

Cheltenham Borough Council Appointments and Remuneration Committee Minutes

Meeting date: 26 June 2024

Meeting time: 6.00 pm - 6.30 pm

In attendance:

Councillors:

Councillor Rowena Hay (Chair), Councillor Victoria Atherstone (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jackie Chelin, Councillor Barbara Clark, Councillor Jan Foster, Councillor Juan Carlos Garcia Clamp and Councillor Andy Mutton

Also in attendance:

Julie McCarthy, HR Consultant

1 Apologies for Absence

Councillor Paul Baker and Councillor Peter Jeffries.

2 Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Approve minutes of last meeting

RESOLVED THAT

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2023 were approved and signed as a correct record.

4 Local Government Act 1972 - Exempt Business

RESOLVED THAT :

“in accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining items of business as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 1, Part 1, Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 1; Information relating to any individual.

5 Pay & Grading Review

The HR consultant introduced the report and explained that she had been engaged to assist with the transfer of Cheltenham Borough Homes to CBC from a HR perspective.

It was acknowledged that the role of the CBC Chief Executive has grown substantially since he was appointed as a shared interim Chief Executive with CBH earlier in the year. The TUPE transfer to CBC would take place on 1 July 2024. The proposal before Members was a temporary measure until the senior officers pay and grading structure had been reviewed in order to ensure it remained fit for purpose in the new organisation.

Based on market information the proposal of a £1500 per month honorarium would be paid until such time as the pay and grading structure had been reviewed. This would take the Chief Executive’s salary up to £150k per annum which was on the lower end of the scale for a chief executive of an organisation of this size but reflects for now the duties he has taken on board.

The HR consultant explained that Members were also asked to approve the delegation of authority to start the review new pay and grading structure. As background, she explained that historically the council had used HAY but there was now an opportunity to use the LGA job evaluation scheme which had been recently reviewed to include grading for senior officers.

HR would be undertaking research in this respect, the findings of which would be presented to the committee in due course.

A Member noted that the pay grades had not been reviewed in ten years so it was timely for this to be undertaken and supported the use of the LGA in this respect.

In response to questions the following responses were given ;

- Post the TUPE transfer, the Chief Executive would consider what the senior structure should look like which include reflecting on any new roles and progress them through job evaluation and pay and grading discussions. The timeframe would allow for consultation on the pay and grading. Over time, pay and grading would be looked at for the whole organisation to ensure it is fit for

purpose and paying for good talent which the council required in order to attract further talent and continue to deliver for the town. It was hoped that the pay and grading for senior officers would be commenced by the end of the calendar year, to be followed by consultation so that it could be implemented in the new financial year.

- It was unlikely that the occupants of the 3 statutory officers would change but there may be some changes at senior level with the potential of additional director posts being created. This depended on the needs for the organisation identified by the Chief Executive which were yet to be defined as had this been considered prior to TUPE transfer, this would have had to be considered as part of TUPE measures.
- It was acknowledged that there were a number of lower grade professional roles which were difficult to recruit to as they had not kept up with the market pay. In these cases the council was able to use a market forces supplement to meet the market level, albeit these were temporary payments.
- It was noted that historically CBH had paid more to their staff in certain technical and administration roles. This required further examination but a wholesale evaluation of jobs would take time and could cause some unrest among staff. Where there is a review this is done within a fixed budget.
- The Chair emphasised that savings were not necessarily the primary focus of bringing services back in house- the council was quite ambitious and strengthening existing teams out in the community would deliver more for residents. Savings had already been generated in terms of HR, Chief Executive and redundancies which will be included in the outturn for this year. The HR consultant added that the focus would be around efficiencies and refocusing teams to immediately better coverage of areas. There would undoubtedly be some exits as performance was reviewed.
- The council was now a multi-faceted business and did have career progression opportunities and could use both market forces and the Local Government Pension Scheme to attract talent.
- Vacancies were being held in CBC but these would not be held to the detriment of the business. If there was a saving to be realised, but timing was not right at this time, fixed term contracts could be used.
- The Chief Executive's honorarium was calculated via a benchmarking exercise and the findings were discussed with the Leader recognising the reluctance of the Chief Executive to accept additional pay. However, it was agreed that an honorarium was justified based on the exercise and this would be backdated to the end of January. It was a temporary measure pending the wholesale review of pay and grading at senior level to ensure it was robust for the future.

RESOLVED (unanimously) THAT

a) the payment of an honorarium to the Council Chief Executive of £1,500 per month to recognise the additional responsibility of the expanded role be approved. The monthly amount to be backdated to 1st February 2024 and to remain in place until a full review of the leadership team and senior salaries is undertaken and agreed.

b) authority be delegated to the HR Consultant to take the necessary steps to action the payment of the honorarium; and

c) authority be delegated to the HR Consultant to commence a full review of the current senior team pay and grading structure to ensure that it is fit for purpose and to present the findings of the review for discussion and agreement at a future meeting of the committee.

6 Any other business the chair determines is urgent and requires a decision

None.

7 Date of next meeting (if necessary)

17 July 2024 (cancelled).

The HR consultant undertook to review the dates and Dem Services would inform Members of the outcome in due course accordingly.