

# Bristol City Council

## Minutes of the Human Resources Committee

21 September 2023 at 5.00 pm



### **Members Present:-**

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

### **1 Welcome, Introductions and Safety Information**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### **2 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Richard Eddy and Amirah Cole.

It was noted that Cllr Mohamed Makawi had resigned from Committee.

The Head of HR noted apologies from Steph Griffin, Director of Workforce and Change, and Ben Mosley, Head of the Executive Office, who was due to present the Staff Survey Update item.

### **3 Declarations of Interest**

There was none.

### **4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Resolved; That the minutes of the previous meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023 be approved as a correct record.



## 5 Public Forum

There was none.

## 6 Trade Union Forum

There was none.

## 7 Work Programme

The Head of HR introduced the Work Programme item which was for noting. The only amendment to the work programme since the last meeting was to the Staff Led Groups Annual Report item which had been deferred and would now be presented at a future meeting of the Committee.

- Cllr Wye raised the need for an additional item on the policy relating to interims and consultants. The Head of HR advised that this was to be discussed at the next Committee meeting in December under the Pay Policy Statement and HR Dashboard – Agency Workers items. Cllr Wye requested that this be added to the work programme as a separate item, which was agreed, and the Head of HR would circulate the existing guidance to the Committee and organise an informal meeting to discuss, if required. **JB ACTION.**

## 8 Staff Survey Results

The Head of HR introduced the item and shared a presentation giving an overview of the staff survey results. Key points were as follows:

- The overall response rate for the survey across the organisation was 43%.
- The results show that colleagues gave generally positive feedback in most areas with 61% positive answers although their views on senior leadership was lower than last year. Also, there was a drop in the number of colleagues who felt it's a better place to work than last year.
- The Chief Executive continues to work with leaders on improving engagement across the organisation and is planning a programme of visits to other workplaces across the city.
- It was confirmed that responses on senior leadership did not include politicians, it was Directors and Heads of Service only.
- The response rate was lower than last year which could be explained by ongoing organisational changes.



- Managers have been asked to discuss the staff survey results as part of their individual team meetings.
- There were text free answers and results by protected characteristics which will be analysed.

Discussion points were as follows:

- Members noted that the response rate was lowest in the Adults and Communities directorate. There wasn't a clear reason as to why this might be, but it could be due to the nature of the service, given that it is very busy. Members were advised that the team would be working with the directorate to help colleagues understand what the results mean for them and establish ways to improve engagement.
- There was a discussion around the number of colleagues who were part of a Trade Union, but the team didn't have figures for this because some staff pay through payroll and others externally. Members wanted to include a question on this in future but were advised that TUs would need to be on board with the questions and that this may not align with the objectives of the survey. It was noted that the biggest TU membership for the organisation was Unison followed by Unite and GMB.
- A Member asked if there was more detail on the negative responses around senior leadership, asking if it was specific teams or more of a general issue. They were advised that it was difficult to confirm at present, but the data suggests more work could be done in the Growth & Regeneration directorate, so the team would focus their efforts there initially.
- There was a discussion around the data for colleagues with protected characteristics, specifically disabled colleagues, which was negative. It was noted that this would be a particular area of work going forward.
- It was noted that a focus on Diversity was a priority for both the HR Directorate and the organisation as a whole.

## 9 HR Dashboard - Diversity and Pay Gaps

The Head of HR introduced the item and started by sharing some general data on staff absence and turnover, followed by sharing a presentation on the HR dashboard diversity pay gaps and the HR Analytics Power BI data which was available on the Source. Key highlights were as follows:

- Sickness absence data up to the end of August 2023 was at 9.99 which gave an average of 10 days per employee. Sickness absence was at its highest in March 2023 which was 10.6 and lowest in June 2019 which was 8.2.
- Voluntary turnover is currently at 11.5% which had dropped since the peak of 12% in January 2023. The team started recording this data in June 2019 where voluntary turnover was at 8.5%; the lowest since then was 5% in March 2021.



- It was noted that the team were required to publish gender pay gap information, but they also voluntarily publish data on ethnicity, disability and LGB.
- The main reason for the gender pay gap related to part time working where the trend was that more female staff work part time in comparison with male staff.
- There had been an increase in female Senior Leadership roles, but the organisation would like to improve number of women working at a senior level.

Discussion points were as follows:

- There was a discussion around recruitment and retention of staff, and it was noted that the data was used to identify gaps in the workforce when advertising for jobs. Colleagues use the data to identify which protected characteristics are underrepresented in their service area.
- Members noted that potential applicants could benefit from some support with joining the organisation, particularly through apprenticeships. Members were advised that there was an upcoming event at City Hall which the team would be attending where people would be invited to talk to employers in the city.
- Members were advised that jobs adverts were shared on social media but there could be specific outreach work for some services if required.
- Members asked if there was intersectional data on protected characteristics, for example gender pay gap and disability, ethnicity etc. and were advised that this was not available at present, but this was something the team would like to work on going forwards.

Meeting ended at 6:15pm

**CHAIR** \_\_\_\_\_

