

## **COUNCIL ASSEMBLY**

**(ORDINARY)**

**WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2014**

### **QUESTIONS ON REPORTS**

#### **7.3 - PAY POLICY STATEMENT**

##### **1. QUESTION TO THE CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, RESOURCES AND COMMUNITY SAFETY FROM COUNCILLOR JAMES BARBER**

At the February council assembly meeting, the cabinet member agreed to review the council's pay policy so that pay structures are less complicated and it is easy for anyone to know how much a member of staff on a particular grade is paid. What progress has he made on this commitment?

#### **RESPONSE**

At the last council assembly (26 February), I was asked whether, in the spirit of transparency, I would commit to reviewing the pay award system that currently exists to ensure it was really for the benefit of council tax payers.

I made clear that the council regularly review our workforce strategy including pay and how we look at performance and rewarding good performance in our staff. I can confirm that I have started the process of a review of pay, including the options on amending how the total package is made up. The first stage of this process is to receive independent advice on the current market conditions and how our packages compare. This has already been commissioned by the director of HR. We will then consider options for any changes to our pay policy in line with normal governance procedures and employment law.

As indicated in the report, it is a statutory requirement that we agree annually in advance our policy on pay for the coming financial year 2014/15. Paragraph 10 of that report makes clear that the current performance related pay arrangements, based on measurable achievements, are a contractual element of individual's pay. Therefore, following the conclusion of the pay review which we have started, if it was decided to make any changes to the terms of those contracts, we would need to negotiate any amendment with affected employees. The timetable for review and negotiation mean that any substantial changes agreed during the coming year would then be reported in the pay policy report that council assembly considers for the 2015/16 financial year.

I can also confirm that I have met with the director of Human Resources to discuss how performance related pay will work in 2014/15, in particular ensuring that performance related pay is truly based on measurable achievements.