

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

30 MARCH 2022

PRESENT:

Councillors Matthews (Chair), Birch and Warburton

52 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillors Banevicius, Cross, Parton-Hughes, Powell, Robertson, Tapper and Wilcox.

53 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

54 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were circulated and signed as a correct record.

55 PAY POLICY UPDATE

Members received a report on the Council's duties under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 regarding the preparation of a Pay Policy Statement for 2022/23. The Pay Policy Statement sets out Lichfield District Council's (LDC) approach to its pay, terms and conditions and other related matters. The Pay Policy Statement is updated on an annual basis and requires approval at Full Council. It was reported that its purpose was to be open and transparent about the distribution of pay to Officers.

It was noted it had taken a year to be able to get agreements from the National Joint Council (NJC) to agree the pay rates that were applicable for 2021 and this year's pay policy for 2022 reflects the 2021 pay settlement. Therefore, until any pay agreements are achieved with the NJC there would not be a revised pay spine until that is formalised later this year. It was concluded that the Pay Policy would be updated when the final settlement is agreed, and members noted the policy will likely undergo several updates due to structural changes at the most senior level of the organisation year as part of Being a Better Council (BABC).

Questions were then taken from members.

The committee referred to the job evaluation process and asked what process was being used other than the NJC scheme. It was reported that the Hay scheme was applicable to any jobs that sit outside the scope of the NJC grade.

Members asked how often market supplements are reviewed and whether they increase with pay rises. The officer responded that market supplements are reviewed by an independent job analyst every two to three years and they consult with the Trade Union at ELG and have adopted a policy of paying the median band.

The possibility of paying lowest paid employees in accordance with the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust was considered by members since those staff have been and will be impacted most by financial pressures. It was noted that this could be explored and with enough information could be considered at the next budget round. However, the officer added that the movement of minimum wage is predicted to rise quickly over the next few years.

Members queried why such a large range between market supplements exists. It was reported that all market supplements go through an external independent process where they are looked at comparatively across a range of similar jobs at other authorities. The difference is due to what LDC's job evaluation is scoring at internally compared to what the market is paying.

It was asked if there were plans to review the essential car user allowance policy especially considering the climate change policy and the acquisition of the new LDC vehicle which is accessible to officers. The officer commented that this was currently under review with preference of using LDC's electric pool car instead of an essential car user allowance. It was noted that the climate impact of this has been included in the Climate Action Plan.

RESOLVED: (1) That the contents of the updated Pay Policy Statement as set out in Appendix A be approved and recommended for approval by Full Council in April 2022

(2) That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with the Chair of this committee, to update and republish the pay policy in respect of the pay spine set out at Appendix 1 and any ratios once the national pay negotiations for 2022 are concluded.

(3) That delegated authority be granted to the Chief Operating Officer in consultation with the Chair of this committee, to revise the pay policy following finalisation of the target operational model and any structural changes approved by this committee, Cabinet or Full Council as a consequence. This will be detailed within any recommendations associated with structural changes at consideration by the appropriate committee.

56 BELONGING & WELLBEING STRATEGY

The Committee received a report on the Belonging and Wellbeing Strategy from the Chief Operating Officer which had been discussed in depth at the previous meeting in December 2021. It was noted that consultations had been carried out with staff to address amendments recommended by the committee.

Questions were then taken from the committee,

Members queried how success of the strategy would be measured. The officer reported that regular surveys were being done to monitor progress including some extensive consultation work. It was noted that feedback would be used to develop an action plan on what is working well and what is not.

It was asked whether there was an employee assistance programme in place that will assist with the strategy. The officer responded that this was one of the key action points in the strategy and presently there were various individual benefits such as access to counselling. She added that they're currently working on developing a more cohesive package that is tailored to individual needs and that survey feedback has helped to provide useful insights into what employees would find beneficial.

Survey engagement was discussed and the Chief Executive informed the Committee that the first survey circulated in October 2021 had approximately 130 responses over four to five weeks whilst the current survey that was released yesterday morning had received 92 responses and would remain open for another three to four weeks. He commented that this demonstrated that people are feeling more engaged and willing to express their views.

The Committee considered the formation of the Belonging and Wellbeing Group. It was reported that the group is a growing number of various officers who have related responsibilities under their job role or officers with a general interest in the strategy.

RESOLVED: (1) The committee approved the Belonging & Wellbeing Strategy set out at Appendix A.

57 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: “That as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business, which would involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972”

IN PRIVATE

58 TARGET OPERATING MODEL PRESENTATION

This item was considered in private.

59 SENIOR PAY BANDINGS

This item was considered in private.

(The Meeting closed at 7.22pm)

CHAIRMAN