

Body: CABINET

Date: 19 March 2014

Subject: PAY POLICY STATEMENT UPDATE

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive

Ward(s): ALL

Purpose: To ask members to approve updates to the Pay Policy Statement produced in accordance with the requirement in the Localism Act 2011

Contact: Becky Cooke, Strategic Organisational Development Manager, 01323 415106

Recommendations: That Cabinet :

1. notes and approves the rationale for changes to the content of the Pay Policy Statement and recommends it to be adopted by the Council
2. notes and recommends that the amended Policy Statement is published on the Council's website once it has been approved by Full Council.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Localism Act 2011 places an obligation on local authorities to be more accountable to the communities they serve. Chapter 8 of the Act requires the Council to adopt and publish a Pay Policy Statement.
- 1.2 In accordance with the legislation, a Pay Policy Statement was adopted and published in 2012/13, and updated last year for 2013/14. We are required to keep the statement up to date and it has now been reviewed to take account of the latest statistical data. The revised version is presented to Cabinet as Appendix One of this report for consideration and recommendation to full Council for its approval. It will then replace the current version on the Council's website to meet the requirements of the Localism Act.

2.0 Key changes to the Pay Policy Statement

- 2.1 There have been a number of minor changes to reflect the current position. The other key changes are:
- 2.2 The significant reduction in the length and breadth of the Pay Policy Statement. The elements that have been removed from the statements previously published since the inception of the Localism Act 2011, are those that offer context to the statistical data that we

are required to publish in accordance with legislation.

- 2.3 These non statutory sections are lengthy and whilst they offer context they do become out of date and subject to close scrutiny in terms of accuracy and relevance. This has the potential to impact on the credibility of the Council's commitment to offer as much transparency as it can in relation to matters of pay.
- 2.4 Scrutiny of the website 'hits' on the Pay Policy Statement indicate very low numbers for the two years since the statement has been published. The inference being that the reduction in the statement will do nothing to dent any confidence in the Council's commitment to be transparent in relation to pay.
- 2.5 The Government has consulted on an updated Transparency Code with a greater breadth of information that we will be required to publish. It will be prudent to focus resources on the provision of our statutory obligations, rather than non obligatory contextual information.
- 2.6 The shortened statement (from 35 pages to 12) does itself offer greater transparency in that the key information is more available, ensuring that any member of the public searching for the information has a concise and factual document to reference.
- 2.7 Research of other local authority Pay Policy Statements reveals that the majority provide the statutory elements without the non statutory context.

3.0 Financial and other implications

- 3.1 There are positive financial implications in this report, in that less resource will be required to ensure the statement remains current and relevant, enabling a focus on the Council's statutory obligations.

4.0 Consultation

- 4.1 CMT has discussed and agreed the content of the amended Policy Statement in a context of the Council wishing to provide as much transparency as it reasonably can in pay matters.
- 4.2 UNISON has also been consulted on the revised Pay Policy Statement.
- 4.3 All those occupying posts where information relating to their roles is published have been given the opportunity to raise any concerns.

5.0 Conclusion

Cabinet is asked to:

Approve the revised Pay Policy Statement and recommend it for approval by Council.

Approve its publication on the Council's website following approval by Full Council.

Julian Osgathorpe
Deputy Chief Executive

Background Papers:

None