

AGENDA ITEM NO: 4

To : Members of the Human Resources Committee

Councillors : Steve Comer, John Bees, Mark Wright, Charles Price, Richard Eddy (subs:)

Copy to : Robert Britton, Head of Human Resources
Minute Book, Pauline Draisey, Evelyn Pearce,
Kirstie Macrae,/Graham Clarkson/Linda
Fitton/ Siobhan Burke, relevant report authors.
Spares x 15

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

19 FEBRUARY 2009

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Trade Union response for Human Resources Committee 19 February 2009

Agenda item 6 Proposed Amendments to the Councils Pay Policy – Recruitment and Retention Policy

I believe that the Authority would not require market supplements if Local Government pay settlements had kept pace with inflation in recent years. Pay is falling behind the private sector making Local Government jobs less attractive and are therefore harder to recruit to.

It's encouraging to see in paragraph 5.5 of the Policy a 'grow your own' reference asking officers to consider secondments or acting ups prior to awarding market supplements. It is noted that if an expensive recruitment campaign is undertaken producing no suitable candidates there is little point in repeating the exercise.

Proposed amendments to the Policy are in paragraph 5.5;-

the Head of Service will consider **all of the following**:

5.5 (ii) v) must be reviewed periodically (at least every **two years**) because the job market does change and what may be a hard to recruit post now may not be in two years time.

Careful consideration must be given to which organisation the Authority uses to provide pay information on market rates to ensure the information used is independent, impartial and free from bias.

Agenda item 7 3rd Tier Pay & Grading

It's encouraging to note that revising arrangements for third tier pay will not require changes to the job evaluation factor definitions or necessary follow on work to review existing evaluations. I do not wish to comment further due to recent Equal Pay case law and potential implications for trade unions.

Agenda item 8 PMDS Scores 2007/08

It's disappointing to read in paragraph 3.2 the system development to give managers the ability to update Workforce (Councils HR system) has not been possible, especially in the context of Business Transformation and modernising Council services. Of the data supplied there appears to be a significant higher proportion of awaited scores in PT&SD Transport Operations compared to the rest of the Authority. It's encouraging to read that the Deputy Chief Executive will follow up areas of non compliance.

Steve Paines

Convenor

UNISON BRISTOL BRANCH**COMMENTS TO BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL HR COMMITTEE****THURSDAY 19TH FEBRUARY 2009****Agenda item 6:- “Proposed Amendments to the Council’s Pay Policy- Recruitment and Retention Policy”.**

UNISON notes the amendments being made to the policy and recognises that encouraging “quality management” to remain within the City Council is vital if the Council is to take forward its radical changes under “Transforming Bristol’s services”. It is deeply concerned by the need however, to seek market supplements in appointments on posts deemed “hard to fill”.

Of the 4 recommendations being put forward, UNISON makes the following observations:-

1. This could be seen as detrimental towards existing staff if market supplements are applied. UNISON firmly believes that the City council already has quality staff within its workforce, and there is no need to look outside the organisation.
2. By giving employees accelerated increments on hard to fill posts, this more often than not gives the perception to the employee that should the post be re-advertised, they should be considered as an automatic candidate, which of course they are not. Employees must be advised that the arrangement in awarding the extra increment is temporary, and can be rescinded at any time.
3. UNISON believes that regardless of the grade of the post, any application of all market supplements must be via approval from the HR Committee. Giving authority to the Head of Paid Service for posts below 2nd tier level is potentially an open cheque book to by pass existing employees who could be seen as suitable candidates.
4. Whilst UNISON will agree that JD’s, JEQ’s and employee specifications should be updated prior to advertising, it does not agree that the documentation should be made available for market supplements.

Members of the HR Committee are asked to consider these points before making a decision.

Agenda Item 7, “3rd tier Pay and Grading

UNISON notes the revised pay line for 3rd tier posts, which is part of the “Transforming Bristol’s Services Review” (TBS). UNISON further notes the revised pay points for the posts graded at BG16, BG17 and BG18.

Whilst UNISON does not raise any objections to the proposals in principal, it does raise concerns however, that in setting the revised pay lines, the “grading barriers”

between 4th and 3rd tier are likely to be widened further, reducing the prospects of career progression. Similarly, if this exercise is repeated for 4th tier and below, UNISON holds the view that the “grading barriers” between 4th tier and 5th tier, and below 5th tier will become too extreme, with little prospect for employees to progress.

UNISON has already made these comments during the TBS project group meetings, and in the recent tests by JE panels on the potential grades of the 3rd tier posts city wide.

Provided UNISON is assured that future structures below 3rd tier will offer an opportunity for career progression, then UNISON will support the proposal.

Agenda Item 8, “PMDS Scores 2007/ 2008

UNISON is disappointed that along with its sister trade unions, there has been no consultation regarding the report.

Whilst the report is purely for information, nonetheless UNISON would comment that in general, there has been inconsistent application across the authority by managers either in holding regular PMDS review meetings with employees, or in the scoring system.

UNISON can point to a number of “Improving Poor Performance” (IPP) review meetings between a manager and an employee, whereby the employee had achieved an average satisfactory score of 3 overall, but was subject to the IPP because there score in some areas fell below a 3.

Whilst the report does provide some useful statistics, it does not give an indication whereby both the Manager and Employee have disagreed on the assessment/ score, and this matter is then highlighted during an IPP review. UNISON can point to one case recently within Culture and Leisure which resulted in the employee being dismissed under poor performance, and the PMDS score given by the manager, was never agreed at any time by the employee.

Whilst the City Council are currently redrafting the IPP procedure, nonetheless all Heads of Service must be reminded of the need to adopt a consistent approach by their managers, when holding PMDS review meetings with them.



18th February 2009

GMB Submission to HR Committee – 19th February 2009

The GMB wish to make the following statement:

Caretaking Review Tied Accommodation – Agenda Item 5

The GMB welcomes this report as it goes some way in accurately reflecting the financial loss to our members.

Amendments to the Council's Recruitment and Retention Policy – Agenda Item 6

The GMB wonders why when the rest of the UK is facing the credit crunch this local authority is looking at enhancing some workgroups salary by offering enhanced market rates. If this is approved by committee today it will remove the monitoring mechanism currently in place whereby the HR Committee make the decision.

The GMB fail to understand when the country is in a full scale recession with a massive shedding of jobs and from national statistics, there is one job for three applicants in the south west region this Council is considering putting in these amendments.

Perhaps the Council is putting this in because there is a lack of cleaners or catering staff or care assistants and Bristol wishes to recognise their value – if I recall from a previous report when these work areas were identified the only solution offered then was additional training in comparison to other posts in IT, Legal and others was to offer enhancements with 'golden hellos' etc.

The GMB would like to know how many 'interim managers' we have and how much we are paying them plus how much this is in addition to the annual wage bill.

The GMB is not against our members being paid in recognition for their range of duties and responsibilities and obviously we support getting the best people for the post but at a time when our members are being hit with the removal of enhancements for shift working, standby and attacks upon their grades through review and restructuring then we cannot support such a proposal and would urge the HR Committee to reconsider.

Third Tier Pay and Grading

The GMB was not involved in this job evaluation exercise and would therefore ask which unions did take part?

The GMB is concerned how this 'new' grade will be funded? Will it be funded from 'savings' by the low paid front line service staff or does the council now have a magical pot of money that is ear marked for this above a certain scp level.

Again the GMB is not against financial recognition for employees but not at the expense of others employees pay and jobs.

PMDS Scores 2007/08

The GMB have undertaken it's own anecdotal survey of our members' experience of their PMDS – some of the results are:

- Many do not have time to prepare for their meeting with their supervisor/manager
- Some come away more demoralised and unclear then before their meeting because it is only done in a negative manner
- Some consider it as an opportunity for their manager to 'get at them'
- When a score of 2 or less is given there is generally no support put in place and especially if a restructuring is imminent feel extremely vulnerable
- Apparently you are able to appeal against the score but it is at the discretion of the manager as to whether it is revisited as it is a 'subjective' process
- Inconsistency of scoring method used
- one example given was the manager was unable to award above a 3 because the person had been off sick and although prior to sickness their work was very good the manager felt unable to award a higher score due to sickness!

Why are these issues not being addressed – because many of our members are too vulnerable to lodge a grievance because of the ultimate repercussions. When will these and other issues be tackled?

Rowena Hayward
Organisation Officer