

IMPLEMENTATION OF AN EQUAL PAY STRUCTURE

The National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services' National Agreement on Pay and Conditions of Service is more commonly known as the "Green Book". The Green Book covers the large majority of the non-teaching workforce and includes a nationally agreed job evaluation scheme.

All Councils were required, under the Agreement, to undertake a pay and grading review in order to a) harmonise terms and conditions across former 'white' and 'blue' collar workers b) to ensure there was no direct or indirect sex discrimination against individual or groups of workers based solely on their gender and c) to provide equal pay for work of equal value.

The County Council completed Phase 1 of its equal pay review in April 2007. This covered all posts up to and including Scale E (some 60% of the Council's non-teaching workforce), and encompassed those predominantly female occupations where pay has traditionally been relatively low.

Less than 10% of staff covered by Phase 1 suffered a reduction in pay, and they were granted salary protection until April 2010.

All separate pay allowances were either consolidated within normal pay, deleted or, after careful scrutiny, justified for retention.

In addition, some 3,000 employees, the vast majority being female, who had been identified as having been potentially unequally paid compared with male comparators were offered and received 'settlement payments' through the services of ACAS.

The Council then completed Phase 2 of its equal pay review in November 2010, addressing all remaining non-teaching posts within the national pay framework and putting in place a new grading structure from grades F-Q (rising to the top of the national pay spine - spinal column point 49). Salary protection arrangements were again granted for a three year period.

As well as evaluating base salaries, Phase 2 also introduced a new, simple and consistent framework of allowances for employees working to non-standard patterns, a review of travel and a review of all other allowances not covered in Phase 1.

Throughout the process the Council worked entirely in cooperation with the trade unions, and consulted extensively to ensure the ongoing support of the workforce.

The Council can now be assured that it has a pay structure that is based entirely upon an objective evaluation of the worth of each employee's job.