

REPORT TO: BEST VALUE SUB-COMMITTEE – 26 FEBRUARY 2002

REPORT ON: BEST VALUE REVIEW OF STAFFING LEVELS

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

REPORT NO: 127-2002

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

This Report sets out proposals to examine staffing levels throughout the Council as part of the Council's Best Value Review Process.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the staffing levels throughout the Council will be reviewed in line with Best Value.
- 2.2 Benchmarking is the appropriate tool and the Working Group will have the authority to set up appropriate procedures to obtain the information required and conduct pilot projects if necessary.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no immediate financial implications. The Review will establish whether there is any potential to reduce staffing levels within the Council and whether the statistical returns to the COSLA/Scottish Executive Joint Staffing Watch are an accurate reflection of the Council's staffing complement.

4. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no equal opportunities implications.

5. LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

There are no Local Agenda 21 implications.

6. DEFINITION OF THE SERVICE TO BE REVIEWED

It is intended that staffing levels throughout the Council will be reviewed with the intention to look at each individual Department in turn and establish exactly what staff each Department has and whether there is any potential to reduce staffing levels. Included in this review is a remit to examine Staffing Watch returns and establish how these figures are collected, and how accurately they reflect staffing levels within the City Council.

7. JUSTIFICATION FOR REVIEWING THIS SERVICE

The Council employs approximately 8,000 people across a whole spectrum of services and occupations. This figure includes the Dundee 'allocation' of Tayside Contracts employees. The job satisfaction and personal development which people derive from working for the Council is crucial in driving continuous improvement within the Council. Council services are continually under enormous pressure to change especially in times of economic difficulty. This puts increased pressure on employees.

In addition the Council has received adverse criticism in regard to Staffing Watch levels in comparison to other Councils. However, a significant proportion of Council posts are a result of external and ringfenced funding from central government and are temporary. In order to address any statistical difficulties in arriving at Dundee City Council's Staffing Watch figure and to review any areas where there is unnecessary duplication, the Working Group will examine all aspects of staffing within Dundee City Council. However, it should be emphasised that the Council maintains a policy of no compulsory redundancies.

8. **BEST VALUE WORKING GROUP**

As this is a thematic review across all Departments it is proposed that the Working Group would consist of the Chief Executive as Chairperson, the Director of Personnel and Management Services; the Director of Corporate Planning with additional officer support as appropriate.

Representation from Elected Members on the basis of 2:2:1:1 and a trade union representation consisting of 1 representative from APT&C employees; 1 representative from manual/craft employees; and 1 representative from teachers.

It is expected that service department staff will be invited to attend when needed to assist scrutiny of policies and procedures within their Department.

9. **BEST VALUE REVIEW PROCESS**

9.1 **Critical Success Factors**

Critical success factors will depend on the findings of the working group with an emphasis on efficiency in working practices and accuracy of Staffing Watch returns.

9.2 **Performance Review**

The Council's performance will be reviewed against current Staffing Watch figures with comparisons made with other Councils' returns and utilising evidence from Best Value Reviews that have been undertaken within individual service departments.

9.3 **Option Appraisal**

Option Appraisals will be carried out on viable alternatives to current delivery of services in regard to staffing levels which would be submitted to the Best Value Sub Committee for decision.

10. **TIMESCALE**

The Working Group should be established no later than March 2002 with initial conclusions in regard to Staffing Watch statistics by December 2002. Any outcomes in regard to staffing within each Department and the potential for reductions will depend on consultation with individual departments.

Chief Executive

Date