

Comments on the Employers Proposals

I thought the rate for the job is the top of the grade, you are paid the other points while you are learning. So why are they making the point lower than this?

How can they justify £300,000 for a Cabinet Office. How much care would this buy for an older person or members of staff employed?

So much for valuing staff! Public sector workers kicked in the teeth and none of it their fault. Remove unnecessary high paid cabinet posts and put the cash where it really belongs, in the care sector.

Having just seen the letter (via intranet) I would like to ask what support/checks are likely to be put in place to ensure that the "calculations" done by HR are fair and take into account the correct entitlements etc. The open letter does refer more than once and highlighted that the Pension dept are not to be consulted. Also in recent options put out for discussion was the reduction of the redundancy allowance from 3 to 2 weeks per year. The letter refers to the calculation based on 2 weeks per year of employment. Is this correct?

This is SCC response to a member when expressing many concerns about the proposals.

The Local Government Employers state in their document Reducing Workforce Costs to local authorities that managers should focus on employee motivation and well-being. Clearly this appears to be a low priority here in Somerset!

Branch Secretary

Thank you for your email, which I've been asked to respond to.

I acknowledge your objection to the Council's spot pay proposal and its intention of opening up formal negotiations in respect of redundancy terms and other terms and conditions and I'm sorry that as a consequence you and some in your team feel less valued.

Firstly, may I say that such actions of the Council are not designed to give the impression that it no longer values its staff. Indeed, the Council has stated publicly in

a number of its meetings, how much it appreciates the contribution staff make to improve the lives of the very many citizens it serves. Your service area in particular is very highly regarded and much of this is down to the staff that work within it.

It is though a painful fact that we in local government (as well as the rest of the public sector) are in crisis due to the financial recession and the cost of getting the Country out of it. This means that all of us will have to endure some pain to support this process. The last few days of announcements from the Government not only reinforces this message but makes it even more poignant. For example, the recent announcement to reduce grants to local authorities by £1.165bn in this current financial year, just in itself means that this Council will need to find savings of circa £11.65m - again in this current financial year.

With regard to the forward negotiations with the trade unions, they will be as you suggest. With regard to spot payments, this will include the detail concerning the metrics around the affordability envelop to which we are all having to operate. Discussions on the level of redundancy compensation payment as of 1 April 2011 needs to take place as well as discussions on various Ts and Cs. Dependent on what comes forward from the Government in its emergency budget on 22 June, we may need to go even further. This may all sound very depressing but its a sad fact that councils across the country are all having to do the same and if such work helps to reduce the number of staff who would have otherwise have found themselves at risk of leaving us through a compulsory route way, then its work that is worthwhile doing.

I hope this goes someway in explaining the Council's position.