

BEST VALUE COMMISSIONERS

Equal Pay Sub Board

Thursday 20th June 2024, 09:15hrs to 11:00hrs

Via Microsoft Teams

Board Members

Pam Parkes, Commissioner and Chair
Chris Tambini, Commissioner
Myron Hrycyk, Commissioner
John Biggs, Political Adviser
John Hutton, Political Adviser
Graeme Betts, Acting Chief Executive
Katy Fox, Director of Peoples Services
Fiona Greenway, Director of Finance & S151 Officer
Rishi Shori, Acting Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Intervention Response
Marie Rosenthal, Interim City Solicitor & Monitoring Officer
Richard Fitzjohn, Equal Pay Programme Lead
Bill Robertson, Equal Pay, Pay & Grading Lead
Rob Edmondson, Assistant Director, Waste Management
Phillip MacPherson, Oracle Programme Lead
Robert Harris, Head of Service, Legal
Tom Smith, DLUHC Chief of Staff
Will Moody, PA, Commissioners Support Team

Apologies

None noted.

1 Welcome & introductions

Pam Parkes welcomed everybody to the meeting and introductions were completed.

2 Previous minutes & actions

A review of actions was undertaken. Action one is currently progressing. The team are in the process of reallocating the work due to recruitment being undertaken.

3 Equal Pay programme update

Katy Fox and Richard Fitzjohn outlined to members of the meeting that there is a significant delay in the job evaluation programme. The expected end date is now August 2025 and is not recoverable back to the April 2025 deadline. Pam Parkes instructed that due to this, a governance board needs to be arranged to keep TUs informed of BCC's progress, this was agreed in the addendum between TU's and BCC. This will be convened as soon as possible.

The Commissioners:

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

The pay and grading programme continues at pace. Mercer has been procured to complete this work. Marie Rosenthal outlined how the delay in the job evaluation programme will knock on the negotiation of the litigation timeline. Their current timeline assumes a reliable JE scheme is in place for April 2024.

4 Equal Pay litigation update

Marie Rosenthal provided an update on Equal Pay litigation which is legally privileged.

It is understood that due to the delay in individuals receiving settlements, claimants are now moving their claims into different cohorts. An analysis needs to be conducted to determine in which cases this has happened. The financial risk to Birmingham City Council is increasing, this is due to at the time of the S114 notice being implemented.

Whilst this was the advice provided at the time of initiation for the S114 notice, Pam Parkes advised that the council do not have to keep this opinion moving forward.

It was determined that the board needs clear financial information to understand the value of the increased liability.

5 Equal pay programme and Oracle programme interdependencies

Philip McPherson and Katy Fox outlined an emerging issue on the interdependency between the EP programme and the Oracle programme. Changes are required to the Oracle system by the end of the year yet there are collective issues in the data that is required for this change. This data is related to Oracle but also jobs and positions within the previous system SAP.

The council also does not have 'job families' within the existing system. The structure which is currently in place cannot be implemented into Oracle at this stage. Within the current data set, there are twenty-three thousand positions and four and a half thousand jobs.

Oracle is heading rapidly into the design phase with the final design set to be completed in January. Given this, jobs would need to be defined, implemented, and loaded into the system at this point. It is understood that this is where Oracle went wrong previously and the link between finance and HR was broken due to the system not being locked down at the right times.

Work needs to be undertaken with HR to define job families and their functions. It was considered it would be useful to understand what job families are in use in other local authorities.

Pam Parkes advised that when she arrived as a commissioner there were in the region of 2800 jobs with some unique roles. BCC should be working towards job families as part of the job evaluation process. A closer working relationship needs to be established with the HR and Oracle team. There is no underlying data to start with.

Myron Hrycyk enquired as to whether there were enough resources to undertake the data cleansing required for the implementation. Katy Fox reassured that HR has the resources and a full team working with Philip and his team on the Oracle reimplementation. There are no risks or issues in the availability of resources.

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It was agreed Philip MacPherson needs to attend the EP boards frequently to understand the detail and timescales of each of the EP workstreams, and how they then impact the Oracle programme.

6 AOB

None.

7 Actions:

- 7.1 Board to be provided with clear financial information to under the value of the increased liability.
- 7.2 Philip MacPherson to attend EP boards moving forward to understand the details and timescales of each of the EP workstreams and how they impact the Oracle programme.

8 Date of next meeting

14th August 2024.

The Commissioners:

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