

**From John Ballantyne : Pay Award 2004/2005**

Following negotiations with Unison, and agreement by Council yesterday (22 July), I am pleased to announce the pay award for 2004/2005.

As at national level, the pay award has been agreed as part of a package of measures. It ensures we remain competitive in what we pay, having just carried out the pay and grading review, and helps us continue to address recruitment and retention issues. The deal also recognises that more staffing capacity needs to be released within the organisation against the background of an increasingly difficult financial situation .

We will be working very closely with Unison to roll out this package of measures and I believe we have been successful in introducing a competitive pay award while addressing some of the capacity issues within the Council.

**The Pay Award**

A pay award of 4.2% from 1 April 2004. This rate is derived from the Office for National Statistics Average Earnings index. The pay award will be implemented in the August payroll, with the backdated pay to 1 April 2004 appearing in September's pay packets.

**New ways of working**

A commitment to reviewing the Council's approach to alternative forms of working, including the use of term time contracts and annualised hours, by March 2006.

**Flexi Time**

Changes to the flexible working hours policy.

(i) The current policy allows staff to adopt a pattern of working which affords flexibility to both employer and employee. It is not the intention to facilitate the accumulation of flexi leave and to reinforce this, the accumulation of flexi leave will be capped as follows:

Flexi-leave for 2004/2005 - capped at 8 days

Flexi-leave for 2005/2006 - capped at 6 days

Flexi-leave for 2006/2007 - capped at 4 days

Exceptions to the provision will require Chief Officer approval.

(ii) the removal of core hours will be subject to further consultation with Unison.

In the meantime, the existing provision for core hours will remain.

(iii) the introduction of a corporate time recording system.

**Holidays**

One concessionary day of annual leave will be withdrawn. This will take effect from the next leave year and therefore effect Christmas 2005. Where an extra day is required to close the Council offices between Christmas and New Year, the concessionary day will be reinstated for this purpose only.

**Overtime**

There will be a review of overtime arrangements.

If you have any queries on any of the above please speak to Human Resources or Unison.