

Minutes of a Meeting of the Human Resources Committee held in the JMR, The Deane House, Taunton, TA1 1HE, on Monday, 11 November 2024 at 2.00 pm

Present:

Councillor Theo Butt Philip (Chair)

Councillor David Fothergill

Councillor Andy Kendall

Councillor Leigh Redman

Councillor Sarah Wakefield

Councillor Federica Smith-Roberts

Councillor Mark Healey

Councillor Emily Pearlstone

Councillor Mike Stanton

Councillor Liz Leyshon

Councillor Heather Shearer

In attendance:

Councillor Mike Rigby

Other Members present remotely:

Councillor Simon Coles

Councillor Andy Dingwall

48 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from:

Councillor Faye Purbrick

Councillor Tony Robbins who was substituted by Councillor Heather Shearer

Councillor Graham Oakes who was substituted by Councillor Frederica Smith-Roberts

Councillor Bob Filmer who was substituted by Diogo Rodrigues.

49 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 2

There were no declarations of interest declared.

50 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 3

There were no public questions brought to the committee.

51 Pay Award - 2024/25 - Agenda Item 4

Sari Brice, Strategic Manager, HR Practice, presented her report by way of a PowerPoint presentation and highlighted:

- The nationally agreed pay award for Green Book staff was recently agreed at 2.5%.

- The former Somerset County Council had opted out of national pay bargaining for Chief Executives and Chief Officers several years ago and as the continuing authority this position remained for Somerset Council.
- The Human Resources Committee acted as the remuneration body for the determination of any salary/cost of living progression for the Chief Executive and Chief Officers.
- Any increase to the Chief Executive's pay would require the approval of Full Council.
- In May 2024 a 2.5% nationally agreed pay award for Local Authority Chief Executives had been agreed.
- In July 2024 a 2.5% nationally agreed pay award for Local Authority Chief Officers had been agreed.

A further explanation of the financial implications of the pay award was provided and it was noted that the forecast budget for the annual cost of living increase for all staff was set at 4% for 2024/25 and the recommendation of a 2.5% increase would be below the forecasted budget.

An overview of various options were highlighted for Members to consider and the Committee was reminded that following the restructure of the Senior Leadership team last summer, all new appointments to Executive and Service Director roles were appointed on a spot salary basis in 2024 in line with the salaries set out in paragraph 1.11 of the report.

It was noted that Union representatives and members had been consulted throughout for their views on the pay offer and the recognised Unions had conducted national ballots of their members.

The Committee was asked to refer to the pay scale gap between the Chief Executive and the lowest level scale for consideration and the information would be included in a policy statement to be discussed at the January meeting.

There was a brief discussion on the cost of living, the living wage, the pay rise for the rest of the staff, and the fact that the Chief Executive did not receive a pay award last year.

Councillor Theo Butt Philip proposed for the Committee to vote and agree all the recommendations set out in the report, this proposal was seconded by Councillor Sarah Wakefield and the Committee agreed:

- To note the nationally agreed Green Book pay award for 2024/25 as outlined in paragraph 1.2 of the report and the updated Somerset salary rates for grades 17 to 4.
- That a 2.5% pay award be awarded to Chief Officers (Executive Directors and Service Directors) for the financial year 2024/25.
- To report to and recommend to Full Council that a 2.5% increase be awarded to the Chief Executive for the financial year 2024/25.

(Vote: For: 8, Abstain: 1)

(The meeting ended at 2.20 pm)

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CHAIR