

Bristol City Council

Minutes of the Human Resources Committee

1 March 2023 at 5.00 pm



Members Present:-

Councillors: Kerry Bailes, Sarah Classick, Lorraine Francis, Farah Hussain and Tim Wye

Officers in Attendance:-

Steph Griffin (Head of Internal Communications and Organisational Development), Mark Jefferson (Workforce Analytics Manager) and James Brereton (HR Business Partner)

1 Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information

The Chair welcomed all parties to the meeting and introductions were made.

2 Apologies for Absence

Apologies received from Councillors Lesley Alexander, Amirah Cole, Richard Eddy, Mohamad Makawi.

3 Declarations of Interest

None declared.

4 Public Forum

None received.



5 Trade Union Forum

None received.

6 The Council's Pay Policy Statement for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

The Committee received a report of the Director: Workforce & Change and Head of Human Resources to consider the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24.

Members were reminded that the Localism Act 2011 required local authorities to agree and publish a pay policy statement annually before the start of the financial year to which the statement related.

The Head of HR clarified the following points –

1. Will Hutton's 2011 Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector recommended that all public service organisations publish their top to median pay ratio to allow the public to hold them to account. The Government's terms of reference for the Hutton review suggested that no public sector manager should earn more than 20 times the lowest paid person in the organisation.
2. At its meeting of 17 March 2022 Full Council approved the following addition to its Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23: "The Council policy is that the pay of the highest paid employee should be no more than 10 times that of the lowest full time equivalent paid employee." This clause was to be reviewed annually and the Committee was being asked to consider this for its Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24.
3. The draft statement explained the Council's pay policies for its highest and lowest-paid employees. Employees of the Council meant those individuals who had a formal contract of employment with Bristol City Council. It therefore excluded agency workers and officeholders.
4. Government guidance was clear that decisions on pay policies should be made by councillors. Bristol City Council was committed to making sure that all councillors had a say on how pay decisions were made, especially for its highest-paid employees. To achieve this, the Statement was reviewed every year, the Mayor consulted, and any proposals made were taken into account. The mechanism for this was that the draft statement was considered by the Human Resources Committee and then recommended to Full Council.
5. A fundamental part of the policy was transparency and openness especially with regard to higher paid employees.
6. The Council's current top to lowest salary ratio was 8.93:1 and was within the Council's declared policy that the pay of the highest paid employee should be no more than 10 times that of the lowest full time equivalent paid employee.



7. Bristol City Council was equally committed to fair pay at the lower end of the pay scale and was a Living Wage Foundation Employer with a minimum pay set at £10.90 per hour which equated to c.£21,000 pa.
8. The Council's Chief Executive and Chief Officer roles were about in the middle range when compared to other local authorities.
9. The draft statement might need to be updated during the course of the year to reflect national pay awards.

The Committee debated the draft policy and arising from members questions the following points were clarified –

10. The remuneration of BCC council members was decided by a Members' Remuneration Independent Review Panel which looked at the duties and responsibilities of councillors and made recommendations on the level of allowances it considered councillors should get. The panel's recommendations took into account government guidelines, academic research and the allowances paid in comparable cities. The independent review panel's recommendations were reported to a full council meeting. Councillors decided whether to accept the levels recommended by the independent panel.
11. The vast majority of BCC employees (80 to 90%) were covered by a national agreement on pay and conditions of service known as the 'Green Book'.
12. Employees outside of the 'Green Book' had similar agreements to determine pay and conditions and these included teachers, youth workers, educational psychologists, and craft workers.
13. The pay and conditions of Interims and other agency workers was outside the scope of the Pay Policy Statement.
14. The UK Living Wage was updated by the Living Wage Foundation annually. An increase in pay at the lower end of the pay scales did not necessarily translate to a corresponding increase at the higher end of the pay scales.
15. As BCC was aligned to national pay awards the pay ratio was equivalent to a pay cap.

Having regard to all the information in the report and the points made in the subsequent discussion Councillor Wye moved that the recommendation in the report, to recommend to Full Council that the Pay Policy Statement 2023/24, to take effect from 1 April 2023, be approved. This was seconded by Councillor Hussain.

With the recommendation in the report being put to the vote there were four in favour and one abstention.

Resolved –

That Full Council be recommended to approve the Pay Policy Statement 2023/24, to take effect from 1 April 2023.



Meeting ended at 5.40 pm

CHAIR _____

