

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 19TH FEBRUARY 2009 AT 2.00 P.M.**

P Councillor Comer (in the Chair)
P Councillor Bees
P Councillor Eddy
P Councillor C. Price
P Councillor Wright

**HR
69.2/09 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were no apologies received.

**HR
70.2/09 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**HR
71.2/09 MINUTES – HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 8TH
JANUARY 2009**

**HR 65.1/09 INVESTIGATION PROCESS FOR
GRIEVANCES/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE: ANALYSIS**

Additional recommendation to be added:

3. Employees would receive progress updates at a minimum of at least every 28 days.

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 8th January 2009, as amended above, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**HR
72.2/09 PUBLIC FORUM**

AGENDA ITEM	AUTHOR OF STATEMENT	SUBJECT(S) OF STATEMENT	No.
6	Steve Paines UNITE	Proposed Amendments to the Council's Recruitment and Retention Policy	1
7		3 rd Tier Pay and Grading	
8		PMDS Scores 2007/08	
6	Martin Jones UNISON	Proposed Amendments to the Council's Recruitment and Retention Policy	2
7		3 rd Tier Pay and Grading	
8		PMDS Scores 2007/08	
5	Rowena Hayward GMB	Caretaking Review Tied Accommodation	3
6		Proposed Amendments to the Council's Recruitment and Retention Policy	
7		3 rd Tier Pay and Grading	
8		PMDS Scores 2007/08	

The public forum items were heard prior to the agenda item to which they referred and considered during the Committee's decision.

**HR
73.2/09 HOUSING CARETAKING REVIEW - TIED
ACCOMMODATION BENEFIT CALCULATION (FURTHER
REPORT)**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Human Resources (agenda item no. 5) approving the proposed calculation principles for pay protection and “buy out” in respect of tied accommodation for Housing Caretakers, to be implemented by no later than 31st May 2009.

The Committee received the public forum items presented for this agenda item.

A revised report containing the legal implications was previously circulated.

The HR Advisor presented the report and highlighted the following issues:

- The principles of the tied accommodation benefit calculation were agreed at the previous meeting of the Committee. This report set out the value of the benefit varies per employee which would vary the levels of pay protection and 'buy out' offered.
- The calculations were based on the best figures available at the time the calculations were made.
- Members were asked to note the legal implications whilst making their decision.

The following comments were made during the ensuing discussion:

- Members noted that this was a difficult decision. However, the decision to pay benefits based on actual costs using the best available figures at the time of implementation was the correct way forward. The option proposed was the least worst option.
- There was only 1 employee who fell below the threshold had Pensionable Emolument Agreement had been used. The average payments were higher than those noted in the previous report.
- The Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods supported the proposals set out in Option 3, the proposed option.

RESOLVED - that the proposed calculation principles for pay protection and “buy out” in respect of tied accommodation for Housing Caretakers, i.e protection based upon the individual caretakers' actual level of benefits, be approved and be implemented no later than 31st May 2009.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE COUNCIL'S RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Human Resources (agenda item no. 6) making amendments to the Pay Policy to enable the City Council to more readily recruit and retain employees in hard to fill/retain posts.

The Committee received the public forum items presented for this agenda item. The following comments were given in response and during the discussion.

- The Head of Human Resources considered that the review of market supplements every 3 years was the minimum period necessary. 2 years was too short a time. However, a review could be undertaken before the end of the 3-year period if it was considered necessary.
- The changes in the report reflected the concerns raised during the Committee's consideration of the Council's structure. There would be only very few posts where national scarcity/technical need would necessitate the use of this policy.
- Heads of Service would be required to consider all the criteria listed before implementing the scheme.
- The services of an independent consultant would be used to confirm or not the need to award a market supplement.
- Other mechanisms to attract people to hard to fill posts had been tried in the past. There would always be times when particular skills were needed and the people with those skills were not readily available.
- The use of the policy should be avoided as much as possible but it was necessary to have a system in place for when it was needed.
- Councillor Wright did not feel that this was the right route to follow.
- Bristol was noted as not being one of the best-paid authorities. Where key posts needed to be filled it was necessary to pay market supplements to attract the necessary calibre of employees to fill these difficult to fill posts.
- In order to keep Members informed it was agreed that the following reports would be presented to the Human Resources Committee on a six-monthly basis.
 - a) Details of the Market Supplements applied and
 - b) Details of the use of Interim Managers.

The HR Manager added the following addition to the reasons why the payment of market supplements would be used:

- in order to retain key skills
- to avoid risk to service delivery and
- to avoid unnecessary recruitment spend.

It was resolved as follows with 4 voting for and 1 against (Councillor Wright) -

RESOLVED - (1) that the first two of the five actions required by Section 5.5 of the Pay Policy be amended to:

“Where from available job advertisement information it is considered that the pay for a post is unlikely to attract candidates of sufficient calibre, experience and qualifications it would be appropriate to apply market supplements which is pay terms are validated by an independent, accredited pay research organisation.”

(2) that an additional paragraph be added to Section 5.3 of the Pay Policy - Incremental Progression and Acceleration:

“An existing employee in an identified hard to fill/retain post may be awarded an accelerated increment or accelerated increments within the post's grade to match a formal job offer given to the employee by another employer. To ensure fairness and equity, before agreeing the Strategic Director and Human Resources will jointly

consider the pay of other employees in the workgroup, including any temporary pay variations within the workgroup (e.g. Acting-up, additional increments) and will ensure that the pay enhancement proposal can be objectively justified. The payment of market supplements would be used in order to retain key skills, to avoid risk to service delivery and to avoid unnecessary recruitment spend.”

- 3. That the application of all market supplements above the maximum of the grade for 1st and 2nd tier posts, will be approved/ratified by the Human Resources Committee. In all other instances Head of Paid Service delegated authority will apply.**
- 4. The post's job description and job evaluation questionnaire should be updated in all instances before market supplements are considered, thereby ensuring that the grade determined by job evaluation is the correct one for the post.**
- 5. that reports detailing**
 - a) the market supplements applied and**
 - b) the use of Interim Managers****would be presented to the Human Resources Committee on a six-monthly basis.**

THIRD TIER PAY AND GRADING

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Human Resources (agenda item no. 7) agreeing a new single status grade of BG18 (scp 61 to 64) (54297 to £58716) (job evaluation points 816 and above) is created with effect from 1 April 2009.

The Committee received the public forum items presented for this agenda item. The following comments were given in response and during the discussion.

- There would be an overall reduction in the number of 2nd and 3rd tier posts which may lead to some increase in the 4th tier posts which would be noted during the job evaluation process.
- The savings in the reduction of 2nd and 3rd tier posts would finance the additional grade.
- Representatives from Unite and Unison attended the consultations. Representatives from GMB were invited but did not attend.

The Human Resources Manager presented his report and highlighted the following:

- The following amendments were made to 4.1:
 - scp 61 - £54297
 - scp 62 - £55770
 - scp 63 - £57243
 - scp 64 - £58716
- Appendix E proposed the following Job Evaluation Points;
 - BG 16 - 730 - 767 points
 - BG17 - 768 - 815 points
 - BG18 - 816 plus
- The Job Evaluation Panel would benchmark the changed and new posts and the HR team would deal with the unchanged posts.
- It was estimated that there would be 7 posts on BG 18, 20 - 22 (rising to 30 in the future) on BG 17 with the remaining posts on BG16.
- Anticipated savings were £1.3 million after the Fixed Term Contracts were exhausted. This saving had previously been reported in the Tier 2 report.
- The Children and Young People's Services Posts were not included at the present time. The proposed structure

allowed for 20 x 3rd tier posts, however, the new Strategic Director may want to review the proposals when he/she was appointed.

- The Joint Negotiating Committee rates applied to 1st and 2nd tier posts. Remaining posts were covered by the National Joint Council rates. It was inappropriate to use the 1st and 2nd tier scales to 3rd tier posts.
- Option 5.4 would extend the gap between 3rd and 4th tier and was not considered a feasible option.
- The 7 posts at BG 18 were naturally larger posts than those in BG 17.

It was unanimously:

RESOLVED - that a new single status grade of BG18 (scp 61 to 64) (£54297 to £58716) (job evaluation points 816 and above) be created with effect from 1 April 2009.

HR

76.2/09

PMDS SCORES 2007/08

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Human Resources (agenda item no. 8) submitting PMDS scores.

The Committee received the public forum items presented for this agenda item. The following comments were given in response.

The Head of Human Resources presented the report and the following points were raised during the discussion:

- The report did show some progress but there was still a long way to go. It was noted that SLT agreed to address PMDS in a more robust way.
- It had been intended that the Workforce system would have been up and running by now, but due to the failure of the system the contract had been cancelled and a new system was being developed.
- The new Performance Management Framework Policy, recently agreed by the Committee, was based on competence-based objectives.
- The Chief Executive had agreed to front the re-launch of PMDS with an article on the Source reminding Managers of their responsibilities.

- When the new system was in operation from 1 April 2009 a score of 2 would entail the drawing up by the manager of a performance improvement plan to identify issues, a timetable for action and any additional support required.
- Further 'drilling down' of the spreadsheet was required to identify what was behind the figures. The spreadsheet did not give a full picture.
- The new 'Vision' workforce system would enable more expansive data to be collected which would provide clearer and fuller responses.
- The high PMDS scores did not correlate with the Council's overall rating. Managers must set the right targets to improve services to move the Council forward.
- Mandatory training for all managers in Finance and Performance Management issues would take place in May 2009.

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

Councillor Bees left the meeting during the previous item.

HR

77.2/09

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED - that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended).

HR

78.2/09

EARLY RETIREMENT ON THE GROUNDS OF REDUNDANCY - CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND SKILLS DIRECTORATE

The Committee considered an exempt joint report of the Strategic Directors of Resources and Transformation (agenda item no. 10) approving early retirement and redundancy costs.

The Human Resources Manager presented his report and the following points were raised:

- Under the old Children and Young People's Services Structure there were 6 1st tier posts. The new structure provided on 4 1st tier posts leaving 2 employees displaced.
- One employee had requested early retirement and the Committee was asked to agree to this and the redundancy costs involved.

- RESOLVED - (1) that the early retirement and redundancy costs of the Programme Director: Partnerships and Localities be approved with effect from 31st May 2009; and**
- (2) that additional pension benefits or augmented service in this case be not granted, as to do so would be contrary to the council's normal practice regarding enhanced pensions.**

HR

79.02/09 SELECTION COMMITTEES

Following a discussion, the Committee suggested that during future Selection Committee processes, candidates who did not reach the required standard during the Assessment Centre process should not be put forward for interview. It was also suggested that Selection Committees should receive a full briefing on each candidate's performance in the Assessment Centre during the interview process.

- RESOLVED:**
- 1. that candidates who did not reach the required standard during the Assessment Centre process should not be invited to interview.**
 - 2. that Selection Committees receive a briefing on candidates' Assessment Centre performance during the interview process.**

(The meeting ended at 3.35.pm)

CHAIR