

SPECIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

9 JANUARY 2006

CALL-IN:

JNC RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To allow Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) the opportunity to review a decision made at an Individual Executive Decision-Making Meeting by the Mayor on 15 December 2005, in accordance with the Authority's Call-In Procedure.

INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE DECISION – THE MAYOR 15 December 2005

2. At an Individual Executive Decision-Making Meeting, consideration was given by the Mayor to a report titled 'JNC – Recruitment and Retention'.
3. At this meeting, the report, detailed at **appendix 1**, set out the following:
 - i) the current salary levels being offered to service directors in other comparable north east councils and the implications for recruitment and retention in Middlesbrough; and
 - ii) A proposal to bring Middlesbrough in line with the average of salaries being paid for comparable posts in north east councils.
4. In doing so, the Mayor ordered the following:
 - i) That the regional survey of comparable executive director posts be updated to reflect the position at December 2005;
 - ii) That a 3-point scale based on an average of comparable posts be established for executive directors from January 2006, subject to the Mayor's approval of the detailed scheme;
 - iii) That regional salary rates for support service directors and head of service posts be kept under review by the Chief Executive. Similar principles to be applied only if circumstances merit this, if proposals are affordable and with the approval of the Mayor plus relevant portfolio holder as to detailed proposals; and
 - iv) That the post of Assistant Chief Executive (Performance and Policy) be deleted from the establishment.

OPTION APPRAISAL

5. In making the decision, the following options were considered:
 - i) Retain the current position;
 - ii) To bring Middlesbrough Council salaries into line within the regional average; and
 - iii) To offer salaries comparable with the highest on offer in the region.

CALL-IN PROCEDURE

6. The Call-In Procedure allows Members the opportunity to Call-In a decision for scrutiny by the OSB which was made by:
 - i) The Executive;
 - ii) An individual Member of the Executive;
 - iii) A Committee of the Executive;
 - iv) A key decision made by an officer with delegated authority from the Executive; or
 - v) Under Joint Arrangements.
7. The Call-In Procedure may only be implemented if so requested by any five Members of the Council and upon receipt of any such request by the Proper Officer before the end of the third working day after the making of that decision.
8. Following the JNC - Recruitment and Retention report, which was approved by the Mayor on 15 December, six Members supported the request to Call-In such decision, in accordance with the Call-In procedure.
9. Throughout this Special Meeting of the OSB, Members will have the opportunity to review the decision. Having considered the decision the OSB may, if they feel it appropriate, refer the decision back to the decision-making body for re-consideration, setting out in writing the nature of their concerns.
10. If the decision is referred, then a further Individual Executive Decision-Making Meeting will be held within ten further working days. The Mayor can then make a final decision in the light of any recommendations made by OSB.
11. If the recommendations of the OSB are not accepted in full, then the Mayor should notify the OSB and give reasons for not accepting the recommendations.

REASONS GIVEN FOR THE CALL-IN

12. Summarised below are the reasons given to the Authority's Proper Officer which are considered the key issues that initiated the Call-In Procedure:
 - i) At a time when Middlesbrough Council is deeply involved with the very sensitive and controversial process of Job Evaluation embracing at least 3,720 members of Middlesbrough Council's workforce, which include salary reductions between 1% and 30% it is inappropriate, insensitive and unnecessary to award four executive directors with an annual salary increase reported in the local media to be at least 15%. Equating to an average of approximately £250 per week.
13. The Constitutional requirements have been met, further documentation relating to the basis of the Call-In is attached at **appendix 2**.

JNC – RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

14. To assist Members of the OSB to review the decision made by the Mayor in relation to the JNC - Recruitment and Retention report, the following key witnesses will be in attendance during this Special Meeting:-
- i) Chief Executive and Director of Human Resources – (to present the background to the report presented to the Mayor at an Individual Executive Decision Making Meeting held on 15 December 2005);
 - ii) The Mayor (to present how the decision was reached); and
 - iii) The Member who initiated the Call-In request (to present their views and concerns with regard to decision made by the Mayor).

PROPOSED CALL-IN TIMETABLE

15. To ensure the Call-In procedure is adhered to, the following Call-In timetable is as outlined below:-

MEETING	DATE/TIME	PURPOSE
Special Meeting - Overview and Scrutiny Board	9 January 2.30pm	To review the decision taken by the Mayor on 15 December 2005, in accordance with the Call-In Procedure.
Individual Executive Decision Making Meeting	19 January 2.00pm	To re-consider the decision (if required)
Overview and Scrutiny Board	31 January 4.00pm	To notify the OSB of the reasons for not accepting the OSB recommendations (if applicable).

RECOMMENDATION

16. It is recommended that the Overview and Scrutiny Board consider the content of this report, to enable the Call-In procedure to be adhered to.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- i) Middlesbrough Council's Constitution / Call-In Procedure; and
- ii) Middlesbrough Council's Scrutiny Handbook 2004/05.

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