
CHIEF OFFICERS APPOINTMENT COMMITTEE, 13.02.13

Present: Councillor Linda W. Jones (Chair)
Councillor Alwyn Gruffydd (Vice-chair)

Councillors Dyfed Edwards, Trevor Edwards, Jean Forsyth, Peredur Jenkins, Aeron M. Jones, Eric M. Jones, Liz Saville Roberts, Angela Russell, R.H. Wyn Williams and Huw Edwards, (ex-officio member).

Also Present: Harry Thomas (Chief Executive), Geraint Owen (Senior Human Resources Manager) and Gwyn Parry Williams (Members' Support and Scrutiny Officer)

Apologies: Councillors Stephen Churchman, Selwyn Griffiths, Sian Gwenllian, Dyfrig Siencyn

1. DECLARATION OF PERSONAL INTEREST

No declarations of personal interest were received from any members present.

2. MINUTES

The Chairman signed the minutes of the previous meeting of this committee held on 27 July 2012 as a true record.

3. PAY POLICY FOR CHIEF OFFICERS

The Chief Executive's report was presented, noting that since last year, for the first time, all Councils were legally obliged to adopt a pay policy for Chief Officers on an annual basis. The statutory provision requires that this should be a function of the full Council. In adopting a pay policy for 2012/13, the full Council had resolved to request this committee to review the sustainability of the pay policy for the future and to report back to the Council. It had requested the committee to advise the Council on its Chief Officer pay policy for 2013/14, to be considered by the full Council on 28 February 2013. In order to do this, the Committee must first consider the effects of the reorganisation of services that had taken place last summer when the post of Head of Social Services, Housing and Leisure had been created to undertake all the functions of the previous Head of Social Services and many of the functions of the Head of Provider Services. When the appointment to the post had been made, it had been decided to use the salary of the former Head of Social Services post as a temporary salary for the new post pending an independent evaluation of the appropriate salary.

The Hay Group had been commissioned to evaluate the roles of the following Heads of Service: Education, Customer Care, Highways and Municipal, Strategic and Improvement and Social Services, Housing and

Leisure, due to an increase in responsibilities. » The evaluation had recommended that there wasn't a sufficient change in the roles of the Heads of the Education, Customer Care, Highways and Municipal, and Strategic and Improvement Services to justify a new scale. However, in relation to the Head of Social Services, Housing and Leisure, the additional duties, over and above the old social services post were significant and the total Hay points had been significantly higher than the next ranked head of service post. The Hay Group therefore recommended a salary using the same policy (lower quartile) as HS3 and Director posts. When this policy was applied to the evaluated size of post it equated to a salary of £80,972. This compared with the temporary salary of £75,111 used at appointment.

Due to the additional financial responsibilities, direct responsibility for an additional £29m and the additional manpower responsibilities of over 1,000 additional staff, it was recommended that the Hay Group's recommendations should be accepted. The savings arising from the deletion of the Head of Provider Service post, £120,000 for a full year, more than covered the additional cost of £5,861 plus the on costs for a full year (£3,419 for 2012/13).

He drew attention to the current pay policy, noting -

- » a) Directors were paid at just below the lower quartile of the public sector market (lower quartile meant that 75% of the sector that had been evaluated as having equal job sizes were paid more). «
- b) The Heads of Education and Social Services, Leisure and Housing were also paid at the level of the lowest quartile.
- c) The others Heads of Service were paid at the median of the public sector market for similar sized jobs.

Whilst there were a number of factors affecting the Council's ability to attract and retain senior managers, he was of the opinion that the pay policy was broadly sustainable at this point in time for the Heads of Service paid on the median level. He therefore recommended no changes to these posts.

He noted that the situation regarding the Directors and the remainder of the Heads of Service was difficult. Paying at the lowest quartile level did expose the Council to risks. For example, the highest paid Directors in the other five North Wales authorities and Powys were paid at a higher level than Gwynedd Directors – even after the recent re-rating. To have the lowest pay in a group of which Gwynedd was one of the larger authorities brought risks in the medium term. However, he was of the view that the Council could afford to risk deferring this issue for at least another year and he recommended no change in 2013/14.

He further noted that the timing of re-rating actual pay to the benchmarks needed attention. The Council needed to be more explicit about this issue. Given that a re-rating had occurred this year, he recommended that the next re-rating should apply to the financial year 2015/16.

Following a discussion with the Monitoring Officer, one recommendation needed to be added, namely to request that the Council authorised this committee to keep the pay policy under review and to make recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Members were invited to make observations.

One member drew attention to the fact that the pay policy adopted last year had not been available in hard copy format for today's meeting. It was agreed to distribute it to the members. The Chief Executive noted that there was no substantial difference between it and the pay policy referred to in clause 3.1 of the report.

In response to a question from a member regarding the savings of £120,000 due to the deletion of the Head of Provider Service post, the Chief Executive clarified that this was realised by deleting this post plus the secretary's post, plus some additional travelling costs.

The Chief Executive referred to the recently published Social Services Bill, and to the fact that its associated requirements were far-reaching. There was currently ongoing work on a regional and a national scale on the further integration of health services and social services. He referred to a bid for a project to the value of £1.8m across North Wales to research into reconfiguration etc. He noted that there would be further preventative work in the field of health and older people.

In response to a question from a member on the pay review on the Head of Social Services, Housing and Leisure, the Chief Executive clarified that as it was a newly created post, there was no specified salary as it had not been evaluated. The appointment had been agreed on the basis of a temporary salary. He also referred to the decision to give the new post holder a mandate to consider the department's structure.

A member enquired whether today's meeting was premature as an officer had to be in post for six months before a pay rise could be awarded. In response, the Chief Executive stated that this was not relevant in this case as the salary would be designated for the post. A temporary salary had been given to the post until the evaluation had been conducted, in accordance with the procedure followed for all other officers. At the time, the post had to be filled urgently, and there had been no time to undertake the evaluation.

A member was of the opinion that the timing of the report had caused considerable consternation due to the 7% pay rise in the salaries of Chief Officers, while remaining staff salaries had been frozen.

Another member was of the opinion that the responsibilities involved with the post were excessive for one officer.

A member noted that there was a need to ensure that the salary corresponded to the post.

A member noted that each individual Council had to determine its own pay policy, and he was of the view that the Welsh Government should be responsible for this, not the various councils.

A member was of the opinion that the pay policy should be deferred for a year, pending information from the Welsh Government on the issue. However, another member disagreed with this suggestion, as the Council had a duty to determine the pay policy for the post.

The Senior Human Resources Manager noted that since the local pay review was adopted in 2008, any individual subject to a change in the job description had to undergo a re-evaluation, leading either to the salary remaining constant, or to a higher salary, dependent upon the points level of the evaluation. In the case of the post under discussion, the new post was evaluated, and included in the job description of an individual within the Council. The Council acted in a manner which was consistent with all other Council staff.

A member proposed an amendment, to defer determining the salary of the post of Head of Social Services, Housing and Leisure which was evaluated at £80,972 from September 2012, for 6 months to allow for reviewing the development of the post and the department.

The amendment fell.

Another member proposed an amendment, not to set the salary of the Head of the Social Services, Housing and Leisure Department to £80,972 from 1 September 2012, but to continue with the temporary salary of £75,511 which was set at the time of appointment. The proposal was not seconded.

RESOLVED to recommend to the Council on 28 February 2013 –

(a) That the pay of the newly evaluated Head of Social Services, Housing and Leisure be set at £80,972 with effect from 1 September 2012 and to review the situation in six months' time.

(b) That there is no change to the pay bands of the other Heads of Service affected by the restructuring last year.

(c) That there is no change to the overall pay policy for next year in terms of the benchmark levels i.e. median and lower quartile for the same posts.

(ch) That the rerating of actual pay to benchmark levels next occurs in 2015/16.

(d) That the Chief Officers' Appointment Committee be authorised to keep the pay policy under review and to make recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Additional matter – Chief Executive's Pay Policy

It was noted that the Chief Executive's Pay Policy needed to be reviewed.

RESOLVED to hold a meeting of this committee to review the Chief Executive's pay policy.

The meeting commenced at 10:30a.m. and concluded at 11.45am