
CHIEF OFFICERS APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE, 07-02-2022

Present:

Councillors: Stephen Churchman, Selwyn Griffiths, Alwyn Gruffydd, Peredur Jenkins, Eric M Jones, Eryl Jones-Williams, Anwen Hughes, Cai Larsen, Dafydd Meurig, Peter Read, Mair Rowlands, Angela Russell and Dyfrig Siencyn

Officers: Dafydd Gibbard (Chief Executive), Geraint Owen (Head of Corporate Support Department), Eurig Williams (Human Resources Advisory Services Manager) and Lowri Haf Evans (Democracy Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

An apology was received from Councillor Elwyn Jones (Vice-chair of the Council)

2. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

Councillor Eric M Jones and Councillor Selwyn Griffiths as their children worked for the Council. The members were not of the opinion that it was a prejudicial interest as it was the Pay Policy that was being reviewed and not the officers' salaries.

3. URGENT ITEMS

None to note

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee, held on 26 November 2021, as a true record.

5. ANNUAL REPORT - THE COUNCIL'S PAY POLICY

The Chief Executive presented the report, noting that there was a statutory duty on each Council to prepare a Pay Policy Statement annually. In accordance with the Council's decision in adopting a Pay Policy for 2012/13, the Chief Officers Appointment Committee was expected to conduct an annual review of the policy's sustainability and to submit any recommendations following the review of the Pay Policy to the Full Council annually.

It was reported that no amendments were being proposed to the policy this year,

Attention was drawn to the review of Chief Officers' salary. Members were reminded that the Committee had recommended a review of Chief Officers' salaries, but that the review should not be undertaken until a decision at a national level had first been made. It was reported that an agreement had not been reached to date for 2021/22. The intention was to undertake a review and present the findings to the Committee following the publication of the national agreement.

In the context of the salaries of posts under the level of chief officers, it was noted that, as with the chief officers' salaries, a national agreement had not been reached. It was added that discussions continued between the Unions and the Employers, that a ballot had been held and that the outcome was expected in the coming weeks.

Following an announcement by Welsh Government (December 2021) to finance an increase in pay for staff working in the care sector to the level of the Living Wage (£9.90), councils would need to ensure compliance with that guidance from April 2022. It was noted that, in anticipation of a pay rise for 2021/22 and 2022/23, the Council's carers would receive an hourly rate that was over and above the Living Wage rate; if no national agreement was reached, steps would have to be taken to raise salary levels from 1 April 2022, in accordance with the guidance.

It was added that the Council had adopted the GLPC Job Evaluation Scheme criteria as the basis for setting salary grades for all posts employed under the Local Government Workers' Conditions of Service. It was explained that the relationship between the remunerations of its Chief Officers and its other employees was designed to secure the ability of the Council to be able to recruit and retain the best suitable candidates to its various posts, whilst maintaining the differentials as defined by the job evaluation scheme. It was highlighted that the Hutton Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector recommended a ratio of no more than 1:20 between the highest and lowest salary (full-time) - this ratio within the Council was currently 1:6.4.

Since the publication of the report, it was noted that a national agreement had been reached to increase the salaries of Chief Executives by 1.5%. Subject to accepting the Pay Policy Statement, the report to the Full Council (03/03/22), would be updated to reflect the increase.

Thanks were expressed for the report

During the ensuing discussion, the following observations were made by members:

- Why could the Living Wage not be increased to £10 per hour - a whole number? - this would likely attract more workers to the care field
- Need to offer a more competitive salary to workers in the care field, work within the private sector, such as retail shops, paid more for less responsibility
- Need to ensure that Welsh Government contributed to the cost of increasing the pay to workers in the care field
- That the Council was working towards a low-level living wage target rather than the higher target - need to work to improve this
- Need information about the cost of increasing carers' salaries - consider different situations
- That national insurance was increasing in April 2022 to address the increase in salaries in the care field - where was this money?
- Carers were doing difficult work - offering care with respect and dignity - need to acknowledge this

In response to a question regarding the agreement on the salary increase in 2021/22, and whether there would be a back-payment for the workforce, it was noted that arrangements were in place to ensure a back-payment before March 31 2022 (before the increase in national insurance on 1/4/22) if a national agreement was reached before closing the payroll for March.

In response to a comment about persuading the Government to increase the salaries of workers in the care field, it was noted that discussions were being held with other councils where it was decided that £12 would be the target hourly rate in order to be competitive. It was added that Councillors had been lobbying for this for over a year and that it was this lobbying that had led to the recent increase (which was closer to £10 per hour). Accept

that the sum did not reflect the work which was being done but the councils would continue to lobby and members were encouraged to do the same.

In response to a comment that a salary increase should be given to carers only, the Members were reminded that the Council had adopted the Job Evaluation Scheme which committed it to pay salaries in accordance with the equal pay legislation. Should a decision be made to increase carers' salaries, every job evaluated at the same level would need to be considered. It was added that a review was currently underway of the content of relevant job descriptions within the Adults Service.

In response to a comment that the Council contributed to the salary of carers in the private sector, it was noted that the pay level in the private sector was lower than the public sector and that the contribution was set as part of the budget.

In response to a comment that further discussions needed to be held on salary levels in the care field, it was noted that the budget would be scrutinised in the Audit and Governance Committee (10/02/22), but that the discussion about the salary of specific posts could be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committee. It was added that it was the Chief Officers Appointment Committee's responsibility to scrutinise and consider the pay policy.

RESOLVED

That the Appointment Committee proposes the Pay Policy Statement (draft) to the Council, on 3 March 2022, for adoption for 2022/23.

The meeting commenced at 4.00pm and concluded at 4.50pm.