

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 2ND JUNE 2011 AT 2.00 P.M.**

A Councillor Beynon (Sub; C Smith)
A Councillor Comer
P Councillor Eddy
A Councillor Emmett
P Councillor Hance
P Councillor Wollacott

HR

1.6/11

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies were received from Councillor Beynon, Emmett and Comer. Councillor Beynon was substituted by Councillor Colin Smith.

HR

2.6/11

ELECTION OF CHAIR 2011/12

RESOLVED - that Councillor Wollacott be elected Chair of the Human Resources Committee for the 2011/12 municipal year.

HR

3.6/11

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR

RESOLVED - that Councillor Comer be elected Vice-Chair of the Human Resources Committee for the 2011/12 municipal year.

HR

4.6/11

MEMBERSHIP OF COMMITTEE

RESOLVED - that membership of the Human Resources Committee for the 2011/12 municipal year be as

follows:-

**Councillor Beynon
Councillor Comer
Councillor Eddy
Councillor Emmett
Councillor Hance
Councillor Wollacott**

**HR
5.6/11 TERMS OF REFERENCE**

RESOLVED - that the terms of reference of the Human Resources Committee for the 2011/12 municipal year, as agreed by City Council at its meeting on 17th May 2011, be noted

**HR
6.6/11 DATES AND TIMES OF MEETINGS 2011/12**

RESOLVED - that the Human Resources Committee meet on the following dates at 2.00 p.m. in the 2011/12 municipal year:-

**Thursday 7th July 2011
Thursday 1st September 2011
Thursday 6th October 2011
Thursday 10th November 2011
Thursday 5th January 2012
Thursday 23rd February 2012
Thursday 22nd March 2012**

**HR
7.6/11 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interests were made for 2011/12 Municipal Year:

Councillor Wollacott was a member, area representative and political officer of the Communication Workers Union.

Councillors Colin Smith and Fi Hance were members of UNITE union.

RESOLVED: that the declarations for 2011/12 be noted.

**HR
8.6/11**

**MINUTES - HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 24th
MARCH 2011**

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 24th March 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**HR
9.6/11**

PUBLIC FORUM

Public Forum business was circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting and a copy placed in the Minute Book.

The public forum items would be heard prior to the item to which they referred.

**HR
10.6/11**

REVIEW OF EMPLOYEES MILEAGE ALLOWANCE RATE

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director Corporate Services (agenda item no. 6) which recommended the review of mileage allowances paid to employees following changes to the HM Revenue and Customs approved mileage rates

The Committee received the public forum statements presented for this item.

During the ensuing discussion, the following points were made:

- In the past, larger vehicles had been awarded larger allowances. This was not the case now as lower emission vehicles were encouraged.
- The HR Committee had recently considered and agreed to pass on the change in VAT rates from 17.5 to 20% to employees.

- Members acknowledged the ever increasing pressures of public services finances and the constraints of the Council.
- It was suggested that if the council retained a lower mileage rate, there were hidden costs to the Council in the cost and time associated with staff reliance on taxi/train/buses.
- Members suggested that there had been no review for a long period of time, perhaps since 2008. It was estimated that petrol prices had increased by up to 30p/litre since 2008.
- The steep rises in the cost of running a car should not disadvantage those who used their car for work purposes.
- It was indicated that 1500- 1600 people claimed the allowances.

Members requested that further information regarding the Disabled Employees Group proposals for the introduction of a mileage allowance for those who use electric/battery driven mobility vehicles or wheelchairs. Although the principle was supported, the Committee required more information such as cost implications on the options presented to make an informed decision. A report was proposed for September 2011.

Following the debate, option four within the report was proposed, seconded and agreed by 3 votes to 1.

RESOLVED - (1) that the BCC mileage allowances of BCC for all vehicles be brought in-line with the recent 12.5% increase to the HMRC rates and allowances increase for cars (from 40 to 45 pence per mile). Increasing the existing mileage rates to:-

Cars & Vans:

First 10,000 miles p.a. = 48.5 p/mile

Over 10,000 miles p.a. = No change

Motorcycles: 27.2 p/mile

Bicycles: 45 p/mile

- (2) that the rate for travel allowances for 10,000+ miles per annum will be paid in accordance with the 'capped' rates and will remain at the existing rate (25.0 p/mile)
- (3) that the implementation of a mileage allowance for disabled employees required to use electric/battery driven mobility vehicles be considered at the September 2011 meeting of this Committee
- (4) that the implementation date of 1st July 2011 be agreed.

HR

11.6/11

AGENCY WORKER REGULATIONS: GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and (Acting) Director HR (Special Projects) (agenda item no. 7) which requested consideration of whether internal agency workers and other casual workers directly employed by the Council be given the same terms and entitlement as those applying to external agency workers.

The Committee received the public forum statements presented for this item.

It was confirmed that a Code of Practice, based upon the Government guidance, would be established before 1st October 2011.

RESOLVED - (1) that the government's guidance regarding the agency worker regulations, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be noted;

(2) that (internal) agency workers and other casual workers directly employed by the council will be

given the same terms and entitlement as those applying to external agency workers under the new regulations, be agreed; and

- (3) that it be noted that the above will be incorporated into an Agency and Casual Worker 'Code of Practice' which will be brought to this committee at its next meeting for information, and application with effect from 1st October 2011.**

HR

12.6/11

EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY (REPEAL OF RETIREMENT AGE PROVISIONS) REGULATIONS 2011

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and (Acting) Director HR (Special Projects) (agenda item no. 8) which related to the abolition of the age 65 Default Retirement Provisions and requested agreement that the Council not apply for the “Employer Justified Retirement Age” at this stage.

The acting director advised members that it may be necessary to review this situation in future years as UK employment case law develops.

The Committee received the public forum statements presented for this item.

RESOLVED - that the council will not, in future, enforce retirement at age 65, nor will it apply any “Employer Justified Retirement Age” provisions, effective from 1st October 2011.

HR

13.6/11

MARKET SUPPLEMENT PAYMENT TO FORENSIC SOCIAL WORKERS

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and (Acting) Director HR (Special Projects)

(agenda item no. 9) which related to the review of an existing market supplement payment made to Forensic Social Workers under the provision of the Pay Policy Section 5.5 concerning 'hard to fill posts' as an aid to recruiting and retaining suitably qualified and experienced staff.

The Committee received the public forum statements presented for this item.

Bristol hosted the regional South West Forensic Social Workers team. Although part funded from other organisations, Bristol City Council was the designated employer and held the contract of employment and responsibilities as such.

It was confirmed that the the market supplement for Social Workers in the Forensic Services team was proposed with a clear end date of the 31st March 2012. A wider review of mental health care provision would be undertaken with a report to the HR committee in February 2012.

- RESOLVED -**
- (1) that the continuation of a market supplement of £1787.00pa (pro rata) for the period 1st July to 31st March 2012 to be paid to the Social Workers in the Forensic Services team be approved;**
 - (2) that the market supplement for the post of “Forensic Liaison Manager and Social Care Lead” beyond the 30th June 2011 not be extended; and**
 - (3) that it be agreed that a further report be submitted to this Committee in February 2012, by which time a wider review of mental health care provision and the pay structure and salaries of Social Work Practitioners, will have been undertaken.**

HR
14.6/11

PROGRESS AGAINST CURRENT PEOPLE STRATEGY AND FUTURE PLANS

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director: Corporate Services (agenda item no. 10) which noted the arrangements for developing the People Strategy and the progress that had been made against the existing plans.

The Committee received the public forum statements presented for this item.

It was highlighted that stress in the workforce continued to be an important issue taken very seriously, with policies in place to mitigate effects of organisational change. It was agreed that a bullet point list underlying the statutory obligations of the manager in the avoidance of stress for the workforce could be produced.

RESOLVED - (1) that the progress made against existing plans in developing the People Strategy be noted.

HR
15.6/11

VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE SCHEME PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and (Acting) Director HR (Special Projects) (agenda item no. 11) which updated the committee regarding the impact and effectiveness of the Voluntary Severance Scheme following its introduction on 1st October 2010.

The Committee received the public forum statements presented for this item.

It was confirmed that within the table 'estimated costs' indicated the redundancy payments, and 'strain on the fund' indicated costs outlined by the Avon Pension Fund for the release of any pension.

It was noted that further voluntary severance reports will be submitted to this Committee periodically as appropriate.

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

HR

16.6/11

REDUNDANCY CAP - SAVINGS TO DATE

The Committee considered a joint report of the Chief Executive and (Acting) Director HR (Special Projects) (agenda item no. 12) which updated the committee with information regarding the application of the maximum weekly 'cap' applied to redundancy payments.

The Committee received the public forum statements presented for this item.

An updated note was circulated as Appendix (12) B to show the savings to date from the application of the redundancy cap.

It was confirmed that BCC had no discretion with regards to the lump sum of a pension, and although the Local Authority had the ability to award 'added years', the HR Committee had made a past policy decision not to do so.

It was agreed that six monthly reports would be provided to the Committee.

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

HR

17.6/11

ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT AND AGENCY STATISTICS

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director Corporate Services (agenda item no. 13) which summarised the changes in the council's workforce over the financial year 2010/11. The report excluded employees in schools as accountability for the management of staffing levels were solely a matter for the governing bodies.

The Committee received the public forum statements presented for this item.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- It was reported that the number of employees had reduced by 362 and vacancies continued to be carefully managed within the authority.

- The reliance on agency workers had fallen substantially over the last financial year.
- The Health and Social Care directorate held a number of vacancies pending the end of reviews and reorganisation.
- The use of casual workers was often seasonal and subject to fluctuations.
- A further report would be presented to the Committee in September 2011, and quarterly thereafter.

RESOLVED: (1) that the report be noted.

HR

18.6/11

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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act (as amended).

HR

19.6/11

FLEXIBLE RETIREMENT AND REDEPLOYMENT OF DIRECTOR

(Exempt under paragraph 1 - Information relating to an individual)

The Committee considered an exempt report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services (agenda item no. 15) .

RESOLVED - (1) that the flexible retirement of the (former) Director of Environment, Transport and Leisure with effect from 31st August 2011 be approved; and

(2) that redeployment to a 3rd tier post be approved with effect from 1st September 2011.

(The meeting ended at 3.20pm)

CHAIR