

# **Argyll & Bute Council UNISON, UNITE & GMB TRADE UNIONS**

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**SUBJECT : SINGLE STATUS (Job Evaluation, The Standard Working Week, Pay & Grading, Terms & Conditions).**

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## **1. BACKGROUND.**

This document is designed to highlight the differences that the Trade Unions have with the final position in relation to the proposals being put forward by the Senior Management Team arising from discussions on the Single Status Agreement. This agreement which came into being on 1 July 1999 affects all former Administrative, Technical & Professional Staff, Manual Workers and Residential Workers now forming a group known as “Employees”. The agreement does not affect Chief Officers, Teachers and Craft Workers who have their own separate agreement.

## **2. JOB EVALUATION.**

There are currently no discussions taking place between the Council & the Trade Unions in relation to this matter with the progression to proceed to the Appeal Stage resting with the Council. The Trade Unions have submitted their appointments to the Appeal Panel and we now await further information.

## **3. THE STANDARD WORKING WEEK.**

Negotiations between the Trade Unions and the Senior Management Team to rationalise a local agreement affecting mainly former staff workers and the new national agreement in relation to the Standard Working Week have been ongoing for some considerable time and have not produced a satisfactory outcome.

Given this impasse the Trade Unions recognise that the Working Time Arrangements as set out in the Implementation Agreement, paragraph 15 is now the way forward in the absence of a local agreement. The effects of this will be :

- 3.1. All full-time employees will have a standard working week of 37 Hours.
- 3.2. Paragraph 16 of the Implementation Agreement will now be mandatory for part-time employees.
- 3.3. Implementation costs we have been advised by the Head of Strategic Finance will be in the region of £2.5m.
- 3.4. Argyll & Bute Council will honour its commitment to the National Agreement, a policy previously confirmed by the former Leader of the Council.
- 3.5. The Trade Unions will honour their commitment to the National Agreement.

#### **4. PAY & GRADING.**

The consequence for the implementation of paragraph 3 will be to revise the Pay Model 6a to outcomes on columns relating to 37 hours. The trade unions in relation to the implementation of this structure have tried to negotiate an implementation based on assimilation which we believe to be fair and equitable taking into account the philosophy surrounding the issues of equality. Again an impasse has been reached and the following is set out to advise members which we see as the way forward:

- 4.1. The deletion of the bottom grades which overlap for a transitional period only.
- 4.2. An assimilation structure which takes into account current experience and is based on equality. An example of the structure is contained within Appendix 1.

#### **5. TERMS & CONDITIONS.**

Attached is Appendix 2, which outlines the differences (highlighted in blue) between the Trade Unions and the Senior Management Team. As with all negotiations there will be areas which both sides will have difficulty in agreeing but to alter or change terms and conditions there have to be clear and valid reasons which have not been demonstrated to us which would allow us to proceed in terms of an accountable group of organisations.

## **6. CONCLUSION.**

The Trade Unions believe that negotiations have now reached a stage which requires outcomes in paragraphs 3 & 4 above given the present impasse reached and we call upon the Council to fulfil its obligations both as a signatory to the national agreement and as an employer which regards its employees as its best asset. In relation to Paragraph 5 we believe that there are still avenues open, which will rest on the outcomes of the decisions reached in paragraphs 3 & 4 above.

## Appendix 1

### ASSIMILATION. (Assumed date of Implementation 18 February 2008)

1. Red circles to be placed at the top of the grade with preservation as per the National Agreement for three years.
2. Others to be placed on the grade on a point for point assimilation.
3. Example based on Four Point Grade :

SPINAL COLUMN	FORMER APT & C EMPLOYEE	FORMER MANUAL WORKER
Bottom Point	1 – 2 Year's Experience	1 – 2 Year's Experience
Second Point	3 – 4 Year's Experience	3 – 4 Year's Experience
Third Point	5 – 6 Year's Experience	5 – 6 Year's Experience
Top Point	6 – 7 Year's Experience	6 – 7 Year's Experience

It should be noted that Former Manual Workers were on a point grade.

These proposals take into account :

- Equality.
- Fairness.
- Experience.