

Appendix B

Report for Charnwood Borough Council

JOINT MANAGEMENT TRADE UNION MEETING

ITEM 3 – UNISON & GMB response to Charnwood Borough Council Pay and Grading Proposal 4th October 2023

UNISON RESPONSE

A proposal was brought by management to the last JMTUM meeting of 19th July 2023. UNISON considered the proposals and provided feedback at the meeting and have since had an opportunity to consult the wider branch committee and provide a fuller response.

Our understanding is that in essence, the proposals are for Chief Executive pay to remain on the same pay scales as now, but for two additional JNC pay grades to be brought in. This would mean that (subject to Job Evaluation re-grading), senior directors could earn as much as £104,490, an increase from the top of the current JNC pay scale of £87,449

Management gave four main rationale given for the proposals which were:

- I. Retaining and attracting top talent
- II. Market competitiveness.
- III. Specialised skills and responsibilities
- IV. Risk and accountability

With regards to the first two rationale, UNISON agree with the basic principle that higher pay helps retain and attract top talent and helps Charnwood Borough Council to maintain competitiveness within the jobs market. However, this is a principle that applies across the organisation: the need to attract top talent is as applicable to jobs lower down the pay scale as it is at the top. We would therefore seek to work with Charnwood Borough Council to look at a way of revising pay scales that address points I and II for all CBC staff.

Our suggestion would be to set up a working group with recognised trade unions to consider ways in which the questions of retaining and attracting top talent, and being competitive within the jobs market, can be addressed most effectively.

We are keen not to discount points two and three: aside from any market forces, on an objective basis the work which senior directors are now undertaking may indeed be of a value greater than which they are currently paid. This is why an effective, transparent Job Evaluation scheme is so important. UNISON would be keen to work with Charnwood Borough Council to explore how Job Evaluation can be more effective. Having reviewed the current policy we have made some suggested amendments which we feel would be beneficial to the organisation.

Please see attached appendix with suggested changes in red.

GMB RESPONSE

I am writing to confirm GMB's position regarding the proposal brought to JMTUM on 19th July 2023 to change the grade structure between the Chief Executive and directors.

It is noted that the argument for the proposal is to "allow for salary increases if required" and that recruitment and retention difficulties experienced by other local authorities are key reasons for Management's belief that the proposed change is needed. We would respond as follows:

The proposal should not be considered in isolation from recruitment and retention difficulties across the Council and without considering if there are problems or anomalies with grading structure elsewhere in the Council.

Charnwood is experiencing some recruitment and retention difficulties at lower levels now. We think that the same tools for addressing these difficulties should be considered across the Council not just at director level. There might be scope for introducing changes to grade structures at some lower levels – looking at career grades for example.

Job descriptions are not regularly reviewed and therefore the Council has no mechanism for ensuring that grade structures remain consistent, up to date and non-discriminatory. We would like to see a mechanism in place for regular job evaluations of all posts at for example: 20% done each year, so every five years the council is up to date with JE.

GMB does not support Management's proposal as it stands but would be willing to do so if the above points were addressed satisfactorily and a commitment was given to evaluate jobs on an ongoing rolling 5-year basis.

On a separate point, we would like to see a review of the appeal process for Job Evaluation to consider a balanced Appeal Panel membership and would ask that this is put on JMTUM agenda for consideration at a future meeting.

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Job Evaluation Procedure with suggested changes in red