

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

For Resolution

19th NOVEMBER 2009

Report of: Service Director: Strategic HR & Workforce Strategy

Title: Payment of additional travel costs for lower paid employees who are subject to a compulsory change in their work location.

Ward: N/A

Officer Presenting Report: Mark Williams

Contact Telephone Number: 0117 9222655

RECOMMENDATION

That this amendment to the Pay Policy (as set out in Appendix A) is adopted, with an effective date of 1st December 2009.

Summary

The Committee is asked to approve the payment of travel costs to lower paid employees whose work location is compulsorily changed and in consequence incur additional costs associated with travel to and from the new place of work.

The significant issues in the report are:

The proposed payment is intended to compensate the lowest paid workers who may find it difficult to cope with increased costs when services relocate. The policy aims to minimise potential problems with retention, business continuity and morale.

If the policy is approved, the Committee is also asked to consider if the duration of payments should be for 12 or 24 months (please see paragraph 4.2).

1. Policy

- 1.1 A local agreement was negotiated previously in the Directorate of Health and Social Care to assist lower paid employees relocating from Vetchlea EPH to pay for additional travel costs. This approach had been previously endorsed by this Committee.
- 1.2 This policy draws on the principles of the above to give enhanced provision.

2. Consultation

2.1 Internal

Trade Unions:

Unison are in agreement with the spirit of the policy but believe that it should apply to staff being paid up to £20,000 per annum.

Unite are in agreement with the spirit of the policy but believe that it should apply to employees up to BG6.

GMB wish for the policy to apply to all staff and for it to apply for 5 years following a move.

2.2 External

N/A

3. Context

- 3.1 As a consequence of the Business Transformation agenda, New Ways of Working/Smart Working and service reviews across the Council there can be a requirement for staff to change their work location. There is no obligation for the Council to re-imburse staff for additional travel to work costs when they are transferred to a new work base. However, the impact of these costs is most significant for the lowest paid workers.
- 3.2 In recognition of this impact and the need to retain employees and maintain service continuity at times of change, it is proposed to make a payment to lower paid workers which covers additional travel

costs incurred by employees in making the journey between their home and new work location.

4. Proposal

4.1 The key points of the proposal are summarised as follows:

- It applies only to employees on grades BG1 to BG5 or equivalent.
- It covers all additional travel costs incurred as a direct result of the move. Payment will be made in lump instalments with the first payment being made from the commencement of the use.
- It applies to those using public transport or their own transport.
- For those using buses it applies only to travel costs after the bus fare salary sacrifice scheme is applied.
- Staff who do not qualify for the salary sacrifice scheme for tax reasons will still have the increased bus fare costs paid.
- Where a risk assessment highlights a high risk for staff travelling on public transport after 10pm, taxi fares in excess of current normal travel costs will be re-imbursed on a case by case basis.
- It is for a 12 months maximum period of payment, from the date of a move.

4.2 The HR Committee is asked to consider the duration of payments. The current proposal is for additional costs to be paid for a maximum of 12 months, in accordance with the existing local agreement. However, the Expenses, Benefits and Travel Policy contains existing provision for increased travel costs to be paid where employees are required to work at a different location *temporarily*, for up to 24 months:

Expenses, Benefits and Travel Policy - Extract from Section 8, Definitions of Business Travel:

'You are sent to work at a different location for up to 24 months (this is termed a "detached duty" assignment).

If you are sent on a detached duty assignment, business travel will include:

Travelling on a daily basis between your home and the detached duty location.

Travel costs will be based on:

- *The actual cost of weekly or monthly (or longer period if more cost effective) season ticket where public transport is used; or*
- *The appropriate car mileage rate, if you use your own motor vehicle; or*
- *Actual fuel costs where a council vehicle is provided to you without fuel less, in all cases, an allowance for your normal commuting costs to the original permanent workplace.*

If circumstances change and it becomes known that the absence will exceed 24 months, journeys to and from the new location undertaken after the date of the change of circumstances may not be regarded as business journeys and you will not be able to claim the costs.'

- 4.3 It is proposed that the provisions and application of this policy be assessed and reviewed in 12 months from the implementation date in order to assess it's fitness for purpose and the financial impact.
- 4.4 This amendment to the Council's Pay Policy, regarding low paid workers, will supercede the "local agreements" applying in H&SC from 1st December 2009

5. Other Options Considered

5.1 Other options considered:

- i) To not implement any payment for lower paid employees.
- ii) To require an initial amount of the increased travel costs to be paid by the employee (eg the first £5 of increased costs per week paid by the employee and any remaining amount in excess of £5 paid by the Council).

6. Risk Assessment

- 6.1 The proposal seeks to minimise the potential adverse financial impact of compulsory accommodation moves for our lowest paid staff. If compensation is not provided there is a risk that those staff will not be able to finance moving location with services, creating potential problems with recruitment and retention, business continuity and morale.

7. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.1 The fundamental principle of the proposal is to provide compensation to the target group of the lowest paid workers who are most adversely affected by compulsory changes in work location where increased travel costs arise. See Appendix B for Equalities Impact Assessment.

Legal and Resource Implications

Legal

This Report and the amendment to the Pay Policy addresses the need for payment of reasonable travel expenses to be made on a temporary basis to Council employees who are low paid and required to change work location. There are no significant legal implications arising from this Report. The Report confirms that consultation has taken place with Trade Unions regarding the change to the Pay Policy.

Legal Advice from Husinara Jones, Senior Practitioner Solicitor for Head of Legal Services.

Financial

(a) Revenue:

Any costs associated with this scheme will need to be borne by the Directorate concerned.

As an indication the maximum annual bus subsidy per person (net of salary sacrifice) is Zone 1 £450 and Zone 2 £600.

(b) Capital:

N/A

Advice from Stephen Skinner, Head of Finance, CSS and Chief Executive Depts.

Land

N/A

Personnel

An additional input will be required from administrative and payroll staff to process payments.

Appendices

Appendix A - Proposed policy for payment of additional travel costs for lower paid workers who are subject to a compulsory change in their work location.

Appendix B - Equalities Impact Assessment

Appendix C - Former Vetchlea EPH local agreement.

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

None

Policy for payment of additional travel costs for lower paid workers who are subject to a compulsory change in their work location.

1. Criteria for eligibility

1.1 Employees on grades BG1 to BG5 (i.e. maximum spinal column point 15, or equivalent salary) who are subject to a compulsory permanent change in their work location will be entitled to a taxable payment for the additional cost of travel between their home and work location, incurred as a result of the change.

1.2 Before payment can be considered for employees travelling by bus they must first take advantage of the Council's salary sacrifice scheme for bus travel (With the exception of those who do not qualify for the salary sacrifice scheme, see 1.3 below). The scheme enables qualifying staff to benefit from substantial savings on the cost of bus travel (circa 30%). Calculation of the increased costs will then be based on the remaining fares to be paid after the application of the salary sacrifice scheme. Details of the salary sacrifice scheme for bus travel and application forms are available on the Council's intranet or through line managers.

1.3 Where employees do not qualify for the salary sacrifice scheme, calculation of additional travelling costs will be based on the additional fare paid.

1.4 Staff using their own transport will receive payment based on the distance travelled between their home and the new work location, less the distance between their home and old work location, as agreed with their manager. Payment will be made per additional mile to and from the new location at the mileage rate specified by the Expenses, Benefits and Travel Policy for the appropriate mode of transport.

2. Payments

2.1 Payment will be due for a maximum period of 12 months.

2.2 For those using either public transport or their own transport a lump sum payment covering the first six months of increased travel costs will be paid to the employee from the date of commencement of work at the new location.

2.3 A second lump sum payment covering a further six months increased travel costs will be due after six months.

3. Conditions of payments.

3.1 Payment will cease if:

- i) the employee ceases to be employed in the post to which the payment applies.
- ii) the employee is absent due to long term sickness (i.e. absent for four weeks or more) or maternity.

3.2 Should the employee cease to be employed by the workgroup, directorate or the Council there will be no 'claw back' of monies advanced.

3.3 Payments will only be due for changes in work location commencing after 1st November 2009, and will not be applicable retrospectively to location changes prior to this date.

4. Taxis between work and home where risk assessed as high.

4.1 It is accepted that for some staff reliant on public transport, the bus route/bus times will mean that they are faced with either a substantial walk, or long wait for public transport which may place them in a situation of high risk. Where the level of risk is assessed as high, for staff who will be either starting or finishing work at or after 10pm, then the difference between the cost of their bus fare and the additional cost of taking a taxi will be paid for a period of 12 months.

4.2 Employees will be responsible for booking and paying for their own taxi and may claim reimbursement of the fare (less the cost of the normal bus fare for the journey) through a monthly expenses claim subject to production of a receipt.

4.3 This payment can only be made subject to the following conditions being met:

- i) Employees are obliged to work outside normal working hours.
- ii) Such late working does not follow a predictable pattern and does not arise on more than 60 evenings in a year,
- iii) Suitable public transport is not available.

4.4 Please see the Expenses Benefits and Travel Policy for further details.

5. Travel Time

5.1 Whilst additional travel time does impact on the individual, it does not have a direct financial cost attached. Consideration to accommodate travel time will only be given if a member of staff is able to identify specific additional costs associated with increased travelling time, e.g. carers responsibilities requiring payment to another person and which can be substantiated by a receipt.

Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)
Stage 1: Initial Screening Form for New/Revised HR Policies or Functions

A: Summary Details

Directorate: Central Support Services

Section: Human Resources

Person responsible for the assessment: Bryn Williams

Contact details: 0117 92 22655

Name of Policy to be assessed: Travel costs of lower paid workers subject to compulsory accommodation moves

Is this a new or revised policy: New

Date policy scheduled for Overview and Scrutiny/Cabinet/LAB: HR Committee - 19th November 2009

B: Preparation

It is important to consider all available information that could help determine whether the policy could have any potential adverse impact. Please attach examples of available monitoring information, research and consultation reports.

1. Do you have monitoring data available on the number of people (from different target groups) who are using or are potentially impacted upon by your policy?

For each equalities group, the following tables show the proportions of staff in the target group of BG1 to BG5, and the proportions of staff for the rest of the Council. The data is taken from the Council's Vision HR database.

1. Gender (figures shown as percentages)

Grade	Male	Female
BG 1 - 5	13	87
BG 6 - 8	26	74
BG 9 - 10	33	67
BG 11 - 18	49	51
BCC	27	73

2. Ethnicity (figures shown as percentages)

Grade	A/O Asian	A/O Black	A/O Ethnic	A/O Mixed	A/O White	Bangladeshi	Black African	Caribbean	Black Somalian	Chinese
BG 1 - 5	0.1	0.4	0.2	0.2	1.8	0.06	2.7	2	0.06	0.2
BG 6 -18	0.2	0.6	0.3	0.3	2.7	0.1	0.5	2.3	0.07	0.2
BCC	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.2	2	0.07	0.9	2	0.04	0.2

Grade cont'd	Indian	Mixed White/Asian	Mixed White/Black African	White/Caribbean	Pakistani	Unknown	White British	White Irish	Not stated	No data
BG1-5	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.3	11	65	0.7	0.6	13
BG 6-18	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.4	7	76	0.9	0.7	6
BCC	0.6	0.2	0.13	0.4	0.4	9	71	0.9	1.0	9

3. Disability (figures shown as percentages)

Grade	Yes	No	Not stated	No data
BG 1-5	1.7	71	15	12
BG 6-18	6	78	10	6
BCC	4.3	74	13	8.7

4. Religion / Belief (figures shown as percentages)

Grade	A/O	Buddhist	Christian	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	None	Not stated	No data	Sikh
BG 1-5	1	0	15	0.06	0	1.6	6	63	13	0.14
BG6-18	1.9	0.3	23	0.1	0.02	0.4	14	54	6	0.12
BCC	1.5	0.2	19	0.09	0.02	0.6	11	59	10	0.1

5. Sexual Orientation (figures shown as percentages)

Grade	Bisexual	Gay/Lesbian	Heterosexual	Not stated	No Data
BG 1- 5	0.08	0.1	21	64	14.82
BG6 - 18	0.04	0.1	37	54	8.86
All	0.1	0.4	30	58	11

6. Age (figures shown as percentages)

Grade	16 - 24	25 - 49	50 - 64	65+
BG 1 - 5	4.5	7.56	34	5
BG 6 - 18	3.5	62	33	1.2
All	4.3	62	32	2

2. If monitoring has NOT been undertaken, will it be done in the future or do you have access to relevant monitoring data for this area? If not, specify the arrangement you intend to make; if not please give a reason for your decision.

n/a

3. Please list any consultations that you may have had and/or local/national consultations, research or practical guidance that will assist you in completing this EqlA

none

C: Your Policy or Function

1. What is the main purpose of the policy or function?

The policy aims to compensate for additional travel costs for the lowest paid staff who are required to permanently move work location. Additional costs will be paid for 12 months to ease the transition to a new work location.

2. Are there any other objectives of the policy or function, if so what are they?

n/a

3 Do any written procedures exist to enable delivery of this policy or function?

n/a

4 Are there elements of common practice in the service area or function that are not clearly defined within the written procedures?

n/a

5 Who are the main stakeholders of the policy?

Staff at grade BG1 to 5 moving location and their managers.

6 Is the policy associated with any other Council policy (s)?

no, but the policy does draw on a local agreement in HSC to compensate staff relocating from Vetchlea EPH.

7 Are there any areas of the service that are governed by discretionary powers? If so, is there clear guidance as to how to exercise these?

no.

8 Is the responsibility for the proposed policy or function shared with another department or authority or organisation? If so, what responsibility, and which bodies?

no.

D: The Impact

Assess the potential impact that the policy could have on each of the target groups. The potential impact could be negative, positive or neutral. If you have assessed negative potential impact for any of the target groups you will need to also assess whether that negative potential impact is high, medium or low – see glossary in the attached guidance notes for definitions.

1.

a) Identify the potential impact of the policy on men and women:

Gender	Positive	Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)	Neutral	Reason
Women	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Men	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.

b) Identify the potential impact of the policy on different race groups:

Race	Positive	Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)	Neutral	Reason
Asian (including Bangladeshi, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese, Vietnamese, Other Asian Background – please specify _____)	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Black (including Caribbean, Somali, Other African, Other black background – please specify _____)	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
White (including English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, Other white background – please specify _____)	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Mixed Dual heritage (White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, Other mixed background - please specify _____)	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Other (please specify)	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.

c) Identify the potential impact of the policy on disabled people:

Disability	Positive	Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)	Neutral	Reason
All	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.

d) Identify the potential impact of the policy on different age groups:

Age Group (specify, for example younger, older etc)	Positive	Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)	Neutral	Reason
All	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.

e) Identify the potential impact of the policy on lesbian, gay men, bisexual or heterosexual people:

Sexual Orientation	Positive	Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)	Neutral	Reason
Lesbian	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Gay Men	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Bisexual	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Heterosexual	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.

f) Identify the potential impact the policy on different religious/faith groups?

Religious/Faith groups (specify)	Positive	Negative (please specify if High, Medium or Low)	Neutral	Reason
Buddhist	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.

Christian	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Hindu	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Jewish	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Muslim	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Sikh	y			The policy will support all staff at grade BG1 to 5.
Other (please specify)				

g) As a result of completing Question 1 a-f above what is the potential impact of your policy?

High ————— **Medium** ————— **Low**

If you have assessed the potential impact as HIGH you must complete a full Equalities Impact Assessment

2. Could you minimise or remove any negative potential impact that is of medium or low significance? Explain How.

Race:

Gender:

Disability:

Age:

Sexual Orientation:

Religious/Faith groups:

3. If there is no evidence that the policy promotes equal opportunity– could it be adapted so it does? How?

Please sign and date this form, keep one copy and send one to Equalities Team.

Signed

Signed

Lead Officer

Departmental Equalities Contact

Date

Date

ADULT COMMUNITY CARE - MARCH 2007

Vetchlea Staff Redeployment - Additional Travelling Costs

This proposal relates only to staff redeployed from Vetchlea EPH

The Councils Disturbance Allowance has provision for Directorates to exercise discretion

“ the scheme may also be applied at the discretion of the Service Director in consultation with the Director of Corporate Services to low paid employees with non site specific contracts whose workplace is also changed where this is attributable to redeployment (as an alternative to redundancy)”

ACC Management acknowledge that Vetchlea staff do not have site specific contracts and therefore are technically not eligible for travel claims. However as most staff are low paid part time workers who tend to live local to their workplace, ACC Management accept that redeployment can have a significant impact on some staff in terms of extra travel costs.

It is proposed that the following be adopted as an agreement for reimbursing staff from Vetchlea EPH for additional travelling costs incurred through redeployment, based on the following criteria:

- Lump sum payment 6 months in advance/ providing excess travel costs still apply
- Will apply to low paid staff - determined as up to BG5
- Travel costs in excess of £3 per week
- For a period of 12 months

Risk Assessment - Late Night Travelling

It is accepted that for some staff reliant on public transport , that the bus route / bus times will mean that they are faced with either a substantial walk or long wait for public transport which may place them in situation of high risk. Where the level of risk is assessed as high, for staff who will be either starting or finishing work at 10pm, then the difference between the cost of their bus fare and the additional cost of taking a taxi will be paid for a period of 12 months .

Travel Time

Whilst additional travelling time does impact on the individual, it does not have a direct financial cost attached. Consideration to accommodate travel time will only be given if a member of staff is able to identify specific additional costs associated with increased travelling time e.g. carers responsibilities requiring payment to another person

This agreement is subject to the following terms;

- this agreement will be specific to the staff of Vetchlea EPH
- this agreement does not commit ACC to establish any agreements for any future work groups
- this agreement will not be applied to any retrospective cases of staff redeployment within ACC or as previously SS&H

David Cottam
Service Manager