

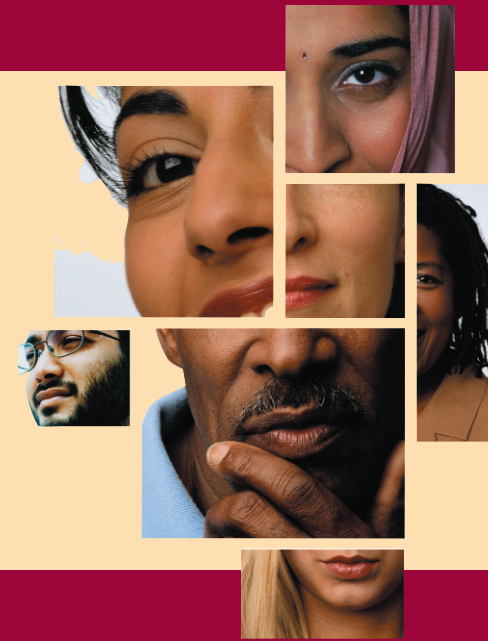
FACT FILE: Birmingham City Council pay and grading review

On March 31st 2008 Birmingham City Council's new fair and equitable pay structure, designed as a result of the Single Status/Pay and Grading Review was introduced.

The Council had already engaged in two weeks of intensive talks with the Joint Trades Unions to further improve the outcomes of the review for all staff.

A resulting offer, which will see more employees receiving a pay increase, more time-served progression and a one-year extension to the pay protection period, has now been put to unions and the Council is awaiting an official response.

Here, Councillor Alan Rudge, Cabinet Member for Equalities and Human Resources, addresses some of the misconceptions which have arisen about this process.



Single status: the truth about the union talks

Myth 1 >>>

'The joint trades unions did not support the Council's revised offer'.

Fact:

At the end of the two weeks of intensive talks between the Council and trades unions, consensus on an improved offer was reached and signed on behalf of the trades unions and the City Council on 12th March 2008. The unions were content and agreed to put it to their members.

Myth 2: >>>

'At each 'mass meeting', the trades unions presented and explained the new offer in a 'neutral and balanced way'.

Fact:

These meetings were not neutral. Many union officials were in fact urging their members not to accept the offer, which they themselves had supported twenty four hours previously! The atmosphere and attitude of the meetings was hostile and unbalanced. There is no evidence to support the eligibility of those in attendance and attendance figures represent less than 10% of Union membership. Unions had agreed that they would put the offer to their members in a secret ballot, not by a show of hands.

Myth 3 >>>

'Performance Related Pay has been imposed on the Council's workers'

Fact:

We are not imposing performance related pay. Pay Band 1 will see progression, as now, driven by service. All but the most senior staff will retain considerable levels of pay progression driven by service.

Myth 4 >>>

'The Council are investing more money in consultants than in their staff'.

Fact:

The Council values its workforce highly and is investing millions of pounds into transforming the way in which its systems operate to allow for the best possible working environment for all of its staff.

The new offer would mean the City Council is investing an extra £35m each year in its pay bill.

Myth 5 >>>

'The Council is not working to achieve fair pay'.

Fact:

This is not true. This is one of the reasons we have undertaken a pay and grading review. An independent audit of the new pay structure clearly shows that, for the first time, it will bring the Council in line with required levels set by the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Myth 6 >>>

'The Council is responsible for this dispute'.

Fact:

There is no justification for this allegation. The Council is responding to the Single Status Agreement sponsored by the Trades Unions. It has used a job evaluation scheme which the Unions jointly designed. It has resulted in nearly half the staff gaining money and one of the smallest number standing to lose money. It has reduced working hours and improved leave. For the

first time thousands of former manual staff are getting an annual wage increase, in addition to the cost of living awards.

Myth 7 >>>

'Staff have been forced to sign contracts under duress'

Fact:

No duress has been placed on staff. Nearly 60% of the workforce have voluntarily accepted new contracts. Termination and immediate re-engagement letters have been given to others guaranteeing their continued employment. There have been no service cuts as a result of this review.

Myth 8 >>>

'The one year's extra protection will not reduce the overall number of losers'.

Fact:

We have a commitment with the unions to ensure that no more than 3.5% of our workforce will lose. This is far better than any other Local Authority of any size.

For more information visit [Inline](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/payandgrading) or go to www.birmingham.gov.uk/payandgrading

