AGENDA FOR CHANGE: PROGRESS REPORT NOVEMBER 2006

Report by Anne Gent, Director of Human Resources and Ray Stewart, Employee Director

The Board is asked to:

- **Note** the progress with the implementation of Agenda for Change and the ongoing challenges in meeting National Timescales for Implementation.

Background

1. Assimilation

1.1 Progress Update

The implementation of Agenda for Change affects over 10,500 staff in NHS Highland (excluding Argyll and Bute, for which assimilation is being taken forward by the previously existing Argyll and Clyde Team). This figure includes approximately 6000 substantive staff, 2300 bank staff and 2000 staff who have now left the organisation.

**In September 2006 overall progress in NHS Highland was as follows:**

- Number of staff assimilated at start of October: £3720
- Number assimilated during October (paid on first available pay date thereafter): £250
- Total assimilated by end of October: £3970
- Cumulative number of staff paid arrears: 1425

**In October 2006 progress in Argyll and Bute was as follows:**

- Number of staff assimilated at end of October: £550
- Cumulative number of staff paid arrears: 0
- Total number still to assimilate: 1775

The updated position for the end of November is still being processed, at the time of writing and therefore figures for November will need to be tabled at the meeting.

1.2 National Targets

As previously reported to the Board, National Targets were set for all staff to be assimilated and paid by October 2006 and all arrears paid by December 2006.

During August, it became clear that NHS Scotland as a whole was likely to have about 75% of staff assimilated and paid by October and about 75% of staff assimilated, paid and paid arrears by December. In addition, most Boards will have a residue of work relating to Exceptions, Bank Staff, Arrears and Local Job Evaluation, which is likely to take until March 2007 to complete.
During August and September considerable discussion has taken place across NHS Scotland and with SEHD regarding both progress to date and anticipated progress, in line with National Targets, at both the HR Directors and Chief Executives Meetings. In addition concerns have been expressed about the different sources of information which are being forwarded to SEHD regarding progress from different sources e.g. GRAMPAA (the software assimilation and arrears tool) and from Project Managers and HR Directors.

It was therefore agreed with HR Directors in early September, that progress against the national targets would be reported in the same way and from one data source from Board HR Directors.

It was planned at that time that 90% of substantive staff would be processed by Payroll by 31 December 2006. However in practice it is now more likely that only 80% of substantive staff will be processed by Payroll by 31 December. Progress in NHS Highland remains in the mid range of Mainland Boards across NHS Scotland.

1.3 Local Process

Assimilating staff onto Agenda for Change involves a complex process comprising of:

- Job description development and agreement
- Matching of job descriptions against national profiles
- Local job evaluation for job descriptions that do not match national profiles
- Local consistency checking
- National consistency checking (see Appendix II)
- Collection of Employee Data to match job descriptions to individual staff and to track and audit all employment changes from October 2004 to the date of assimilation
- Assimilation
- Payment on Agenda for Change
- Payment of arrears

Managing Risks

To enable NHS Highland to complete the process in line with National targets, a number of risks had to be managed. Despite the identification of additional resources and a number of process reviews, which have included incorporating good practice from other Boards, a number of Risks remain particularly challenging to manage as follows:

- Final resolution of Terms and Conditions issues for Bank Staff at National Level
- Local consistency checking
- National consistency checking by the National Joint Evaluation and Monitoring Group (JEMG)
- Provision of accurate and timely employee data from managers
- Payroll capacity for Assimilation
- Payroll capacity to Pay Arrears

In addition it has become increasingly clear that the fact that NHS Highland has a proportionally high number of different Jobs, each with an individual Job Description, (3,000 for 10,500 staff), due both to Remote and Rural Factors and a higher level of part-time working than in most Boards, is a significant issue. This means that all stages of the process are more complex and time consuming to process, i.e. Matching, Consistency Checking, Employee Data Collection and Assimilation.
1.4 Current Position

Appendix I provides a snapshot as at 10 November on the current position. Appendix II details the Consistency Checking Programme for October – December 2006 also as of 10 November.

It is important to note that the turnaround time at JEMG is now significantly impacted on our ability to assimilate large numbers of staff. However local challenges with regard to obtaining accurate and timely employee data are still causing some delay.

1.5 Argyll and Clyde

The Argyll and Clyde Agenda for Change Project Team continue to manage the assimilation process for NHS Highland staff in Argyll and Bute CHP. The HR Manager and local Staff Representative attend the Project Team meetings. Overall progress is moving slightly behind that of old NHS Highland. However discussions are taking place on a regular basis with NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde as to progress. The CHP are currently assisting the Project Team with matching staff to job descriptions and locating applicable Employee Data.

1.6 Summary

In summary, it is clear that significant progress has been made in progressing what is a hugely complex and resource intensive process and one which requires scrupulous accuracy and attention to detail and awareness of likely implications for staff and on resources.

In common with other Boards and despite the very best efforts to manage risks, with increased resources and reviews of process, progress has not been made fully in line with national targets.

However the NHS Highland Agenda for Change Team should be commended for their tenacity in progressing this hugely complex and challenging task. In addition, it is important to note, it is anticipated that the outcomes from the process will be of very high quality and that the number of requests for Reviews low. Essentially full involvement and support for the process is being provided by the Employee Director and Staff Side Representatives.

2. Contribution to Corporate Objectives

The implications of Agenda for Change are a Key Corporate Objective.

3. Governance Implications

The implementation of Agenda for Change will make a significant contribution to the achievement of the Staff Governance Standards.

4. Impact Assessment

The implementation of Agenda for Change promotes Equality of Pay and Conditions between different staff groups.

Anne Gent
Director of Human Resources

Ray Stewart
Employee Director

24 November 2006