

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

- For Information -

Thursday 9th July 2009

Report of: (Designate) Service Director: Strategic HR & Workforce Strategy

Title: School Caretakers: Tied Accommodation

Ward: Citywide

Officer Presenting Report: Jan Mackenzie, AHRM (Schools)

Contact Telephone Number: 0117 903 7820

RECOMMENDATION

This report is submitted to this Committee for its information.

Summary

The report sets out for members, information on the implementation of the Council's policy for caretakers in tied accommodation which was approved at HR Committee in 2007.

At its meeting on 2nd April 2009 the HR Committee, as a matter arising, passed the following resolution:

"That a report outlining non-implementation of the Tied Accommodation Policy by Head Teachers/Governing Bodies be brought to a future meeting (July) of the Human Resources Committee".

The significant issues in the report are:

None.

1. Policy

1.1 Previously HR committee determined that with effect from 1 November 2007 caretakers in tied accommodation would:

- be charged a standard rent
- receive a reduction of 75% in their council tax (for single caretakers this is in addition to the 25% reduction, making 100% reduction)
- be responsible for paying their own water rates

2. Consultation

2.1 Internal

Not applicable.

2.2 External

Not applicable.

3. Context

3.1 Currently 63 schools in the city have resident caretakers. Of these schools:

- 4 caretakers are in Voluntary Controlled (VC) Schools
- 5 caretakers are in Voluntary Aided (VA) Schools
- 7 schools' caretakers have transferred to a PFI
- The remainder (47) are in community schools.

3.2 In Community and VC schools the City Council is the employer. In VA schools the governing body is the employer and as such the Council cannot implement this policy in these schools, it is for the governing bodies to determine the schools' policies. However the Council can recommend this policy to VA schools for adoption. Caretakers who have transferred to another employer under TUPE (PFI/BSF schools) will have transferred to the new employer on the same terms and conditions as were in place at the time that they transferred.

- 3.3 Two VA schools have adopted this policy and the Council has recently written to the governing bodies of the remaining VA schools recommending that they adopt this policy. (see attached letter, Appendix A).
- 3.4 All community and VC schools are following the HR Committee decision on this policy.

4. Proposal

- 4.1 Not applicable, policy for information.

5. Other Options Considered

- 5.1 None.

6. Risk Assessment

- 6.1 Not applicable as report for information only.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.1 Report for information only.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

Not sought as report for information only.

Financial

(a) Revenue: (b) Capital:

Not sought as report for information only.

Land

Not applicable as report for information only.

Personnel

Where VA schools wish to adopt this policy the Schools' HR team will assist them in doing so.

Appendices

Appendix A: Letter to all VA schools recommending that the City Council's policy is adopted.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985 Background Papers:

None

School Caretakers: Tied Accommodation Report - Appendix A

Letter to Chair of Governors of VA Schools With Resident Caretakers

Dear (name of Chair of Governors)

Caretakers' Tied Accommodation

In 2007 the Council's HR Committee considered caretakers' tied accommodation charges across the Council and determined that:

- a standard rent should be charged to all caretakers (currently £63.78)
- the Council tax caretakers pay to reduce by 75% (for single caretakers this is in addition to the 25% reduction, making 100% reduction)
- caretakers will be responsible for paying their own water rates

This now applies to all the caretakers who work in Bristol City Council Schools.

As you are aware the governing body of an aided school is the employer, and as such is legally responsible for determining the employment decisions and the school's pay policy. Not all voluntary aided schools have adopted the above policy in relation to the council tax subsidy and the payment of water rates. I am therefore writing to ask you to consider adopting the above policy for caretakers' tied accommodation. This will bring your school's caretaker's payments into line with the City Council's caretakers.

If you wish to pay the council tax reduction for your caretaker you will need to contact the Finance Department - Helen Alvis, (helen.alvis@bristol.gov.uk) Accounting Assistant, CSS Finance, The Council House, College Green, Bristol, BS1 5TR. Please copy to Alison Kearney (alison.kearney@bristol.gov.uk), Senior Accountant at the same address.

If you wish to discuss this matter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Jan Mackenzie
AHRM (Schools)