

Appointments Committee

Tuesday, 28th January, 2014
6.00 - 6.45 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Rowena Hay (Chair), Wendy Flynn, Les Godwin, Colin Hay and Rob Reid
Also in attendance:	Julie McCarthy and Amanda Attfield
Apologies:	Councillor Paul McLain, Councillor Duncan Smith and Councillor Simon Wheeler

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors McLain, Smith and Wheeler.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. APPROVE MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. PAY POLICY STATEMENT

The Human Resources Manager (GOSS-West) introduced the report and explained that the draft 2014/15 Pay Policy Statement was essentially a refresh of the 2013/14 Pay Policy with some changes to layout and the addition of the following provisions:

- Paragraph 7.2: In accordance with guidance set out by the Secretary of State it is proposed that full council be given the opportunity to vote before large salary packages are offered in respect of any new appointments in excess of £100,000.
- Paragraph 7.7: In accordance with guidance set out by the Secretary of State it is proposed that full council approval is sought for any severance packages offered by the authority in excess of £100,000
- Paragraph 11 :Trade Union Recognition and Facility Time-this has now been recognised by the transparency agenda. It has been estimated that the amount of reasonable time permitted for TU activity/duties over a normal business year is 470 hours for all TU representatives employed by Cheltenham Borough Council. The estimated average total hours per TU representative per week is 2.5 hours per week. This included work on supporting the membership, case review, sickness absence, management team meetings etc

Members commented that 2.5 hours a week per TU representative was a considerable amount of time bearing in mind the size of the organisation. In response the Head of HR explained that this was an estimate only and would fluctuate depending on the business need i.e. degree of organisational change at any one time. This figure was expected to decrease with the establishment of the Leisure and Culture Trust later in the

year. It was also highlighted that the Council had two recognised Trades Unions for the purpose of collective bargaining, Unison and GMB and it would be for them to organise how they were structured following the establishment of the Trust. Members agreed that this paragraph on Trade Union Recognition and Facility Time should be included in the pay policy statement as it showed commitment to collective bargaining, and reflected the positive relations the council had with the Trades Unions.

The Head of Human Resources (GOSS-West) then updated members regarding the Living Wage (LW). She explained that this was not a legal requirement but a recommended hourly rate set independently and updated annually in November. The Council's comparative grade hourly rate was Grade B, which had a four point scale. The bottom of this scale was just below the LW (£7.26), all other points in the scale were above the LW). Grade A was used as a stepping stone grade from Apprentice to trainee role. 7 employees were currently on Grade B, and were new entrants, earning £7.26 (per hour). All of these individuals would receive an increment on 1 April to bring them up to £7.71 (per hour) – above the LW. The majority of these (four) worked in Wellbeing and Culture and under current proposals would transfer to the Leisure and Culture Trust in October 2014.

The Human Resources Manager informed members that the Council used a number of casual workers who were paid below the LW. She highlighted that the casual contract was not a zero hours contract i.e. there was no obligation from either side either to offer work or accept work. Casual workers covered peaks and troughs in work, and many were students working in festivals and summer play events mostly in leisure and culture services. Given the proximity to the creation of the Trust it would be advisable that any decision on LW for these groups of workers be for the future Trust to consider in the context of their operating environment. Members recognised the benefits of casual workers to the organisation.

The Head of Human Resources explained that the LW was a live topic and a regular feature in the cost of living debate. It was an issue under consideration by many councils in the south west. Advice from the LGA was that the introduction of the LW could have serious financial implications for councils so it was up to each council to decide whether to adopt the LW depending on its own circumstances. As the majority of casual workers were in leisure and culture she believed that this would be an issue for the Trust to consider going forward and in any event the seven current employees would be above the living wage as from April 2014. The council would need to also consider the approach (potential increased cost) to other workers such as agency and casuals, not only employees, when looking at LW.

Members discussed the merits of adopting the LW at CBC. The financial impact of the council adopting it could be nil/low as those currently on the lower hourly rate would receive an increment in April. Some agreed that as the majority of workers concerned would be transferring to the Leisure & Culture Trust it would be appropriate to wait until then. Another member highlighted the benefits of adopting it now in terms of recruitment and retention and lower rates of sickness absence as well as showing leadership as a large employer in the town. The Head of Human Resources explained that the Cabinet Member Corporate Services was leading the work on the LW within the Council and reminded members that should the council adopt

it there could also be implications for casuals and agency workers. Once adopted, even if adopted as a salary supplement to be reviewed annually, the amount of LW paid would not be within the Council's control as it varied and was set annually. Once committed, it would not be easy to uncommit. It was advisable to do further work to ascertain the full implications.

Members noted that the LW was under active consideration within the council and would await the outcome of this work.

RESOLVED

- 1. That any textual changes to the updated Pay Policy Statement (2014/15) be made in consultation with the Chair of the Appointments Committee**
 - 2. That the updated Pay Policy Statement be submitted as an appendix to the budget report for ratification at the Council's Full Council meeting in February.**
- 5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIR DETERMINES IS URGENT AND REQUIRES A DECISION**
None
- 6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING (IF NECESSARY)**
TBA when required.

Rowena Hay
Chairman