

ANGUS COUNCIL

RESOURCES AND CENTRAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

17 JUNE 2004

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS PACKAGE

REPORT BY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ABSTRACT

This report contains the annual review of the Employee Benefits Package.

1 RECOMMENDATION

The Committee note the terms of this report.

2 BACKGROUND

On 17 March 1998 the Personnel & Property Services Committee approved the introduction of an Employee Benefits Package (Report No 196/98 refers) and remitted the Personnel Services Manager to submit an annual report on the Package to Committee.

3 REVIEW OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS PACKAGE**Personal Accident Insurance**

This product is offered by AIG Europe (UK) Ltd and since its original launch in 1998, 96 employees have taken advantage of the product, although the current uptake level is 73, two fewer than last year.

Following the original launch, leaflets were distributed in 1999 and 2000, but in accordance with company policy there has been no distribution since, although the product is still on offer to employees.

Personal Loans

Since March 2002, Personal Loans have been offered by the Co-operative Bank. Their service was launched in that year with an advertisement in the spring edition of Angus Matters and a leaflet distribution in May. There are now four leaflet distributions per year the first two already having taken place in February and May.

Up to March 2004, 66 employees had taken advantage of this service, 11 in the last year and 24 since the service has been offered by the Co-operative Bank.

Car and Home Insurance

This product is offered by Eagle Star which has just been rebranded Zurich. Since its original launch in 1998, 166 employees have taken out policies, 26 in the last year. There are 2 leaflet distributions each year (for 2004 – May and September) and it is proposed to continue with this level of distribution meantime.

Legal Services

This service is offered by Thorntons WS. They have indicated that on average, they received 2 enquiries a month in 2002/03 but they had approximately 35 transactions in the past year.

Dental Services

This service is offered by Denplan and was launched in November 1999. At present 24 employees are taking advantage of this product, an increase of 12 from last year.

Denplan have indicated that they have no plans to distribute leaflets advertising their product this year although it is still on offer to employees.

Health Care Cash Plans

This product is offered by the Hospital Saturday Fund. Since its original launch in August 1999, 38 employees have taken advantage of the product, although the current uptake level is 34.

During the year a representative from HSF has had a series of meetings with employees from the Contract Services, Housing and Property Services Departments at various work locations.

Independent Financial Advisory Service

This service is offered by 2 companies: Charcol Aitchison and Colegrave and Ferguson Oliver. Since its original launch in April 1999, 54 enquiries have been received and 30 employees have benefited from the services, 6 in the last year.

The Mid-Life Financial Planning Seminars, organised for employees in the 40 – 55 age range to help them achieve full financial benefits at retirement, have been well attended and feedback from participants has been very positive. Some of the feedback referred to offering similar seminars to younger employees to afford them the opportunity of receiving financial advice and guidance. The Personnel Services Manager responded to this feedback and in discussion with the representatives of the two companies, introduced new seminars called 'Financial Planning for Life' from September 2003. Details of these seminars are included in the Employee Development Planner.

WellWoman

This product is offered by AIG Europe (UK) Ltd. WellWoman is an insurance plan available to employees or their spouse/partner that would give up to £25,000 worth of tax-free financial support from initial diagnosis of a major cancer to affect women eg breast, ovarian, cervical and uterus, and during recovery. Since its original launch in August 1999, 54 employees have taken advantage of this product, although the current uptake level is 50.

AIG Europe (UK) Ltd, have no plans for a distribution of leaflets this year although the product is still on offer to employees.

Holiday Savings

This product, ie discounts on holidays and travel, is offered by DP&L Travel Ltd and since its launch in February 2000, 331 bookings have been made, 105 in the last year, up slightly on the previous year.

This product continues to prove very popular with employees. It was re-launched again this year with a leaflet distribution in May.

Will Writing Service

This service is offered by "Wills Made Easy". It was launched by a leaflet distribution in May 2001 re-launched again with leaflet distributions in September 2002 and November 2003. Since its launch 36 employees have taken advantage of this service, 8 in the last year.

Credit Union

Tay Valley Credit Union Ltd, formerly known as Tayside Credit Union, is a savings and loans co-operative, owned and controlled by the members, whose aim is to provide Local Government employees in the Tayside area with a convenient savings facility and access to loans at a very competitive rate of interest.

It was formally included in the Employee Benefits Package in September 2001. There is a leaflet distribution each May. Currently, membership stands at 165, a net gain of 15 in the last year.

4 EXTENSION TO EMPLOYEE BENEFITS PACKAGE

Lex FreeChoice – StaffSelect

Lex FreeChoice, a leading car finance PCP provider, made an approach offering a car leasing scheme called 'StaffSelect' to employees of Angus Council, to enable them to access vehicles at discounted PCP finance rates not available on the high street.

It is considered that this product will add value to the Employee Benefit Package and accordingly, in accordance with the decision of the Personnel and Property Services Committee of 13 June 2000, the Personnel Services Manager approved its inclusion. It was launched by a leaflet distribution and an article in the autumn edition of Angus Matters in September 2003.

Since the launch and up to 31 March 2004, 14 quotes have been given, two orders placed and one vehicle delivered.

5 STAFF DISCOUNT SCHEME

This Committee on 23 October 2003 approved Report No 1204/03 which gave agreement in principle for Angus Council to participate in a Staff Discount Scheme as outlined in the report.

Angus Council together with Dundee City Council, Perth and Kinross Council, Tayside Contracts, Tayside Fire Brigade and Tayside Police and the proposed provider of the scheme, Community Information Support have made some progress in moving this initiative forward and it is hoped to launch the new discount scheme towards the end of 2004.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Employee Benefits Package results in no cost to the Council. The cost of leaflets is met by the participating companies.

7 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

There are no human rights implications associated with the terms of this report.

8 CONSULTATION

The Director of Finance and Director of Law and Administration have been consulted on the terms of this 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 this report.