

ANGUS COUNCIL

PERSONNEL & PROPERTY SERVICES COMMITTEE

18 JUNE 2002

REGRADING APPLICATIONS/APPEALS

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ABSTRACT

This report proposes that the present moratorium on regrading applications/appeals be rescinded and that it be delegated to the Personnel Services Manager to make decisions on grades in response to regrading applications.

1. RECOMMENDATION

The Committee note and approve the terms of this report and in particular agree to:

- i lift the present moratorium on regrading applications/appeals
- ii delegate responsibility to the Personnel Services Manager, under the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, for making decisions on grades in response to regrading applications

2. INTRODUCTION

At its meeting on 13 June 2000 the Personnel & Property Services Committee agreed that no further regrading applications/grading appeals be considered pending the introduction of the single status job evaluation scheme.

The reason for this decision was to enable resources to concentrate on implementing the job evaluation scheme rather than having to implement the scheme at the same time as dealing with regrading claims/appeals under the existing grading scheme.

The decision was taken against a backdrop of a nationally agreed implementation date of 31 March 2002 for the job evaluation scheme.

This date has however proved to be operationally impractical for councils to achieve and the SJC for Local Government Employees has now agreed to extend the target date for implementation to 31 March 2004.

In doing so the SJC has, however, also agreed that grading appeals under Appendix F of the former APT&C Scheme should be actioned until such times as the job evaluation exercise is completed.

An employee can appeal to the SJC under Appendix F against the decision of a council in respect of the outcome of a local grading appeal or against the failure of a council to reach a decision.

In light of the implications of the SJC Agreement, councils, like Angus, which decided to put a hold on regrading claims/appeals pending completion of the job evaluation exercise, now need to reconsider their position.

3. PROPOSAL

To continue to put a hold on regrading claims/appeals could in the opinion of the Personnel Services Manager potentially lead to conflict with the SJC, conflict with the trade unions locally which would be damaging to employee relations and possibly hinder progress on the new job evaluation scheme and conflict with, and a lowering of morale amongst, employees.

It is therefore the view of the Personnel Services Manager that the Committee should rescind the previous decision and action regarding claims/appeals under the present grading arrangements at the same time as implementing the new job evaluation scheme.

The point must be made, however, and it has been acknowledged both locally and nationally by the trade unions, that the opening up of regrading claims may, depending upon the volume of claims, (and there is every likelihood that there will be a fairly substantial volume given that the moratorium has been in place for two years) hinder progress in implementing the new job evaluation scheme as the same staff resources will be involved in both.

Before the moratorium was put in place, once a regrading claim had been considered a report was submitted to this Committee with a recommendation from the Personnel Services Manager and comments from the departmental Chief Officer. No other information or background papers were supplied to Committee. If an individual wished to appeal the subsequent decision of the Committee they did so to the Appeals Sub Committee of the Personnel & Property Services Committee.

Concern had been expressed about this procedure from both a Member and employee perspective and in particular in regard to the lack of information provided to the Personnel & Property Services Committee and the fact that the same members making the decision at Committee were on the Appeals Sub Committee.

One way of addressing this would be to provide more information to Committee and ensure that the composition of the Appeals Sub Committee did not comprise members of this, the parent Committee. This would however result in an even greater workload for Personnel Services and it is not considered appropriate to have an Appeals Sub Committee of a parent Committee comprising members who are not on the parent Committee.

An alternative to the above – and the preferred option – would be to extend the Scheme of Delegation in respect of the responsibilities of the Personnel Services Manager by delegating responsibility for making decisions on grades (which the Personnel Services Manager already has in regard to temporary posts). Should an employee wish to appeal the decision of the Personnel Services Manager they would do so direct to the Appeals Sub Committee of the Personnel & Property Services Committee.

This option would not only address the procedural concerns but would help minimise the workload burden on Personnel Services.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications associated with the terms of this report. There would, however be financial implications should a post be regraded but such costs will be maintained within departmental revenue budgets.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no human rights implications associated with this report.

6. CONSULTATION

The Director of Finance and Director of Law & Administration have been consulted on the terms of this report. The Chief Officers Management Team are in agreement with the proposals as outlined in the report.

A B Watson
Chief Executive

HR/PersMan

NOTE No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.