

Council Meeting	
Meeting Date	17 May 2023
Report Title	Staff pay award
EMT Lead	Larissa Reed, Chief Executive
Head of Service	Bal Sandher, Head of HR Lisa Fillery, Director of Resources
Lead Officer	Larissa Reed, Chief Executive
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That full council approve the pay award set out in 2.7 of this report 2. That an amount of £100,000 is taken from the budget contingency reserve to cover the shortfall from the budgeted amount.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 Swale Borough Council recognises the importance of managing pay fairly and in a way that motivates staff to make a positive contribution and support the delivery of the Council's objectives.
- 1.2 This report sets out the background to the proposed pay award for staff and the proposal to fund the award,

2 Background

- 2.1 The council has almost 300 staff and recognises the importance of paying staff fairly for the work they do. The council is aware that many staff have struggled with the increased costs of goods and services over the past 12 months.
- 2.2 Many council salaries have historically been higher than comparator councils. Despite this we, like others have experienced challenges in recruiting and retaining staff.
- 2.3 The council, like many organisations has been negatively affected by increased costs associated with hyperinflation. This has reduced the available budget to fund pay rises for staff.
- 2.4 Due to the financial difficulties faced by Swale Borough Council, members approved a reduction in the working week, from 37 to 34 with no loss of pay in lieu of a pay rise. The purpose of this was partly to save money but was also to

improve work life balance for staff and to aid recruitment. This began from 5 May 2023.

- 2.5 An amendment was accepted by Budget Council on 22 February 2023, which proposed a one-off payment of £1,000 to all staff working at grade 5 and under. This was agreed to be funded from the budget contingency reserve.
- 2.6 The Council has a collective bargaining agreement with Unison (our recognised Trades Union) and put the offer to their members. This was rejected.
- 2.7 The Chief Executive and Unison have worked closely together to find an agreement which is both beneficial to staff and affordable to the council. The proposal agreed by Unison is as follows

Grade	Proposed one off payment per fte
2	£1000
3	£1000
4	£1000
5	£1000
6	£800
7	£750
8	£750
9	£500
10	£500

- 2.8 Staff at Grade 2 are paid the Real Living Wage, so they received an increase in their hourly rate of 10% when this increased in April 2023.
- 2.9 Staff at scale 10 are team managers. It is not proposed to provide any additional payment to Heads of Service, Directors or the Chief Executive.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 That staff at the grades indicated in the above table (2.7 of the report) receive a one-off payment in lieu of a pay increase for the year 23/24.
- 3.2 That £100,000 is taken from the 'Budget Contingency Reserve' to fund the pay rise (this is in addition to the budgeted figure agreed by council on 22 February 2023)

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Option 1 – that no pay award is given. This is not recommended as SBC staff, like many people across the country are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. The proposal put forward ensures that a staff are more able to cope with increased costs.

- 4.2 Option 2 – that a percentage pay award is given to staff. This is not recommended due to the current financial position of the council. To pay for an on going pay award, the council would most likely to have reduce services and make staff redundant.
- 4.3 Option 3 – that a pay award is given to all staff. This is not recommended as the cost would be prohibitive and the recommended proposal ensures that staff on lower grades receive a greater benefit.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Chief Executive has consulted with Unison who have confirmed their members accept this offer

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	To deliver this and future corporate plans, the council needs to be resourced to deliver administrations objectives. The proposal will assist the council in retaining staff.
Financial, Resource and Property	The overall cost of the pay award is approximately £300,000. This figure is dependent on how many of our staff are in the pension fund. This can be funded from the allocated budget and the additional £100,000 requested in this paper. This is a one off spend and so will not be an ongoing pressure to the council.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	There is no statutory requirement for the council offer a pay award.
Crime and Disorder	There are no direct crime and disorder implications of this proposal
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	There are no direct Environmental Emergency implications of this proposal
Health and Wellbeing	Staff have been affected by the cost-of-living crisis, with some lower paid staff disproportionately affected. This proposal will have a positive effect on the wellbeing of staff
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	There are no direct safeguarding implications of this proposal
Risk Management and Health and Safety	There are no direct health and safety implications of this proposal

Equality and Diversity	The council has 72% of female staff, many of whom work in lower paid roles and part time. Those staff will benefit from this proposal and the sliding scale of payments will ensure that lower paid staff are not adversely affected
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no direct privacy or data protection implications of this proposal

7 Appendices

None

8 Background Papers

Minutes of the meeting of council 22 February 2023.