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Bristol City Council Minutes of the Human Resources Committee (Zoom Meeting)



17 February 2022 at 5.00 pm

Members Present:

Councillors: Sarah Classick, Lorraine Francis, Farah Hussain, Steve Pearce, Tim Wye (Chair), Chris Windows (substitute for Cllr Eddy)

Officers in Attendance:

Mark Williams (Head of Human Resources), James Brereton (Human Resources Business Partner), Joanne White (Senior Programme Manager), Mark Jefferson (Reward and Workforce Analytics Manager), Steve Gregory (Democratic Services).

DRAFT EXTRACT

9. The Council's Pay Policy Statement for the period 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023

The Committee received a report of the Head of Human Resources to consider the Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23. 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.

Key facts emphasised in the report were –

1. As of 31 December 2021, the pay ratio between the highest and lowest paid employee was 1:9.36. This was an improvement on the pay ratio on 31 December 2020 which was 1:9.45.
2. National pay settlements agreed by the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Executives of Local Authorities and the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities to the Chief Executive, would be automatically applied to Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors as appropriate, subject to Full Council approval of the Pay Policy Statement on 15th March 2022.
3. The Real Living Wage was £9.90 per hour (40p increase) with effect from 1st April 2022, which equated to a minimum salary of £19,100 (based on a full-time week of 37 hours. Reducing the Council's top to lowest salary ratio to 8.98:1 based on current pay level. It also meant that the lowest paid had an increase of 3.5% in addition to the pending nationally negotiated pay settlement.

Following discussion and in response to Members questions the following points were raised/clarified:

1. Care workers employed outside of the Council were not legally protected in the same way as council employees however the Council strongly encouraged employers to align with the council pay

structures and took every opportunity to implement this when drawing up new contracts with external providers.

2. Regarding the pay ratio members asked if there was an ambition/target to get to 1:10. The Head of Human Resources explained that was not the case at the current time however the Council was aligned to the Government's Terms of Reference regarding the Will Hutton review (2011) which had suggested that no public sector worker should earn more than 20 times the lowest paid person in the organisation.
3. In pursuant of an improved pay ratio target the Head of Human Resources proposed that an amendment be made to the Pay Policy Statement and put to Full Council to explicitly achieve a target of a 1:10 pay ratio. An exclusion clause might have to be included regarding Chief Executive/Chief Officer posts. The draft amendment would be circulated to members for their input prior to the Full Council meeting in March. Members endorsed the proposal.
4. Members queried if the 'real living wage' had an impact on pay differentials. Head of Human Resources acknowledged that it did at lower pay levels however as there were fewer employees at that level and there was significantly more turnover the impact had been largely mitigated. Noted that this was a national issue amongst council employers not just Bristol City Council.

Resolved –

That Full Council be recommended to approve the Pay Policy Statement 2022/23, to take effect from 1 April 2022 subject to an additional clause being included to achieve a target pay ratio of 1:10 as soon as possible.

Meeting ended at 6.30 pm

CHAIR