

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held on Tuesday 2 November 2021 at 5.00 pm in Telford Room, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford TF3 4NT

Present: Councillors S Davies (Chair), N A Dugmore, A J Eade, R C Evans, R A Overton (Vice-Chair) and W L Tomlinson

In Attendance: K Clarke (CFO and Director: Finance & Human Resources), A Lowe (Director: Policy & Governance) and S Wilson (H R Manager)

Apologies: Councillors L D Carter

PEC-8 Declarations of Interest

Councillor S Davies informed the committee that they were a Member of the National Joint Commission on Pay.

PEC-9 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2020 confirmed and signed by the Chair.

PEC-10 Personnel Matters

Members of the Personnel Committee received an update on the proposed changes to personnel matters related to pay negotiations, the Real Living Wage, the Local Government Pension Scheme: Employer's Discretionary Policy and the implementation of the 'Resolving Workplace Disputes Policy'.

The HR Manager advised the Committee that the pay and term of conditions of employment for the majority of local government employees was determined by the National Joint Council (NJC) for Local Government Services. In July 2021 the National Employers had made an offer to the relevant trade unions, UNISON, GMB and Unite with regards to the pay award for 2021/22. Members heard that this offer outlined 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. The HR Manager noted that this offer had been rejected by the trade unions and there was a view of industrial action. The HR Manager assured that they would be kept updated as the situation progressed.

The Committee heard that the Real Living Wage was set each year by the Living Wage Foundation. This hourly rate was above the National Living Wage and was a voluntary rate that employers can pay. Members were asked to note that this rate did not apply to the statutory Apprentice hourly rates. The current Real Living Wage was £9.50 an hour. Membered heard that on the 15

November 2021 it was expected that the new Real Living Wage was to be announced. The HR Manager requested that the Committee provide delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Human Resources to update the Council's pay policy to apply the updated Real Living Wage, dependent on the financial viability of the increase to the Council's overall financial position.

Members highlighted their dedication to investing in Council employees and the need to meet the cost of living demands.

The Director of Finance and Human Resources provided the Committee with an update on the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulation 2013, which was a discretionary policy which allowed employers to define the banding used in the calculation of pension deductions from employees' salaries. Members heard that some Council employees took part in Salary Sacrifice Schemes which resulted in them taking home less salary, however their pension contribution were still charged on their full salary. The Director of Finance and Human Resources informed the Committee that in order to make it equitable a review was to be undertaken with the view to re-define elements included in the calculations to stipulate that annual salary was defined as salary post deduction of any existing salary sacrifice deductions.

During the discussion Members enquired what the extent to which this changes, if applied, effected the Council. The Director of Finance and Human Resources advised that the change effected a small number of employees but the implications were to be investigated further and reported back to the Committee.

The Committee heard that the Policy on Resolving Workplace Issues had been developed with the Trade Unions to set out a positive approach to dealing with conflicting issues within the workplace and aimed to prevent disagreements from escalating to a point where they required formal resolution. The Director of Finance and Human Resources informed Members that human resource officers and Trade Union Representatives had been trained to facilitate such discussions, and in occasions where it was appropriate to engage in formal mediation, a trained mediator will work with the parties involved and seek resolution to the issue. Where this was not achievable, this policy provided a mechanism to hear concerns at formal meetings chaired by an appropriate manager with a right of an appeal to an appropriate senior manager. Members were involved in such matters, as appropriate with regards to the Senior Management Team.

RESOLVED that:

- a) the progress of the national pay negotiations be noted**
- b) authority be delegated to the Director of Finance & Human Resources, after 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.

- c) authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Human Resources to update the current discretion under the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations 2013 (Regulation 9), 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 following a review.
- d) the new negotiated Policy on Resolving Workplace Issues be noted
- e) Authority be delegated to the Associate Director: Policy & Governance to make any necessary updates to the Officer Employment Procedure rules in the Council's Constitution in line with the updated policy.

PEC-11 Any Other Business

None.

The meeting ended at 5.22 pm

Chairman:

Date: Thursday 21 September 2023