

## 7. AVOIDANCE OF INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES PROCEDURE

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services presenting a revised draft Procedure for Avoidance of Industrial Disputes in respect of non-teaching staff.

The Head of Corporate Services explained that while the council was fully committed to maintaining a constructive and positive working relationship with the recognised trade unions it was also accepted that situations could arise from time to time where proposed changes to working practices and conditions of employment resulted in a failure to agree. It was therefore important in these circumstances that there was a recognised protocol available for helping to resolve such matters before they escalated into damaging industrial disputes.

Following representations from the non-teaching trade unions through the council's Joint Consultative Group, the former Lothian Regional Council procedure which the council had adopted back in 1996 had been modified and updated.

The revisions were relatively minor in nature and included the removal of out of date references to the National Joint Council (NJC) which became obsolete following the introduction of the Single Status Agreement in 1997. The revised procedure also retained the option for parties to agree to third party assistance through the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) in the event of failure to agree a resolution at the Avoidance of Dispute Committee.

A copy of the revised draft was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

It was recommended that the Panel considers the revised draft Avoidance of Disputes Procedure with a view to its submission to the Council Executive for approval.

### Decision

1. To note the content of the report; and
2. To agree that the report be submitted to the Council Executive for approval.