

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

**COUNCIL
BUSINESS
MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE
1 SEPTEMBER
2023
EXTRAORDINARY
MEETING**

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
BUSINESS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE HELD ON FRIDAY 1
SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 1600 HOURS IN COMMITTEE ROOMS 3
AND 4, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA SQUARE, BIRMINGHAM**

PRESENT: - Councillor John Cotton in the Chair;

Councillors Robert Alden, Baber Baz, Sir Albert Bore, Jack Deakin, Des Hughes, Brigid Jones, Sharon Thompson and Miranda Perks.

ALSO PRESENT: -

Janie Berry, City Solicitor (Monitoring Officer)
Deborah Cadman, Chief Executive
Robert Connelly, AD, Legal and Governance
Fiona Greenway, Interim Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)
Darren Hockaday, Interim Director People and Corporate Services
Ian O'Donnell, Independent Financial Advisor
Bill O'Shaughnessy, Employee Relations Specialist Consultant
Jon Roberts, External Auditor, Grant Thornton
Christian Scade, Head of Scrutiny and Committee Services
Rishi Shori, Assistant Director and Solicitor, Strategic Partnerships and External Affairs and Corporate Leadership
Mark Stock, External Auditor, Grant Thornton
Mohammed Sajid, Assistant Director, Financial Strategy.
Errol Wilson, Committee Team Leader

NOTICE OF RECORDING

The Chair advised the meeting to note that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there were confidential or exempt items.

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Des Hughes advised that he was a member of the Unite Union.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Gareth Moore.

PAY EQUITY SYSTEM

The Committee considered a report concerning a renewed Pay Equity System (PES) consisting of a job evaluation study and new pay structure, which needed to be delivered by no later than 1 April 2025. It was noted this was critical to ending pay inequity and ensuring all staff were treated fairly.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

It was-

RESOLVED:-

That members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the exempt items of business under the next agenda item under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that: (i) it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined under paragraphs 3, 4 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act; and (ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

During the discussion a range of issues were considered relating to

- Background and Context
- Implementation assurance and governance
- Job evaluation study
- The Current Job Evaluation Programme
- Developments since April 2022
- Alternative options to the current programme
- Option considerations including Best Value Assessment
- Common stages in the process
 - a. Stage 1: Job Information
 - b. Stage 2: Evaluation and Moderation
 - c. Stage 3: Model and Structure
- Option 1 - Use the unadapted NJC Gauge system in full (the current programme)

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- Option 2 - Use an adapted version of NJC Gauge in co-operation with West Midlands Employers (“WME”), Version A (“WME Gauge A”)
- Option 3 - Use an alternative adapted version of NJC Gauge in co-operation with West Midlands Employers, Version B (“WME Gauge B”)
- Option 4 - Outsource job evaluation to a third-party specialist supplier.
- Option parameters and risks
- Consultation, and
- Risks including industrial relations.

There were a range of matters that were considered during the exempt part of the meeting, and these are set out in full under the private Minutes.

RESOLVED:-

1. It was noted that the Committee was required to make a decision based on the two objectives (listed in i. and ii. of the report presented). These were essential for a new job evaluation study for BCC (as set out in the report to Cabinet on 25th July 2023) and the assessment against Best Value principles (set out via Appendix 7 to the report presented):

i. That it must be objective, robust, consistently applied, and Equality Act 2010 compliant; and;

ii. That it must be conducted in the shortest possible timescale given the size of potential liability and the estimated accrual rate and noting that Cabinet had recommended that implementation should be on or before 1st April 2025.

2. That, following consideration of Option 2 (set out in 2.2.2 and section 7 of the report) and Option 4 (set out in 2.2.3 of the report) Option 2 was adopted as the PES methodology to be delivered, based on the respective merits and risks.

3. It was noted, set out in section 12 of the report, that Option 2 (NJC Gauge delivered in conjunction with West Midlands Employers (WME)) was conditional on:

i. A signed Addendum to the Principles Collective Agreement between the recognised trade unions and BCC attached at Appendix 3 of the report, including Points of Further Clarification;

ii. The assurances set out at paragraph 12.7;

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iii. An immediate start to implementation at the point of decision, Friday 1st September 2023; and,

iv. If the Addendum was not signed by 09:00am Monday 11 September 2023, it would mean Option 2 was not practical to implement and the Council would reserve the right to choose an alternative PES.

4. It was noted that Option 4 (outsource to an external provider) had been set out in Section 14 of this report.

5. It was noted that, if it became apparent at any stage of the process that the deadline of April 2025 could not be met or if other concerns become clear, such as a deviation from the methodology agreed and any associated agreements and lack of evaluator resource, the Council could terminate the process and explore alternative methodology routes to achieve the programme outcomes. Should the need for this arise, it was recognised Trade Unions would be consulted and engaged appropriately.

NB: Councillor Robert Alden voiced his abstention from the recommendations.

OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business to consider.

AUTHORITY TO CHAIR AND OFFICERS

RESOLVED:-

That in an urgent situation between meetings the Chair, jointly with the relevant Chief Officer, had authority to act on behalf of the Committee.

The meeting ended at 1725 hours.