



BRISTOL CITY COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

**ANNUAL REPORT
2021-22**

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 The Human Resources Committee is a non-executive committee of the Council. The committee is the primary means by which Full Council obtains assurance in relation to workforce management in the Council. The committee also has a number of non-executive powers which are set out in its terms of reference. The Human Resources Committee's primary responsibilities relate to the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors. The Chief Executive is responsible for all other staffing matters and the day-to-day management of the organisation as the Head of Paid Service.

2. Terms of Reference:

- 2.1 The Committee's approved Terms of Reference for 2021/22, which are published on the Bristol City Council website, can be summarised as
- The employment and remuneration of the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service), Executive Directors and Directors.
 - Full Council has delegated to the Committee the power to determine the terms and conditions on which employees hold office including procedures for their dismissal (s.112 Local Government Act 1972) and functions relating to local government pensions (regulations under s.7, 12 and 24 Superannuation Act 1972).
 - The oversight and scrutiny of the wellbeing, performance and employment practices of the council and its workforce, and the implementation of its equality policies relating to employees.

3. Membership and Meetings of the Committee:

- 3.1 The Committee was chaired during 2021/22 by Councillor Tim Wye. The Committee comprised of nine members as indicated in the table below. Councillor Pearce was the Vice Chair.

Tim Wye (Chair)
Steve Pearce (Vice Chair)
Richard Eddy
Sarah Classick
Paula O'Rourke
Lorraine Francis
Farah Hussain
Kerry Bailes
Lesley Alexander

- 3.2 The Committee met formally on five occasions during 2021/22. All meetings were quorate and held at City Hall.
- 3.3 In addition to the Committee Members, the Head of Human Resources and the Head of Organisational Development and Internal Communications supported the work of the Committee. Other officers, as appropriate, attended Committee meetings.
- 3.4 A range of reports were considered during the year, the details of which are provided in Appendix 1. Additionally, at each meeting, the Committee's work programme was reviewed for continued relevance and progress against actions required by the Committee was monitored. Public forum was also received at some meetings.

4. The Work and Activity of the Human Resources Committee in 2021/22:

- 4.1 The specific objectives of the Committee relate to overseeing arrangements in the following areas.
- Terms and conditions of employment including remuneration of the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors
 - Oversees and scrutinises the wellbeing, performance and employment practices of the Council, and the implementation of its equality policies relating to the workforce

Key Messages from the Work of the Committee

- 4.2 This annual report captures key messages from the work of the Committee during the full year.

A new committee and terms of reference

- 4.3 The Human Resources Committee was re-constituted for the civic year 2021/22 and started its work with a revised set of terms of reference, which were developed by the previous Committee. The committee started its work with seven councillors who were new to the work of the Committee. Officers provided induction to new members of the Committee on its role and responsibilities. A feature of the new terms of reference was the reporting annually on the work of the Committee to Full Council. Previous members of the committee felt it was important that the work of the Committee should be reported to Full Council in the same manner as the other committees' report.

Trade Unions

- 4.4 The Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee met with the trade union branch secretaries informally before each meeting to discuss the agenda. This was a new arrangement introduced by the Chair of the Committee. Trade unions were also offered the opportunity to speak to the committee at each meeting.

Covid 19 and Return to Workplaces

- 4.5 The pandemic has had a significant impact on all areas of the Council's work with redeployment of staff and policy and procedure updates to enable service delivery under emergency conditions. The Committee received regular reports on the organisational response and the return to the workplace and including the introduction of the zones to the Council's headquarters buildings.

Equalities and Inclusion

- 4.6 The Committee received reports from officers on the work taking place in the organisation. The Committee received reports on the work of the Staff Led Groups, a pay gap report in relation to Gender, Race, Disability and LGB. This highlighted the action that is being taken to close pay gaps. The Committee also received an annual report on recruitment and the impact on improving workforce diversity. The Committee were satisfied that the organisation is taking robust action to improve workforce diversity and address the areas for improvement are being addressed. Some members of the committee also met with two Chairs of the Staff Led Group, which provided members with a level of independent assurance.

Health, Safety and Well-Being

- 4.7 As part of the new terms of reference, the Committee received an annual report from the Head of Health, Safety and Well-being. This was welcomed by all members of the Committee as a positive addition to its work. The Committee also received an annual report on sickness absence trends and issues. This highlighted the impact of sickness absence on workforce wellbeing.

Pay for senior officers

- 4.8 The Committee approved the local application of national pay settlements for the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Directors. The 2022/23 Pay Policy Statement was considered and recommended to Full Council in March 2022. Members of the Committee have divergent views on the Pay Policy Statement. The Committee noted the Senior Coroner's pay award and received regular updates on other national pay negotiations. The committee also noted how the Council has significantly changed the pay ratio from 1:20, lowest to highest paid, to 1:10.

Travel Policy reform

- 4.9 The Committee were invited by officers to contribute their views on the proposed reforms to the Travel Policy. The views contributed to the development and direction of the policy. The Committee were pleased to see the commitment to reduce car mileage and promote alternative and active travel but recognised the importance of supporting essential workers as well. The Committee welcomed the introduction of an employee salary sacrifice scheme for ultra-low emission motor vehicles.

Workforce Strategy

- 4.10 A key element of the Committee's work is overseeing and monitoring the implementation of the Council's Workforce Strategy. The Workforce Strategy is being refreshed and the Committee contributed its views on areas for development. The strategy will be a key feature of the 2022/23 work programme.

Annual Pensions report

- 4.11 The Committee received their annual report on the work of the Avon Pension Fund. Councillor Pearce presented his report to the Committee. Concerns were expressed by the Committee in relation to the Fund's ethical investment strategy, follow-up from which will feed into the work of the Committee in 2022/23.

5. CONCLUSION

- 5.1 The Committee's has discharged its obligations under its terms of reference.
- 5.2 The Committee believes the organisation is making progress in the areas that fall within its purview.
- 5.3 The Committee would like to record its thanks to former Head of Human Resources Mark Williams and to Reward and Analytics Manager Mark Jefferson for their support in its work.
- 5.4 The Committee welcomed the appointment of Steph Griffin as Director of HR and Organisational Development from 1st October 2022 and James Brereton as Head of Human Resources from 1st July 2022.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Reports considered by the Human Resources Committee in 2021/22

Meetings	Agenda items
22 nd July (AGM)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Programme • Workforce Strategy - overview • Selection Committee – Size & Composition • Return to the Workplace • COVID Recovery and Update • Gender/Race/Disability/LGB Pay Gap
23 rd September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sickness – thematic review • COVID Recovery and Update • Proposals for Employee Travel Policy • Information report on HR policy consultations, national pay negotiations and Coroners Pay settlement.
16 th December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Pulse Survey Findings • Apprentice Annual Report • Health Safety & Wellbeing Annual Report • Staff Led Groups Annual Report • COVID Recovery and Update
17 th February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pay Settlements for Chief Executives and Chief Officers • Pay Policy Statement • COVID Recovery and Update • Update on Council Wide Change Programmes (Common Activities, Management and Capacity Review, Succession Planning)
28 th April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avon Pension Fund annual report • Recruitment - thematic review • Refresh of Workforce Strategy • Proposals and timescales for New Trade Union Facilities Time Agreement