

REPORT TO:	FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM:	8
DATE OF MEETING:	14 th OCTOBER 2004	CATEGORY:	DELEGATED
REPORT FROM:	DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES	OPEN	
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	DAVID CLAMP (EXT 5729)	DOC:	
SUBJECT:	ASSIMILATION PROCEDURE	REF:	pers/reports
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE:	FM05

1.0 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Assimilation Procedure outlined in appendix A is approved for adoption by the Council.

2.0 Purpose of Report

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to propose a revised procedure that offers a flexible, fair and consistent approach when dealing with the potential assimilation of employees into posts.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The management of change especially when it directly affects employees' terms and conditions and/or duties and responsibilities needs to be as effective and efficient as possible to minimise uncertainty and maintain services. Currently there is a local procedure to determine whether assimilation can take place. The criteria used being;
- It is deemed that the duties/responsibilities of an employee's current post covers/represents at least 80% of the duties/responsibilities of the post offered – known as the 80% rule
 - The post offered has a salary of not more than one grade above the employee's current post
- 3.2 Whilst being a sensible and reasonable approach to use at the time it was introduced, a review of the procedure is suggested to provide more flexibility and opportunities for career development and security of employment.
- 3.3 The local adoption of an Assimilation Procedure was also a consideration outlined with the Implementation Agreement arising from the 2004 national pay settlement.

4.0 Proposal

- 4.1 The basic principle behind assimilation will remain unchanged. This will enable employees to be offered posts where it is decided that the employee is able to meet the basic requirements of the post with reasonable training provided where necessary. It is still important to have some guiding principles for managers to make this decision and provide for consistency in the application of the process.
- 4.2 It is therefore recommended that a formal desktop review be undertaken on any proposals where assimilation may take place. It is also proposed to remove the criteria relating to the post being within one grade as it is considered that this is too restrictive and could restrict career development opportunities. Ahead of this consultation will take place so any employee directly affected or trades unions can make representation on the proposals.
- 4.3 Details of the procedure that will be followed are attached. It is important to note that the underpinning principle will be regular discussion and feedback with the employees involved. To ensure consistency, a representative from Human Resources will be involved at every stage. All decisions with reasons will then be documented.
- 4.4 Any subsequent actions that may arise will then follow either the Councils' redeployment or redundancy procedures.
- 4.5 Key points are
- The use of the Assimilation Procedure will only be considered where formal reviews of existing structures are being undertaken.
 - Assimilation will normally only occur into a post offering comparable terms of employment unless employees request alternative considerations
 - Employees will be consulted over any proposals and have the right to be represented by a trades union representative
 - An Appeals procedure against any decision is available.

5.0 Consultation

- 5.1 The Joint Negotiating Committee approved the procedure at its meeting held on 16th September 2004.

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 None arising directly from the report

7.0 Corporate Implications

- 7.1 The revised procedure will form part of the employment practices the Council will need to meet the requirements of the 2004 national pay settlement.

8.0 Community Implications

8.1 None

9.0 Conclusions

9.1 Adopting the Assimilation Procedure will ensure consistency and transparency when any review of existing staffing structures are undertaken. It will also provide a further option when such matters are being considered.

10.0 Background Papers

10.1 None

