

BEST VALUE COMMISSIONERS

Equal Pay Sub Board

Wednesday 10th April 2024 – 14:00hrs to 15:30hrs

Room 125, Council House

Board Members

Pam Parkes, Commissioner & Chair
John Biggs, Political Adviser
Richard Fitzjohn, Equal Pay Programme Lead
Pauline Shakespeare, Job Evaluation Lead
Bill Robertson, Equal Pay, Pay & Grading Lead
Elizabeth Thomas, DLUHC Chief of Staff
John Hutton, Political Adviser
Graeme Betts, Interim Chief Executive
Rob Harris, Head of Service, Finance
Chris Tambini, Commissioner
Craig Cooper, Strategic Director, City Operations
Andy Vaughan, Director, Street Scene
Katy Fox, Director of Peoples Services
Fiona Greenway, Director of Finance and S151 Officer.
Will Moody, PA, Commissioners Support Team
Tom Smith, DLUHC Chief of Staff

Apologies

Rishi Shori, Director of intervention Response

1 Welcome & Introductions

1.1 Pam Parkes welcomed everybody to the meeting and introductions took place.

2 Previous Minutes

2.1 The meeting was satisfied that the minutes of the last meeting was a true record and reflection of what was discussed.

3 [Action Tracker](#)

3.1 All action completed.

4 Equal Pay Update

4.1 Richard Fitzjohn presented an update on the Equal Pay programme and the progress made. The team is now reasonably established however, the issue of job questionnaires not being completed is still ongoing.

4.2 Trade Unions are pushing back to BCC and stating that the pre-existing consultation process should be being used. Due to this dispute, BCC will bring this issue to a governance board.

The Commissioners:

Max Caller CBE, John Coughlan CBE, Chris Tambini, Pam Parkes FCIPD, Jackie Belton, Myron Hrycyk, Lord John Hutton, John Biggs.

- 4.3 BCC plan to bring this issue to Commissioners in the form of a governance board as this is now a barrier preventing the equal pay programme from moving forward as planned in a timely manner.
- 4.4 Approximately 20 JDQ's has now been completed and there is approximately 200 to complete. 180 have been scheduled. The delay in these roles being evaluated approximately costs BCC 15million per month. So far there has been a two month delay due to the issues outlined above.
- 4.5 There are approximately 180 contentious roles which need to be evaluation – most of these sit within the Street Scene department and will likely cause disputes with the Unions.
- 4.6 A dispute process is required to be established for BCC and the Trade Unions to continue with the programme in an effective manner.
- 4.7 Due to the complexities with the roles within the Street Scene service, Andy Vaughan and Richard Fitzjohn are to meet following today's meeting.
- 4.8 Further to the above update, a communications and engagement plan was shared for the EP programme. It needs to be understood how the Council is reacting in relation to equal pay as this is a potential risk to the organisation. It was felt much more engagement was required with officers.
- 4.9 The political leadership have asked BCC for an Equal Pay Management Committee as they have a political commitment to give an update at Full Council on the EP programme, they will also have public questions relating to Equal Pay. Pam Parkes requested an update to ensure that it is clear on how BCC is keeping members involved.
- 4.10 A discussion arose around procurement for advisory support – relating to pay structures. There was initially a delay in data sharing and procurement has started with four candidates, it is now envisaged that the contract will be in place and signed by mid-May. This will need to be reflected in the timeline for the EP programme.

5 Equal Pay Governance Board

- 5.1 BCC as defined in the signed addendum between TU's and the Council operate joint working groups which deal with the 'day to day' issues of the EP programme.
- 5.2 This is the first time BCC and TU's have been unable to come to an agreement. The disagreement is on the job evaluation process and how BCC should be evaluating each job moving forward.
- 5.3 There was confusion on how the Equal Pay Governance Board would be convened. Pam Parkes outlined that BCC would need to formally write to Commissioners, a governance board will then be convened, and both positions put forward, with the Commissioner for Equal Pay then making an impartial decision on the best way to move forward.
- 5.4 It was deemed that this meeting now needs to be scheduled as soon as possible due to the delay, and consequent expenditure which is coming from the delay.
- 5.5 There is a view with the TU's that the April 2025 deadline is an arbitrary date and not a hard target. The disconnect of understanding between TU's and BCC on the 1st of April 2025 is an existential risk to the Council.
- 5.6 It is noted that this could have an impact on other programmes of work across the Council.
- 5.7 Pam Parkes outlined the importance of escalating the issues quickly to Commissioners. Commissioners are in place to intervene.
- 5.8 There will not be a standing governance board as this will then lose its effectiveness.
- 5.9 The date of 29th April 2024 has been identified for the board to be convened but is to be confirmed.

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6 Equal Pay Litigation Update

- 6.1 Marie Rosenthal presented a legally privileged update in relation to BCC's Equal Pay litigation.

7 Actions:

- 7.1 Katy Fox to write to Commissioners on behalf of BCC requesting to bring the issue of job evaluations to a governance board.
- 7.2 Andy Vaughan and Richard Fitzjohn to meet following today's meeting to discuss the complexities of the roles within Street Scene.
- 7.3 Richard Fitzjohn to update on communication and engagement with members, and how members are being kept up to date on the EP programme.
- 7.4 Richard Fitzjohn to reflect procurement timelines in the EP programme timelines.
- 7.5 Will Moody to convene Equal Pay Governance Board for 29th April 2024.

8 Date of the next meeting:

- 8.1 Wednesday 8th May 2024

The Commissioners:

Max Caller CBE, John Coughlan CBE, Chris Tambini, Pam Parkes FCIPD, Jackie Belton, Myron Hrycyk, Lord John Hutton, John Biggs.