

BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE
HELD ON 10TH JANUARY 2013 AT 2.00 P.M.**

P Councillor Wollacott (in the Chair)
P Councillor Beynon
P Councillor Comer
P Councillor Eddy
P Councillor Emmett
P Councillor Hance

**HR
39.1/13 APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

There were no apologies

**HR
40.1/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were none

**HR
41.1/13 MINUTES - HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 8TH
NOVEMBER 2012**

**RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the
Human Resources Committee held on
8th November 2012 be confirmed as a
correct record and signed by the Chair.**

**HR
42.1/13 PUBLIC FORUM**

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

**HR
43.1/13 PROGRESS REPORT ON PAY AND REWARD**

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services (agenda item no. 5) which provided comments

and observations on the progress that has been made to date on the introduction of a living wage.

Officers reported that discussions with TU colleagues had accomplished an agreement of the direction going forward.

Officers confirmed their intention to implement a sustainable living wage structure within the Council as an established long term solution. It was hoped that such arrangements would commence in April 2014.

During the ensuing discussion the Members made the following comments:

- BCC had a good track record in reaching such agreements, for example with the transition to single status.
- National level pay negotiations had not yet reached a conclusion. A living wage at National level was unlikely.
- A general consensus across the main political groups had resulted in a motion of full Council supporting the process for evaluation of the living wage.
- As a living wage supplement had been paid last year, it was suggested that not to repeat it would be tantamount to a pay cut. However, it had been agreed that the use of allowances to 'add on' to the existing structure in the long term, was unsustainable.
- Councillor Eddy reiterated that the recommendation of full Council was to explore the possibility of the living wage and the consequences to the tax payer. He stressed that financial implications had not been addressed within the report. In response, officers confirmed that it was hoped changes could be funded through existing resources and that concrete proposals to the Committee for decision would include financial implications. Officers confirmed that full cost implications had been included in past reports to the Committee regarding the living wage supplement for the 2012/13 financial year. Officers invited the views of the Committee on the progress made so far rather than any decision.

- Further information regarding the living wage payments made within 2012/13 financial year was requested. A report would be presented to the Committee in Summer 2013 to outline further proposals (including cost implications).
- It was highlighted that a large proportion of the employees affected by the proposals were employed by schools. The schools budget was controlled by the schools forum and not the Cabinet.
- The extension of the living wage to council contractors would require further consideration and discussion, perhaps appropriate to the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee, as the Human Resources Committee were primarily concerned with the employees of BCC.

Councillor Eddy voted against the recommendation. The remaining Councillors voted for.

RESOLVED - that the report be noted.

HR

44.1/13

CHANGES TO PENSION AND AUTO ENROLMENT

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services (agenda item no. 6) considering the implementation of the pension auto enrolment regulations.

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

Officers reported that at present, employees could access a variety of pension schemes dependent on their circumstances including those for teachers, NHS staff joining BCC and casual employees. Employees were able to opt out of their scheme. The auto-enrolment legislation established a number of trigger points at which BCC would re-enrol people who had opted out of the scheme with the principle of prompting people periodically to save for their retirement. The issues were complex and guidance was lengthy.

The views of the Committee were sought regarding whether the Council delay the implementation of the scheme for 3 months from the initial commencement of 1st March 2013 to avoid problems with

capacity and workload. Secondly, the Committee were asked their views on a three year transitional delay. Each option had an associated cost implication. A three year delay would mean a higher number of template letters would be required to communicate with different categories of staff which could lead to errors. Officers recommended an earlier commencement in order to convey a simpler message.

In response to Member's questions the following points were highlighted:

- The schools forum had been consulted regarding the changes.
- In response to concern that a comprehensive record of 'opt outs' was not kept in the past officers confirmed that measures had been put in place for the system to record opt out dates in future. Furthermore, 'i-connect' software would pick up trigger points for compliance to ensure recording requirements were caught.
- Advice would be publicised before the implementation date. A template communication had been received from central government and an initial message had been released via the Source. Communications to casual workers had also been sent.
- With reference to the changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme from 2014 onwards, the short term 50/50 option had not been included within the proposals. Although it had been considered within the financial implications.
- There was a consensus with the recommendations within the report. The Committee agreed with the three month delay to avoid adding to the busiest time of year for the relevant team, and did not support the option of a three year transitional delay.

RESOLVED - that the views of the Committee be noted in relation to the implementation of the pension auto enrolment regulations.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS OF PROPOSED 2013/14 COUNCIL BUDGET

The Committee considered a report of the Strategic Director, Corporate Services (agenda item no. 7) which noted the staffing implications of the proposed budget for 2013/14 and the action that would be taken to mitigate the need for compulsory redundancies.

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

Officers and Councillor Gollop (Assistant Mayor, with responsibility for Finance) confirmed that a briefing with Trade Union colleagues took place on Monday 7th January, with the confirmation of 323 redundancies within the organisation. Work would continue to mitigate the number of compulsory redundancies and work with staff for redeployment. There had been 48 compulsory redundancies to date.

With reference to the report, the following points were discussed:

- A toolkit for managers to consider non-staff reduction budget cuts was being produced. Service Directors were required to produce three year plans for resource requirements which would increase the ability for long term planning.
- The mayor planned for future budget discussions to take place earlier with more chance for positive debate. Stability was also required from Government re the budget base spend in years going forward.
- Career breaks and sabbaticals were suggested as ways to make short term reduction in spend. The holiday buy-back scheme would be repeated.
- The importance of training budgets in order to maintain a flexible and skilled workforce was highlighted.
- Officers confirmed that the practice of 'bumping' was not included within the Management of Change policy, however, it could possibly be considered for the future, particularly as part of longer term resource plans. The practice could move people around the organisation, as one team not at risk could

allow a voluntary redundancy in order to accept someone who could be retrained into the role.

- It was confirmed that those made redundant were provided support through a third party supplier commissioned to assess skills to be taken to the market place.
- Members were aware of the risk of good employees choosing to move on during times of instability and fear of redundancy. Also, they were mindful that those left in the organisation required the right support to fulfil their roles as with added workloads and changes, long term sickness was a risk and reality.

RESOLVED - that the staffing implications of the proposed budget for 2013/14 and the action that will be taken to mitigate the need for compulsory redundancies be noted.

HR

46.1/13

EXCLUSION OF PRESS OF PUBLIC

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following item 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

47.1/13

SENIOR MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE - UPDATE REPORT

The committee considered an exempt report of the Interim Chief Executive (agenda item no. 8) updating the Committee on changes that had taken place within the senior management structure.

The Chief Executive presented the current structure and options which included details of the future plans of individuals and periods of employment.

The Committee agreed to hold further discussions via the Party Leads on Human Resources Committee regarding the future roles

and levels of pay of the strategic leadership team. The outcomes of those discussions would be presented to a full future HR Committee meeting.

RESOLVED - that the discussion be noted.

HR

48.1/13

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED - that the next meeting of the Human Resources Committee be held on 28th February 2013 at 10.00 a.m.

(The meeting ended at 4.00 pm)

CHAIR