### Public Agenda Pack



### Notice of Meeting of

#### **HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

### Tuesday, 9 January 2024 at 2.00 pm

# Sedgemoor Room, Bridgwater House, King Square, Bridgwater, TA6 3AR

To: The members of the Human Resources Committee

Chair: Councillor Theo Butt Philip

Councillor Mandy Chilcott
Councillor Mark Healey
Councillor Graham Oakes
Councillor Faye Purbrick
Councillor Tony Robbins
Councillor Sarah Wakefield

Councillor David Fothergill
Councillor Andy Kendall
Councillor Emily Pearlstone
Councillor Leigh Redman
Councillor Mike Stanton

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This meeting will be open to the public and press, subject to the passing of any resolution under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A: Access to Information.

The meeting will be webcast and an audio recording made.

Issued by (the Proper Officer) on Friday, 29 December 2023

#### **AGENDA**

#### Human Resources Committee - 2.00 pm Tuesday, 9 January 2024

#### Public Guidance Notes contained in Agenda Annexe (Pages 5 - 6)

#### Click here to join the online meeting (Pages 7 - 8)

#### 1 Apologies for Absence

To receive any apologies for absence.

#### 2 Minutes from the Previous Meeting (Pages 9 - 14)

To approve minutes from the previous meeting.

#### 3 Declarations of Interest

To receive and note any declarations of interests in respect of any matters included on the agenda for consideration at this meeting.

(The other registrable interests of Councillors of Somerset Council, arising from membership of City, Town or Parish Councils and other Local Authorities will automatically be recorded in the minutes: <u>City, Town & Parish Twin Hatters - Somerset Councillors 2023</u>)

#### 4 Public Question Time

The Chair to advise the Committee of any items on which members of the public have requested to speak and advise those members of the public present of the details of the Council's public participation scheme.

For those members of the public who have submitted any questions or statements, please note, a three-minute time limit applies to each speaker, and you will be asked to speak before Councillors debate the issue.

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#### 5 Pay Policy Statement 2024/25 (To Follow)

To consider the report about the Pay Policy Statement 24/25.

#### 6 Chief Officer Pay Award 2023/24 (Pages 15 - 22)

To consider the report about the Chief Officer Pay Award 23/24.

#### 7 Health and Safety Policies (To Follow)

To receive an update on Health and Safety Policies.

#### 8 Employment Policies (To Follow)

To receive an update on Employment Policies.

#### **9 Workforce Update**

To receive an update on workforce matters.

#### 10 Committee Workplan (Pages 23 - 24)

To go through the committee, forward workplan.

#### **Guidance notes for the meeting**

#### **Council Public Meetings**

The legislation that governs Council meetings requires that committee meetings are held face-to-face. The requirement is for members of the committee and key supporting officers (report authors and statutory officers) to attend in person, along with some provision for any public speakers. Provision will be made wherever possible for those who do not need to attend in person including the public and press who wish to view the meeting to be able to do so virtually. Inspection of Papers

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They can also be accessed via the council's website on <a href="mailto:Committee structure">Committee structure -</a> <a href="Modern Council">Modern Council</a> (somerset.gov.uk)

#### **Members' Code of Conduct requirements**

When considering the declaration of interests and their actions as a councillor, Members are reminded of the requirements of the Members' Code of Conduct and the underpinning Principles of Public Life: Honesty; Integrity; Selflessness; Objectivity; Accountability; Openness; Leadership. The Code of Conduct can be viewed at: Code of Conduct

#### **Minutes of the Meeting**

Details of the issues discussed, and recommendations made at the meeting will be set out in the minutes, which the Committee will be asked to approve as a correct record at its next meeting.

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Members of public wishing to speak or ask a question will need to attend in person or if unable can submit their question or statement in writing for an officer to read out, or alternatively can attend the meeting online.

A 20-minute time slot for Public Question Time is set aside near the beginning of the meeting, after the minutes of the previous meeting have been agreed. Each speaker will have 3 minutes to address the committee.

You must direct your questions and comments through the Chair. You may not take a direct part in the debate. The Chair will decide when public participation is to finish. If an item on the agenda is contentious, with many people wishing to attend the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

#### **Meeting Etiquette for participants**

Only speak when invited to do so by the Chair.

Mute your microphone when you are not talking.

Switch off video if you are not speaking.

Speak clearly (if you are not using video then please state your name)

If you're referring to a specific page, mention the page number.

There is a facility in Microsoft Teams under the ellipsis button called turn on live captions which provides subtitles on the screen.

#### **Exclusion of Press & Public**

If when considering an item on the agenda, the Committee may consider it appropriate to pass a resolution under Section 100A (4) Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the basis that if they were present during the business to be transacted there would be a likelihood of disclosure of exempt information, as defined under the terms of the Act.

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# Agenda Annex

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# Agenda Item 2



Minutes of a Meeting of the Human Resources Committee held in the Wyndham Room - County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY, on Tuesday, 10 October 2023 at 2.00 pm

#### **Present:**

Cllr Theo Butt Philip (Chair)

Cllr David Fothergill Cllr Mandy Chilcott
Cllr Mark Healey Cllr Emily Pearlstone
Cllr Faye Purbrick Cllr Tony Robbins

Cllr Sarah Wakefield Cllr Henry Hobhouse (substitute)

#### 1 Apologies for Absence - Agenda Item 1

Apologies were received from Councillors Andy Kendall, Graham Oakes and Leigh Redman.

Cllr Stanton joined the meeting remotely.

#### 2 Minutes from the Previous Meeting - Agenda Item 2

Resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

#### 3 Declarations of Interest - Agenda Item 3

There were no additional declarations of interest.

#### 4 Public Question Time - Agenda Item 4

The Chair noted that there had been no public questions submitted.

# **5** Approval Process for Somerset Council Health and Safety Policies - Agenda Item 5

The Chair, invited the Service Manager - Corporate Health and Safety to introduce

the report and he provided a presentation of a range of Health and Safety policies for Somerset Council for the Committee's approval.

- The Committee was shown how to access the Intranet Site and a background was provided of Health and Safety processes that had been undertaken to prepare the policies contained in the report.
- It was explained that a Health, Safety and Wellbeing Steering Group had been established and was chaired by the Health and Safety Champion. The Group's function would be to monitor the Council's Health and Safety policies, debate significant Health and Safety issues to ensure that the Council provided a workplace conducive for staff wellbeing. The Group would oversee 5 Boards that had been set up to ensure that Health and Safety risks were managed effectively across the directorates.
- A diagram was displayed of the Health and Safety and Well-being management framework.
- It was noted that the Somerset Council policies had been adopted from the former County Council and four District Councils (Mendip, Sedgemoor, Somerset West & Taunton, and South Somerset) and work had been undertaken to review and update those to a single set of Health and Safety policies.
- The Statement of Intent was outlined and Members noted that it committed Somerset Council to ensuring the provision of a workplace where employees felt safe, supported, and free to raise concerns and feel included regardless of race, religion, gender, political beliefs, or abilities. As the most senior individuals in the Council, the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council have signed the Statement of Intent.
- The Statement of Intent also outlined the Council's commitment to undertake its business operations in a way that prevents injury or illness to employees, visitors, contractors, and the public who may be impacted by Council operations and activities.
- The Working Safely at Height Policy outlined the Council's commitment to ensuring compliance with the Working at Height Regulations 2005. In doing so, the policy clearly defined responsibilities placed on employees across all levels of the organisation.
- The Safety Action Notice Policy set out the approach for how the Council

would administer and take action to address identified or reported noncompliance, hazards, or serious risks to Health and Safety.

- The New and Expectant Parents Policy set clear responsibilities to manage and reduce risk and help enable new and expectant parents at work.
- The Confined Spaces Policy was a new policy as during the Local Government Reorganisation process, the Health and Safety Service identified a need for this policy owing to activities undertaken by operational teams transferring from predecessor district organisations.
- The Working Outside in the Sun and Extremes of Heat and Cold Policy would replace the Sun Protection Policy.
- The Water Assets Policy is a new policy as during the Local Government Reorganisation process it had been noted a water assets policy would ensure the Council had clearly defined procedures for their management and the management of employees who may work near the Council's water assets.
- The Biological Agent (Infection Control and Blood-Borne Virus) Policy was an update of the current Blood-borne virus policy.

There was a discussion and the following points were raised: how the Committee makes amendments to the policies before approving; the use of word of ensure throughout the policies; the statement of intent not being presented to the last meeting; the responsibilities of employers and employees around health and safety; the processes of third party contractors; the policies that were linked together to enable processes to take place; expectant parents liaising with employers about pregnancies; breastfeeding to be acceptable anywhere in the organisation; the importance of having a policy for working in confined spaces and ensuring qualified people were carried out such jobs; relevant policies had been reviewed by colleagues in public health.

The Service Manager of Corporate Health and Safety explained to Members the link between policies and the approach that would be taken; explained the process if the Committee made an amendment to policies; the work undertaken between the former Councils and amending those policies in a transparent and robust way for Somerset Council.

The Director of Strategy, Workforce and Localities advised the Committee that he would work with the Service Manager - Corporate Health and Safety to review some of the wording contained in some policies, such as the word 'ensure'. The Service

Manager – Corporate Health and Safety undertook to consider that appropriate assessments and checks of contractors were reviewed as part of the procurement exercises.

The Committee, having considered and discussed the reports, agreed to:

Approve the Somerset Council Health and Safety Statement of Intent Policy;

Approve the Somerset Council Safety Action Notices Policy;

Approve the Somerset Council Confined Spaces Policy;

Approve the Somerset Council New and Expectant Parents Policy;

Approve the Somerset Council Working Safely at Height Policy;

Approve the Somerset Council Biological Agent (Infection Control and Blood-borne Viruses) policy;

Approve the Somerset Council Water Assets and Working Outside in the Sun and Extremes of Heat and Cold;

Give delegated authority to the Corporate Health and Safety Unit to publish and update guidance documents when necessary.

#### **6 Workforce update** - Agenda Item 6

The Chair, invited The Director of Strategy, Workforce and Localities to provide an update and the following points were noted:

- A general workforce update was outlined and this included recruitment opportunities arising in those services areas going through restructuring.
- It was noted that a Head of Operations post, a Customer Insights post and a Head of Regulatory Services were currently going through the recruitment process, and were open to expressions of interest.
- A process of creating business cases for individual service structures was ongoing across the Council.
- There would be a thorough evaluation and recruitment process and the redeployment pool could be utilised by unsuccessful employees.
- The Strategy, Workforce and Localities area had significant challenges due to its current functions having previously been split across all of the 5 former Councils and a thorough systematic review would ensure all areas were appropriately consulted on.
- It was explained there were a significant number of vacancies recorded on SAP and a review was being carried out to ensure the current number (1362) was accurate.
- Final steps on reviewing policies and procedures associated with Recruitment Protocols, Redundancy Procedures and suitable alternative employment were being progressed.

There was a discussion and the following points were raised: the ongoing uncertainty for many staff concerning recruitment/retention and restructure as there appeared to be a number of staff leaving due to this. Reviewing the number of vacancies showing on SAP and how this could be mitigated in future.

The Interim Director of Workforce was introduced and she informed the Committee of her previous work experience, including recently undertaking a number of senior leadership roles such as Interim Assistant Director People Services at Birmingham City Council and Interim Talent, Transformation and Inclusion Director at Hammersmith and Fulham Council. She noted her commitment to the Council and looking forward to using her knowledge and skills to ensure the workforce was fit for purpose.

The Director of Strategy, Workforce and Localities informed the Committee that the Council's senior leadership team had been concerned about staff leaving and the Council and they were committed to providing clarity and communications for all staff. He noted that the SAP vacancy issue was complicated as it involved migrating data and checking data quality.

The Chair, after ascertaining there were no other items of business, thanked all those present for attending and closed the meeting.

(The meeting ended at 3.50pm)	
	CHAIR



# Agenda Item 6

#### **Somerset Council**

### Human Resources Committee

- 9 January 2024

### Chief Officer Pay Award – 2023/2024

Executive Member: Cllr Theo Butt Philip, Lead Member for Transformation and

Human Resources.

Lead Workforce Officer: Dawn Bettridge – Interim Service Director Workforce

Author: Cherry Russell – Strategic Manager – HR Business Partner

Contact Details: <a href="mailto:cherry.russell@somerset.gov.uk">cherry.russell@somerset.gov.uk</a>

Please complete s	ign off boxes below pr	ior to submission to Democ	ratic Services
	Seen by:	Name	Date
	Legal	Jill Byron	22.12.23
Danaut Sign off	Corporate Finance	Jason Vaughan	29.12.23
Report Sign off	Workforce	Dawn Bettridge	13.12.23
	Executive Member	Theo Butt Philip	28.12.23
	Monitoring Officer	David Clark	21.12.23
Summary:	<ul> <li>The report sets out the Chief Officer pay structure which is inclusive of the 2023/24 pay award, agreed at Full Council in May 2023.</li> <li>The report sets out the changes to Green Book pay following the national agreement on the 2023/24 pay award, agreed on 1 November 2023.</li> <li>The report seeks a decision on the Chief Executive salary for the same period now that the Green Book and Chief Executive pay award has been agreed nationally.</li> </ul>		
Recommendations:	<ol> <li>The members of the HR Committee are asked to:         <ol> <li>Note the nationally agreed Green Book pay award for 2023/24 as outlined in paragraph 1.2 below and the updated Somerset salary rates for grades 17 to 4 at Appendix 1.</li> <li>Note that the new pay structure for Chief Officers (Executive Directors and Service Directors) included the 2023/24 pay award as agreed at Full Council in May 2023.</li> <li>Agree that 3.5% is awarded to the Chief Executive for the financial year 2023/24, as outlined in paragraph 2.3 below.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>		

Reasons for Recommendations:	Determination of any salary/cost of living progression for Chief Officers and the Chief Executive is undertaken by the HR Committee. Following the national agreed percentage increase for the Chief Executive is intended to ensure fairness and equity in pay awards for the 2023/24 financial year, within the forecast budget.
Links to Priorities and Impact on Service Plans:	Appropriate pay provisions for all staff including our leadership team are fundamental to the delivery of the Council's objectives and services as set out in the County Plan.
Financial, Legal and HR Implications:	The forecast budget for annual cost of living increase for all staff was set at 5% for 2023/24.
Equalities Implications:	The Council's duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 is to have "due regard" to the matters set out in relation to equalities when considering and making decisions. Following consultation with Somerset Council's Equalities in Employment Officer, it is considered there are no direct equality impacts associated with the pay award.
Risk Assessment:	Failure to pay competitive salaries for the Leadership team may result in retention and recruitment issues and leadership instability across services.
Scrutiny comments / recommendation (if any):	N/A

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 On 1 November 2023, the National Joint Council (NJC) for local government services reached agreement on a one year pay award for 2023/24, applicable to Green Book staff. This pay award will be backdated to 1 April 2023 and will cover the period until 31 March 2024.
- 1.2 The pay award confirms an increase of £1,925 (pro-rata for part time employees) for Spinal Column Points (SCP) 2 43, which reflects a different percentage increase, depending on basic salary. Staff on NJC Green Book conditions who are paid above SCP 43 will receive a 3.88 % pay increase.
- 1.3 For the lowest paid workers on SCP 2, on a new salary of £22,366 this will equate to a 9.42% increase from the previous year. The maximum Green Book NJC national pay spine is SCP 43, on a new salary of £51,515, this will equate to a 3.88% increase.

- 1.4 The Council has a legacy local agreement to vary some pay and conditions for Somerset Grade 8 and above. This introduced one pay point per grade from Grade 8 (SCP 38) up to Grade 4 (SCP 52). The Council's salaries therefore deviate from the NJC pay spine from SCP 39 and go beyond the maximum point.
  - However, the national agreement address this by confirming, all locally determined pay points above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer, should be increased by 3.88 per cent, in accordance with Green Book Part 2 Para 5.4 (The Green Book Part 2 Para 5.4 provides that posts paid above the maximum of the pay spine but graded below deputy chief officer are within scope of the NJC. The pay levels for such posts are determined locally, but once fixed are increased in line with agreements reached by the NJC).
- 1.5 The Somerset Council salary rates by spinal column points for Green Book staff are outlined at Appendix 1, showing Grades 17 to 4, with the 2023 pay award applied.
- 1.6 Employers are encouraged to implement the pay award and any backpay as swiftly as possible after agreement is reached. The Green Book pay award was implemented in the November 2023 payroll for Grades 17 to 4.
- 1.7 The Council is currently opted out of national pay agreements by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) for Chief Officers and Chief Executives of Local Authorities. Under the Councils constitution (Part D3), the HR Committee acts as the Council's Remuneration Committee for Chief Officers pay which includes all Service Directors, Executive Directors, and the Chief Executive.
- 1.8 In recent years the pay awards for Chief Officers and the Chief Executive in the legacy Somerset County Council have mirrored the Green Book pay award for staff.
- 1.9 Although the Council is currently opted out of national pay agreements for its top three tiers, the national agreement can be an option for consideration by this Committee. The legacy District Councils followed the national approach for Chief Executives and had varying approached for Chief Officer pay award either following the Chief Executive, Chief Officer or Green Book nationally agreed pay awards. At Somerset County Council the HR Committee have considered the nationally agreed increases in the past. This year the national agreement for Officers in scope of the JNC for Chief Executive and Chief Officers of local authorities was confirmed as an increase of 3.5% to be backdated with effect from 1 April 2023.

- 1.10 The salaries for Somerset Council's Chief Executive (Tier 1) and Chief Officers (Tier 2 Executive Director and Tier 3- Service Director) are recommended by Appointment Committees for endorsement at the next available Full Council, in line with the Council constitution. These salaries have been based on job evaluation outcomes and market factors including salary benchmarking and comparisons with other similar local authorities, recruitment adverts and advice from the recruitment partner for these roles.
- 1.11 The salary structure for Somerset Council Tier 2 Executive Director and Tier 3 Service Director roles were outlined in Full Council reports in February and May 2023. Executive Director roles have been set based on job evaluation outcomes and market factors within the range £129,000 to £150,000. Service Director roles have been set at three levels, to reflect job evaluation outcomes and market factors, these are as follows:

SD1: £115,000 - £118,000 SD2: £110,000 - £115,000, SD3: £100,000 - £105,000.

New Service Director roles were appointed to on a spot salary basis in 2023 and have been confirmed as inclusive of the 2023/24 pay award, so no further consideration is required by this Committee.

- 1.12 The Chief Executive for Somerset Council took up his appointment in October 2022. The salary was agreed on appointment in the summer of that year pending a decision on the pay award. A report of the HR Committee went to Full Council in November 2022 which confirmed the decision that no pay increase would be awarded to the recently appointed Chief Executive for 2022/23. This HR Committee is now being asked to consider the options outlined below at paragraph 2.2 whether the Chief Executive salary should be increased for the 2023/24 financial year.
- 1.13 Any change to the Chief Executive pay requires Full Council approval following HR Committee recommendation. The next Full Council is scheduled for 20 February 2024 so any agreed pay award for the Chief Executive would be actioned in the March payroll at the latest (and backdated to 1.4.2023) and the Councils Pay Policy would be amended to reflect the change.
- 1.14 A separate report will be presented to the Committee in due course outlining options for the approach to the 2024/25 pay award.

#### 2. Options considered and recommendation

- 2.1 No alternatives are available in relation to the application of the pay award for Green Book staff (staff in Grades 17 4 in both schools and SCC) as this is nationally agreed.
- 2.2 The 2023/24 pay award for Chief Officers was included as part of the appointment decisions and the new pay structure for Executive Directors and Service Directors agreed at Full Council in May 2023.
- 2.3 There are three options for consideration for the Chief Executive salary review covering the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024, as outlined below:

#### 2.3.1 Option 1

In recent years the Chief Executive at the legacy Somerset County Council received the same percentage pay increase as Green Book staff. On this basis a pay award of 3.88 % for the Chief Executive would be consistent with previous decisions of this Committee at Somerset County Council.

#### 2.3.2 Option 2

Although Somerset Council is currently opted out of national pay negotiations for Chief Executives of Local Authorities as a legacy from the continuing authority, it is open to the Council to follow the 2023/24 pay agreement for those within scope of the JNC. The legacy District Councils all followed national pay for their Chief Executives. National agreement was reached on 1 November 2023 on the pay award applicable from 1 April 2023 to be increased by 3.5%. It is recommended that the Committee considers this option for adoption which is intended to ensure fairness and equity in pay awards for the 2023/24 financial year and to ensure our pay remains competitive with other Councils. This is not intended to set a precedent for the future.

#### 2.3.3 Option 3

Another option is to freeze the Chief Executive salary for a second year at the level he was appointed on in October 2022 with no pay increase for 2023 for the period up to 31 March 2024.

#### 3. Consultation

3.1 Updates on the Green Book NJC national pay negotiations have been discussed with the recognised Trade Unions at the Joint Negotiation Forum in Somerset. Union members were consulted throughout 2023 as to their views on the pay offer and the recognised Unions conducted a national ballot of their members.

3.2 This report has been circulated to the recognised trade union representatives of the Joint Negotiation Forum for information and comment at the meeting on 13 December 2023, with requests for final responses by end of the day on 4 January 2024. Any comments received will be shared verbally at this Committee in January.

#### 4. Implications

4.1 The 2023/24 budget provision for pay award increases to salary was set at 5% which would equate to £9,750 for the Chief Executive. The financial impact of the three options for the Chief Executive pay award all fall within budget forecasts. The cost of the proposed Chief Executive pay award at 3.5% is £6,825

#### 5. Background papers

- 5.1 Appendix 1: Updated Somerset Council salary rates by spinal column points for Green Book staff with 2023/24 pay award applied (Excel spreadsheet attached separately)
- 5.2 Full Council report of the Chief Executive 24 May 2023 Agenda item 9 (available separately on request) confirmation of salary structure for Executive Directors (Tier 2) and Service Director (Tier 3) roles.

#### Appendix 1

		9	Somerset Co	uncil Pay Scale	April 20	023
SCP	Gra	de	Salary 01/04/23	Hourly 01/04/23	Rate	SCCSpot Points
1	17		N/A	N/A		
2	17	16	22,366	11.59		
3	15		22,737	11.79		
4	15	14	23,114	11.98		

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5		14	23,500	12.18	
6	13	14	23,893	12.38	
7	13		24,294	12.59	
8	13		24,702	12.80	
9	13		25,119	13.02	
10	13		25,545	13.24	
11	13		25,979	13.47	
12		12	26,421	13.69	
13		12	26,873	13.93	
14		12	27,334	14.17	
15		12	27,803	14.41	
16		12	28,282	14.66	
17		12	28,770	14.91	
18		12	29,269	15.17	
19		12	29,777	15.43	
20	11		30,296	15.70	
21	11		30,825	15.98	
22	11		31,364	16.26	
23	11		32,076	16.63	
24	11		33,024	17.12	
25	11		33,945	17.59	
26		10	34,834	18.06	
27		10	35,745	18.53	
28		10	36,648	19.00	
29		10	37,336	19.35	
30		10	38,223	19.81	
31	9	10	39,186	20.31	
32	9		40,221	20.85	
33	9		41,418	21.47	

34	9		42,403	21.98	
35	9	8	43,421	22.51	
36		8	44,428	23.03	
37		8	45,441	23.55	
38		8	46,464	24.08	SCC Spot Point
39	7	8	47,536	24.64	
40	7		48,613	25.20	
41	7		49,744	25.78	
42	7		51,106	26.49	
43	7		52,069	26.99	SCC Spot Point
44	7		53,339	27.65	
45		6	54,618	28.31	
46		6	55,942	29.00	
47		6	57,279	29.69	
48		6	58,669	30.41	
49		6	60,087	31.14	
50		6	61,533	31.89	SCC Spot Point
51		5	76,261	39.53	SCC Spot Point
52		4	86,078	44.62	SCC Spot Point

# Agenda Item 10

#### **HR Committee work plan**

#### 9 January 2024

Pay Policy Statement 24/25 Chief Officer Pay Award 23/24 Health & Safety policies Employment policies Work force update

#### 9 April 2024

Health & Safety policies Employment policies Work force update

#### 9 July 2024

Health & Safety policies Employment policies Work force update

#### 8 October 2024

Health & Safety policies Employment policies Work force update

#### 14 January 2025

Pay Policy Statement
Work force update

#### 8 April 2025

Work force update

