

TRADE UNION SIDE

RESPONSE TO THE CABINET RECOMMENDATION TO REJECT THE TRADE UNION'S PROPOSED NEW SEVERANCE POLICY

4th October 2007

The Trade Union Side are extremely concerned that their proposal attached to the Cabinet Report, has been rejected. The Trade Union Side has detailed its concerns fully in the attached response but feels that it is necessary to emphasise strongly to the General Purposes Committee the damage that the management proposal will do to employee morale and Trade Union Relations.

Employees have worked extremely hard to improve the Council under very difficult circumstances and will view this decision as an indication of how they are valued by managers and Councillors.

It has not been established in the report that our policy is not in line with other Councils as the survey was only of a very limited number. No clear trends have been established to substantiate the claim by Howard Crabtree that this Council is overly generous in its redundancy payments or added years.

Within this limited sample the response was poor and inconclusive, in fact only one Council does not enhance redundancy payments and only three out of the twenty who responded do not grant added years.

References to "clear trends" it would appear are misleading, a grave concern when Councillors are dependant on managers for accurate information.

The Trade Union Side have demonstrated that savings could be made in line with cabinet recommendations of the 3rd September 2007 if their proposals were accepted.

The Council must be able to recruit, possibly from Councils in our surrounding area, the terms and conditions of employees, including severance, in the face of constant change, is a factor that would certainly influence employees considering joining the Council.

The Trade Union Side also feels that should further restructuring be necessary it is unlikely that requests for employees to come forward and volunteer for redundancy will produce any interest. Compulsory redundancy would be the result, with the potential for a severe breakdown in employee relations. The Trade Union Side works hard with managers and Councillors to support improvement and this progress could be lost.

The good level of consultation and co-operation enjoyed by Trade Unions and management would be difficult to maintain. This potential breakdown in communication could be highly detrimental to the recovery of the Council.

The Trade Union Side therefore recommend to the General Purposes Committee their proposed policy awarding 1.5 times the redundancy entitlement based on actual earnings, capped at 30 weeks.

In the case of those aged 50 years and over added years at the rate of 1 year for each 5 years of service up to a maximum of 4 years would also produce savings to the Council.

Trade Union Side
Northampton Borough Council