.
- The changes mean that staff will be subsidising public services from their income.
- Further to some staff already having had salary reductions after being redeployed, these changes mean they may face real financial hardship.
- When faced with the decision whether to sign up to the revised terms and conditions, staff are not really being given a choice.
- There needs to be acknowledgement that staff will not be able to absorb and undertake all the work when there is less available time to do it.
- VR/VER should be offered out to 53 and 54 year olds.
- Mileage claims for travel between meetings/locations should be ended.
- The position regarding staff who have joined the Council through a TUPE arrangement is unclear, i.e. will the rest of their terms and conditions be protected?

Changes relating to Car Users

- Issues with the Critical Car User Criteria:
 - The decision that those on scp 28 and above will not be eligible for the Critical Car User Pool is unfair and discriminatory, as there are lots of staff above this level who undertake high business mileage. There was strong feeling around this.
 - The criteria should include a section on travel during unsociable hours, as some staff have to use their car for work in the evenings and weekends and public transport may not be available at these times and wouldn't be safe.
 - The questionnaire doesn't take into consideration how individual services operate.
 - As well as consideration being given to transporting service users, consideration should also be given to services that attract and retain investment in the borough.

- Social workers have issues with the fact that when they carry service users in their cars they can get soiled and damaged and there won't be compensation for this.
- A car pool and use of taxis should be considered where public transport isn't an option – this comment is based upon an assumption that employees can refuse to use their car for work.
- The allowance should be retained, but on a sliding scale depending on banding.
- The 45p per mile allowance is not enough, especially for cars with larger engines and with the reality that petrol and other car related costs are rising.
- If staff do not use their car for work there will be risks to service provision and could ultimately have an impact on residents.
- Pool car parking permits should be available in some cases, as some staff don't park at a Council Building very often, so shouldn't have to pay for a constant parking space which they don't use regularly (apparently Manchester have such a scheme).
- Unfair that employees who have recently started with the Council believed they would get the allowance (and made the decision to join the Council based on this) will lose it.
- There is lack of clarity as to which employees will have a requirement in their contracts to have access to a car for work purposes and whether this will be included in contracts upon staff may be reengaged in April 2014.
- Staff who need to use their car for work should be issued with a badge to use in their cars allowing them to park for free in Council car parks/on the roads of the borough for a certain time period.
- It is unfair that some staff pay for parking and other staff don't have to pay.
- The costings that support the estimated savings for this proposal don't include the fact that some staff who currently don't claim business mileage will do so as a result of losing the allowance.

Reducing the Sick Pay Scheme

- The severity of the measure is disproportionate to the savings the Council will make.
- There should be guidance/criteria for the extension of sick pay.
- There is a question about the estimated level of savings, i.e. savings would not be as high as suggested.

- This will unfairly penalise the most vulnerable staff and is more likely to impact on older employees.
- If we services adopt private and third sector models in the future then it is unlikely that the exemptions will be honoured.
- Staff are more likely to return to work when not ready to do so which will also impact on colleagues.
- This targets lower paid staff. The current sick pay should be retained at 6 months full and 6 months half pay, however there should be a cap on the salary level that the authority should pay out of £38,500 or those in the 40% tax bracket. This would affect a minimal number of employees however may well achieve the same level of savings.
- During the first 6 months of employment (probationary period) only statutory sick pay should be received.
- There should be an appeal process further to an employee applying for an extension of sick pay.
- Feeling that it is unfair that the proposals haven't highlighted the fact that short-term sickness absence will affect when sick pay reduces/expires, not just long-term sickness.
- Fair transition arrangements will be needed if this proposal is implemented.
- Sickness should be properly managed rather than reducing sick pay.

Unpaid Leave

- There are concerns about how services will manage to deliver with reduced time available especially for small teams and services that are already extremely stretched with increased demand. For some the only way this would be manageable is if the team take it all at one time with the service closing, e.g. at the Christmas shut-down period.
- Some services will have to provide agency cover which could lead to increased costs rather than savings.
- Where staff work term-time only, the leave will need to be taken during the school terms which will impact on the pupils.
- It will be more difficult for staff on lower salaries to manage with this salary reduction.
- There is no commitment to remove its mandatory status after 2 years.
- It would be better to encourage flexible working.

- Suggestion that instead staff should have a reduction of annual leave by 3 days – although this wouldn't make the cash savings it would mean better service delivery and there would be some savings.
- Risk of not meeting service levels and loss of income for services that are bought-in.
- An alternative voluntary scheme hasn't been given due consideration.
- Senior staff should have to take more unpaid leave to reduce the impact on lower paid staff.
- There will be inequity where employees who already don't take all their annual leave, TOIL etc. won't be able to take this additional leave and will take on even more work from colleagues who do take the additional leave. The staff who carry forward or lose annual leave currently should be exempt.

Introduction of a Living Wage

- Fair proposal.
- The amount should be increased with inflation year on year, given the relatively small cost to the Council.

Reduce Overtime Rate

- Fair proposal.
- Extra work that is already done isn't recognised.
- There is concern that service delivery would be affected, particularly when staff are required to work overtime at short notice.
- It will discourage staff from working flexibly to support service delivery.

Remove Relocation Allowance

- Fair proposal.
- Instead consideration should be made as to reducing the payment period from 4 years to 2 years and possibly only those on the lower salary scales.