

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE: 2nd NOVEMBER 2021

PERSONNEL MATTERS

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR: FINANCE & HUMAN RESOURCES

PART A) – SUMMARY REPORT

1. SUMMARY OF MAIN PROPOSALS

The purpose of this report is update members and seek views and agreement from the Committee for proposed changes and the way forward on the following personnel matters.

- National Pay Negotiations
- Real Living Wage
- Update of the Local Government Pension Scheme: Employer’s Discretionary Policy with respect to salary sacrifice deductions
- Implementation of the Policy on Resolving Workplace Issues

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Personnel Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the progress of the national pay negotiations.
- 2.2 Delegates authority to the Director of Finance and Human Resources, following consultation with the Chair of the Personnel Committee, to update the Council’s pay policy to enable any proposed update to the ‘Real Living Wage’ with effect from 1st April 2022 dependent on the financial viability of such increase in line with the Council’s overall financial position.
- 2.3 Approves the amendment of the current discretion under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (Regulation 9), to authorise the Human Resources Manager to re-define the elements included in the calculations to stipulate that annual salary is defined as salary post deduction of any existing salary sacrifice deductions.
- 2.4 Notes the new negotiated Policy on Resolving Workplace Issues and delegate authority to the Associate Director of Policy & Governance to

make any necessary updates to the Officer Employment Procedure rules in the Council's Constitution in line with the updated policy.

3. **SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Co-Operative Council priority objective(s)?	
	Yes	These proposals support all objectives through the provision of a fair set of employment policies which value the Council's workforce, enabling it to provide services which put Co-operative values at the heart of the Organisation
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	<i>Not applicable</i>
TARGET COMPLETION/DELIVERY DATE	<i>Not applicable</i>	
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	Yes	The cost of the final agreed pay award and the impact of changes to the Real Living Way will be considered as part of the overall Service & Financial Planning Strategy. PH – 28.10.21
LEGAL ISSUES	Yes	There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report. Legal advice will be provided on any individual matters arising out of the proposals contained within this report. AL 27/10/2021
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	No	Not applicable.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	Not applicable.

PART B) – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

4. INFORMATION

- 4.1 The pay and terms of conditions of employment for the majority of local government employees is determined by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services. In July 2021 the National Employers made an offer to the relevant trade unions, UNISON, GMB and Unite with regards to the pay award for 2021/22. In summary this offer was that, with effect from 1 April 2021, there would be an increase of 2.75 per cent on NJC pay point 1 and an increase of 1.75 per cent on all NJC pay points 2 and above. This offer was however rejected by the trade unions.

Once pay negotiations are, however, completed and an agreement has been reached then pay awards will be backdated to the implementation date of the agreement.

Members are asked to note this update.

- 4.2 Telford & Wrekin Council currently pays employees the Real Living Wage. The Council makes this investment in our employees based on our values to ensure that our employees earn a wage that meets the cost of living.

The Real Living Wage is set each year by the [Living Wage Foundation](#). This hourly rate is above the National Living Wage and is a voluntary rate that employers can pay. (This rate does not apply to statutory Apprentice hourly rates)

The current Real Living Wage is £9.50 an hour.

On the 15th November 2021 it is expected that, as part of Living Wage Week, the new Real Living Wage will be announced. It is therefore proposed that after consultation with the Chair of the Committee, authority to update the Council's pay policy to enable any proposed update to the 'Real Living Wage' with effect from 1st April 2022 be delegated to the Director of Finance and Human Resources, dependent on the financial viability of such increase in line with the Council's overall financial position.

- 4.3 The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013, (Regulation 9), allow employers to define banding used in the calculation of pension deductions from employees' salaries.

Some employees take part in Salary Sacrifice Schemes (for example for childcare vouchers), taking home less salary in exchange for participation in such schemes. On occasion this means that their actual annual salary falls below a salary banding threshold. In order to be equitable it is proposed to amend the current discretion under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (Regulation 9), to authorise the

Human Resources Manager to re-define the elements included in the calculations to stipulate that annual salary is defined as salary post deduction of any existing salary sacrifice deductions.

- 4.4 The Council believe that all employees should be treated fairly and with respect and dignity; this is explicit in our Council Values and Core Behaviours. We recognise however, that there will be occasions where employees may feel that they have not been treated this way. There may also be times when employees have concerns about their employment, or where disagreements may arise within the workplace either between colleagues or between employees and their manager.

Working with trade unions, a new policy was developed which sets out a positive approach to dealing with such situations and aims to prevent disagreements from escalating into more serious disputes which require a more formal approach to resolution. Human Resource Officers and Trade Union Representatives have therefore been trained to facilitate such discussions to enable employees to raise any concerns in a safe, confidential and supported way with a view to reaching early resolution.

In some circumstances it may also be appropriate to engage in formal mediation where a trained mediator will work with the parties involved and seek to a resolution to the issue.

Where this is not achievable, this policy provides a mechanism by which concerns can be heard at formal meetings chaired by an appropriate manager with a right of an appeal to an appropriate senior manager. Members will be involved in such matters, as appropriate with regards to the Senior Management Team.

Members are asked to note the new Policy on Resolving Workplace Issues and authorise any necessary updates to the Officer Employment Procedure rules in the Council's Constitution in line with the updated policy.

5. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Personnel Committee: PEB-31 (13 February 2012), PEB-8 (19 February 2013), PEB-4 (10 February 2014), PEB-8 (22 January 2015), PEB-9 (11 February 2016), PEB (2 February 2017), PEB (2 February 2017), PEB (8 February 2018), PEB (31 January 2019), PEB (27 February 2020)

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Policy on Resolving Workplace Issues

Report prepared by Sue Wilson, Human Resources Manager – 01952 383510