

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE OF DUNGANNON AND SOUTH TYRONE BOROUGH COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 7 JANUARY 2009 IN THE COUNCIL OFFICES, CIRCULAR ROAD, DUNGANNON**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** In the chair, Councillor Currie (Chair)  
Councillors R Burton, Cavanagh, McGuigan, McLarnon, Molloy and Morrow

**APOLOGY:** Councillor Brush

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mr Burke, Acting Chief Executive  
Mr Currie, Head of Human Resources  
Mr Frazer, Director of Development  
Mrs Smith, Council Business Manager

The meeting started at 8.00 pm.

## **1 PAY AND GRADING REVIEW – JOB EVALUATION PROCESS**

The Chair advised that meeting called to discuss with Business Improvement Section, Belfast City Council the ongoing pay and grading review job evaluation exercise.

The Chair welcomed Mr John Heyburn and Mr Les McCloy and invited Mr Heyburn to explain the stages of the process.

Mr Heyburn outlined the process:

Staff are given opportunity to review and amend their job description  
Job description signed off by post holder, head of division and in some Councils union representative.

Signed and agreed job descriptions received by BIS along with agreed staffing structures.

These are considered by BIS and any anomalies discussed and decided upon with management.

Can do desk top exercise or interview post holders about the duties of the post. This Council agreed that post holders be interviewed. This is a more open and transparent approach and you can get a fuller picture. Officers fully trained in carrying out interviews and guard against evaluating the postholder or being influenced by management. Bound by job description if at interview something comes up that jars with job description or structure it is checked with management.

Interview seeks out information under 11 scoring areas and fair and appropriate level under each area is allocated to the post and the total points awarded determines the pay grade. BIS charged with setting minimum rate for the satisfactory discharge of the duties.

Set of result sent down to Council. Council accepted and post holders advised and any new rates implemented.

The job evaluation scheme gives a right to an appeal. Grounds for appeal, disagree with factor levels awarded.

Can have one or two stage appeal procedure, formal or informal and then formal. Two stage appeal process carries additional cost.

Council adopted to go with one stage, formal appeal process.

Currently working way through formal appeals.

Appeal heard by panel of three people made up of, independent trained in job evaluation and appeals and experience of panels ie ex labour relations, management side representative can be independent or some authorities swap personnel and full time trade union official.

All panel members have to have previous training in job evaluation processes.

At appeal BIS on one side and appellant with trade union support on the other, each present case, Panel can ask questions and seek further clarification, two parties leave room, Panel discuss and make decision, only need majority decision.

BIS robustly defend all appeals.

Head of Human Resources circulated paper which set out statistics in relation to pay and grading review; number of job evaluations held 136; appeals lodged 68; successful appeals to date 14; unsuccessful appeals to date 17; appeals withdrawn 18; appeals still to be heard 19. Appeals withdrawn, appellant would come to that decision following discussion and advice from union.

In response to members questions the representatives stated that:

Number of reasons why appeals successful and rate of success or failure not out of kilter with other neighbouring authorities.

Final set of result issued and BIS was happy that balanced within authority and rogue appeals can throw balance out and cause annoyance among employees.

Informal appeals may seek out areas of concern that can be explained and negate formal appeal process.

At formal appeal, supported by union, appellant provides examples and you will get guilt edge shining example which may not be able to be challenged.

Appeals concentrating on one or two areas mainly knowledge and skills.

Once job evaluation result accepted by Council employee has right, under scheme, to appeal.

Outcome of appeal, after two sides put their case, in hands of panel.  
Way system set up, basis of appeal, disagree with factor levels.  
Within this Council continuous evaluations. Can be seen as good employer but can also lead to people leapfrogging and distorting structure. Employees do not have an automatic right to a job evaluation, subject to any policy the Council may have. Council could have panel in place to consider requests for job evaluations to ensure consistency amongst all employees.  
Council can have some input into selection of the panel that would hear the appeals.

Members expressed concern regarding cost implications of the process and that appeal system seems to be flawed in that appellant should not be allowed to introduce information that not put forward at original interview.

The Acting Chief Executive stated that at SMT meeting held earlier in the day there was robust and frank discussions with strong views expressed. Team in full agreement not to be dealing with further evaluation issues but no level of agreement when to halt the process. Team would be recommending the introduction of moratorium on job evaluations. Also SMT today has initiated review of current policy.

The Chair thanked Mr Heyburn and Mr McCloy for their informative input to the meeting following which they left the meeting at 9.00 pm.

During further discussion members spoke of need for;  
more input into who sits on appeals panel  
job evaluation procurement process to ensure best value for money  
rigorous process for assessing requests for job evaluation  
workforce to be made aware of financial situation which will require a change of attitude  
Council should return to carrying out core services only  
no variations to be made to any job descriptions  
implementation of moratorium which will in effect save jobs  
members to lead from the front and consider cut in conference costs etc.

In response to query the Acting Chief Executive stated that SMT had meeting today and had agreed that should look at introduction of moratorium on job evaluations and lifelong learning requests.

Proposed by Councillor Cavanagh  
Seconded by Councillor R Burton and unanimously

**Resolved** That it be recommended to the Council that:  
pay and grading review process be completed (ie 19  
appeals still to be heard),  
a moratorium be introduced with immediate effect on all  
job evaluation processes, subject to no legal implications  
and  
moratorium to be in place until the end of the term of this  
Council.

## **2 DURATION OF MEETING**

The meeting was called for 8.00 pm and ended at 9.30 pm.

MAYOR \_\_\_\_\_

CHIEF EXECUTIVE \_\_\_\_\_  
(Acting)