

Staffing and Appeals Committee Minutes

Date: Thursday 23rd February 2023

Time: 4.00p.m. – 5.08p.m.

Venue: [New Shire Hall, Alconbury Weald, Huntingdon, PE28 4YE](#)

Present: Councillors D Ambrose-Smith, H Batchelor, M McGuire, E Meschini, E Murphy (Chair), L Nethsingha, and T Sanderson

56. Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest

Apologies were received from Councillors K Billington, K Reynolds (Councillor M McGuire substituting), N Shailer (Councillor E Meschini substituting), and S Tierney (Councillor D Ambrose-Smith substituting).

No declarations of interest were received.

57. Minutes – 1st and 5th December 2022

The minutes of the meetings held on 1st December and 5th December 2022 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

58. Senior Manager Pay Data and Pay Policy Statement 2023

The committee received a report reviewing data on senior employee remuneration which would be published to ensure compliance with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and the Localism Act 2011.

At the time of reporting, four posts exceeded the £150,000 salary range: Chief Executive: Cambridgeshire County Council, Chief Executive: Greater Cambridge Partnership, Executive Director: People Services who had since left the authority, and Executive Director: Place and Sustainability. Members noted there were 38 posts in the top three tiers of the pay scale, an increase of three upon the previous statement. Of this, eighteen posts were shared with partners and four were employed by Peterborough City Council. There were 199 officers earning above £50,000 in total remuneration, an increase of 22 upon last year's statement. This number was expected to continue to increase given the application of an annual cost of living award on a set £50,000 threshold.

The committee was informed that the median salary had increased by £2,835 and the mean salary had increased by £2,576, as affected by the cost of living award of £1,925 applied to the majority of pay scales. Members noted that the pay ratio for Cambridgeshire remained 1:6, which aligned with the recommendation from Hutton Review of Fair Pay that it should not exceed 1:20.

The Chief Executive reported that he had contributed to the Hutton review on behalf of Cambridgeshire County Council and in partnership with the Work Foundation. Therefore, he endorsed comments made with regard to the pay ratio and pay gap reporting. He stated that objective job evaluation and the Council's commitment to National Joint Council Arrangements for Pay Bargaining ensured valued frontline staff received real and fair pay. Meanwhile, the review of the Leadership Pay Scale had allowed the Council's salary offer to align better with equivalent posts in other organisations, which had assisted the recent employment of four critical posts, including the Section 151 Officer and Monitoring Officer.

Members were made aware that changes to the organisation's structure were reflected in the Chief Officer Pay Policy Statement but structure charts would need to be updated with this information prior to publication.

Individual members raised the following issues in relation to the report:

- complimented the recent workshop held by the service to address councillors' pre-existing questions about senior manager pay data, the pay policy and pay gap reporting.
- acknowledged the importance of data sets and tracking progress and movement in the future.
- welcomed the fact staff had accepted a flat cash settlement, enabling those on lower salaries to benefit most, but acknowledged that this could not continue in the long term.
- highlighted the importance of pay gap data to inform the Council's approach to supporting and increasing workforce diversity.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Consider the report and recommend the Pay Policy Statement 2023 (Appendix 2) to Council on 21 March 2023 for approval.

59. Pay Gap Reporting

The committee received a report reviewing data due to be published on the Council's gender pay gap (statutory reporting) and ethnicity pay gap (non-statutory reporting). In line with government guidelines, the data published was as of 31st March 2022. The Council's average gender pay gap had reduced, while the average ethnicity pay gap had increased.

Within the previous eighteen months, a campaign had been undertaken to increase completion of personal diversity monitoring information. It was anticipated that the resulting doubling of non-white ethnicity data had impacted the pay gap reported. To further this, the Ethnicity Pay Gap Action Plan included implementation of a new

recruitment system and an alignment of the recruitment process within ERP Gold to encourage new employees to submit diversity data from the outset.

Members were reminded that ethnicity pay gap reporting used the same data calculation methods as gender pay gap reporting. However, it was noted that, should ethnicity pay gap reporting become statutory, the government might provide different guidelines for data calculations.

Individual members raised the following in relation to the report:

- welcomed the fact the Council was leading the way for ethnicity pay gap reporting.
- noted that Full Council had a statutory obligation to approve the publication of gender pay gap reporting.
- recognised that the pay gap report had highlighted that predominantly women were employed in roles such as care professions, which tended to be in lower pay tiers. Men could provide positive diversity to these professions and were encouraged to consider these career paths.
- noted that the service was collaborating with the Council's internal IDEAL Network (Inclusion, Diversity and Equality for All) to encourage employees to record diversity data by validating self-classification and explaining how data management ensured confidentiality. The Chief Executive thanked the IDEAL Network for its support addressing this challenge which existed in many organisations.

It was resolved unanimously to:

Consider the report and recommend the Pay Gap Report 2023 (Appendix 1) to Council on 21 March 2023 for approval.

60. Role of Staffing and Appeals Committee in the appointment of the Council's Leadership Team roles

The committee received a report proposing changes to the current employment process for non-statutory roles. Currently, there were a variety of senior roles for which approval from the Staffing and Appeals Committee and ratification from Full Council were required. The report proposed delegating non-statutory appointments to the Chief Executive and/or the relevant Executive Director to expediate the employment process for prospective employees, providing a more agile response to labour market conditions. The Chief Executive highlighted that, if passed, the Chief Officer Appointment Policy and the Council Constitution would require updating.

Individual members raised the following in relation to the report:

- acknowledged that the updated procedure was reflective of other upper tier authorities, although employment procedure varied across organisations: Member involvement was often greater in local district councils, while one county council required committee approval for just three statutory roles.

- recognised the advantage of having managers lead more specialised interviews through the proposed process.
- noted that member participation would be sought in other aspects of the recruitment process, such as on stakeholder panels. Specific details of alternative participation routes for non-statutory employment would be detailed in the report to Constitution and Ethics Committee. **Action.**
- clarified that Staffing and Appeals Committee approval would continue to be sought for all statutory roles. This included all Tier 1 and 2 appointments and some Tier 3 appointments, such as the Director: Education. Other Tier 3 appointments, such as Director: Children's Social Care, were not statutory and therefore appointment would be delegated to officers. This would be clarified in the subsequent report to Constitution and Ethics Committee. **Action.**

It was resolved unanimously to:

- a) Approve the proposal to clarify and redefine the scope of the Committee's accountability in relation to senior appointments, and
- b) Recommend an amendment to Constitution and Ethics Committee for the Constitution to be updated accordingly.

61. Cambridgeshire County Council HR Services Update

The committee received a report summarising workforce activity over the past year in relation to the previous and proposed People Strategy. Attention was drawn to progress with regard to:

Recruitment and Retention

The service was seeking to support individuals impacted by significant structural change and the separation from Peterborough City Council, as well as improve recruitment and retention. Therefore, Human Resources had restructured to resource additional staff for the Recruitment and Retention Team which now comprised of ten.

Improved retention activity included: Increasing consistency of stay and exit interviews; incorporation of stay and exit interview data into reports; follow-up conversations after stay interviews; and increased employee engagement, such as through surveys including an anticipated full employee benchmarking survey.

Improved recruitment activity included: Incorporation of the induction experience into stay interviews; implementation of a new recruitment system and recruitment hub that posted vacancies across a broader range of websites. Since website implementation, candidates had reported improved experience.

Health and Safety

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Sessions for staff were scheduled monthly, resulting in 25% of Health and Safety Team activity being dedicated to training.

Learning and Development

In April 2022, the service had implemented a new e-learning system which utilised inhouse skills to create a bespoke and cost-effective platform. From implementation in April 2022 to December 2022, the Learning and Development Team had seen 4,863 course places and 11,000 e-learning modules undertaken. The apprenticeship award had highlighted the success of the apprenticeship programme, demand for which was anticipated to increase above the current 203 next year. It was hoped that, of this anticipated increase, 14 social work apprenticeships would be undertaken. The overall increase would likely exceed available funding, and therefore the service was seeking alternative funding routes.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Restructuring of Human Resources (HR) finances had allowed the formation of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Team comprising of two and a half staff members. The corporate EDI Team worked closely alongside the IDEAL Network to promote progress against the EDI Action Plan. This included: development of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA), its promotion through EqIA superusers, and quarterly reporting with Unison and the IDEAL Network on advancement towards the Unison Anti-racism Charter. Future action for the service included expert informed, inhouse development of mandatory EDI training, scheduled for release in March 2023, a review of the 2023-27 EDI Strategy, scheduled for Full Council approval in May 2023, and integration of Equality Diversity Impact Assessments with health and carbon themes.

Wellbeing

The Council's wellbeing offer on Camweb, the staff's internal network, and Wellbeing Hours were popular with staff – Wellbeing Hours were frequently attended by circa 300 employees. The Council had also partnered with the Integrated Care System to increase the support offer for social care and public health colleagues without utilising significant internal resources.

The Chief Executive reflected upon the content of report and the extensive work of teams within Human Resources to support all aspects of the Council, including himself.

The committee welcomed this detailed and well-formatted report, and individual members raised the following in relation to the themes:

- acknowledged that the following measures were supporting the Council to become the most attractive employer in the region: non-financial benefits and the broader offer; incorporation of a video by the Chief Executive on the job portal; and future

benchmarking of recruitment against other authorities, as per request of the Chief Executive.

- welcomed the fact the service was supporting individuals through retention activity prior to the exit interview.
- highlighted their own experiences with apprentices moving to higher paying bodies after completing their apprenticeship. This was unlike the Council which offered apprentices a regular salary and frequently used apprenticeships to upskill pre-existing employees to either benefit their existing team or enable them to transfer teams.
- congratulated the service on the high demand for apprenticeships and high retention within the social work apprenticeship. It was suggested the Council explore resourcing apprentices through apprenticeship levies from external organisations' that could also benefit from such an arrangement.
- noted that demand for apprenticeships came from across the organisation. It was agreed this data would be circulated following the meeting. **Action.**

Members acknowledged that Staffing and Appeals Committee meetings were predominantly reactive and therefore not scheduled in advance, but suggested that there would be a benefit from more regularly reviewing the reports seen in this meeting.

The committee resolved to note the information contained in the report.

Chair