



NOTICE OF MEETING

Employment Committee

Wednesday 12 December 2018, 7.30 pm

Council Chamber - Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12 1JD

To: Employment Committee

Councillor McLean (Chairman), Councillor Allen (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Angell, Mrs Birch, Leake, Ashman, Mrs Temperton, Virgo and Worrall

Non-Voting Co-optee

Councillor Heydon

cc: Substitute Members of the Committee

Councillors Brossard, Dudley, Mrs Hamilton, Dr Hill and Peacey

Gill Vickers
Executive Director: Delivery

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Council Chamber - Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell, RG12
1JD

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AGENDA

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1. **Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence and to note the attendance of any substitute members.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to declare any disclosable pecuniary or affected interests in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

Any Member with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in a matter should withdraw from the meeting when the matter is under consideration and should notify the Democratic Services Officer in attendance that they are withdrawing as they have such an interest. If the Disclosable Pecuniary Interest is not entered on the register of Members interests the Monitoring Officer must be notified of the interest within 28 days.

Any Member with an affected Interest in a matter must disclose the interest to the meeting. There is no requirement to withdraw from the meeting when the interest is only an affected interest, but the Monitoring Officer should be notified of the interest, if not previously notified of it, within 28 days of the meeting.

3. **Minutes from previous meeting**

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 18 July 2018.

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4. **Urgent Items of Business**

Any other items which, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent.

5. **Update from the Chairman of the Local Joint Committee**

A verbal update from the Chairman of the Local Joint Committee.

6. **Minutes of Sub Groups**

The Committee is asked to note the minutes of the Local Joint

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Committee held on 18 July 2018 and Education Employment Sub Committee held on 20 November 2018.

7. **Transport Development Section- Recruitment Market Premia Payments**

To receive a report on Transport Development Section- Recruitment Market Premia Payments.

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8. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

To consider the following motion:

That pursuant to Regulation 21 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2000 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 9 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (4) Information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations, or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or officer holders under, the authority.

9. **Bracknell Grades - National Pay Award**

To receive a report on Bracknell Grades – National Pay Award.

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**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE
18 JULY 2018
7.30 - 8.39 PM**



Present:

Councillors McLean (Chairman), Allen (Vice-Chairman), Angell, Mrs Birch, Leake, Virgo and Worrall

Also Present:

Councillors Heydon

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Ashman and Mrs Temperton

12. Declarations of Interest

There were no declaration of interest.

13. Minutes from previous meeting

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Committee held on 20 March 2018 and 2 July 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

14. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

15. Update from the Chairman of the Local Joint Committee

Councillor Leake reported that Unison understood the need for discontinuing the Bracknell Forest Supplement but wished for it to be kept under review due to the unknowns surrounding nation increases. It was also reported that Unison were concerned that the job evaluation scheme hadn't previously been implemented correctly.

16. Minutes of Sub Groups

The Committee noted the minutes of the Local Joint Committee held on 2 July 2018.

17. Annual Review of Bracknell Forest Supplement

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that the decision surrounding the Bracknell Forest Supplement had been delayed until confirmation of the 2018 NJC pay award, so any change would be backdated from 1 April 2018.

Due to the national action on low pay the Bracknell Forest Supplement was now irrelevant as the real living wage was now higher than the supplement, therefore there were no Bracknell Forest staff members in receipt of the supplement. As a result the

Committee were recommended to discontinuing the local supplement payments but this would be kept under review.

RESOLVED that the Bracknell Forest Supplement be discontinued with immediate effect, given that national measures mean the lowest NJC pay scale point is now higher than the Real living wage, making BF Supplement irrelevant.

18. **December Pay Date**

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that for many years the December payroll run has been earlier in the month. Historically, the main reason for early payment was to ensure that payslips were delivered to schools before school term ended. However, payslips were now electronic and could be accessed from home or checked when convenient. It was suggested that as this was no longer a reason to process payroll prior to Christmas, the payment date could be changed to fall in line with the other months in the year where payment is made on the last working day of the month.

This had been considered on one previous occasion by Unions. Unison had been supportive of the change however Teacher's Unions were not. Since that consideration, work has been done with Schools and the indication was that the change would be supported

It was proposed that the changed payment date would be effective from December 2018. This would give plenty of time to inform staff of the change prior to the December pay run.

In response to the Committee's queries the following points were made:

- Once the change had been formally agreed Staff Members and the Unions would be informed of the change well in advance of December.
- Staff were currently paid on the last Friday before Christmas.
- The Unions had already formally agreed the change.

RESOLVED that December pay date and implementation ready for December 2018 is supported.

19. **Exclusion of Public and Press**

That pursuant to Regulation 21 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2000 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 10 on the agenda (item 20 in the minutes) which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.

20. **Market Premia Requests For Posts In Corporate Property**

The Committee received a report is to requesting that market premia payments are added to the Head of Property Maintenance post and the post of Strategic Head of Asset Management in the Property branch in the Resources directorate. This had arisen due to ongoing failure to appoint any suitable applicants after three

recruitment attempts to the post of Head of Property Maintenance over an eight month period.

During debate a number of issue and concerns were raised by Members of the Committee, as a result the proposed recommendation fell at the vote and an alternative motion proposed and agreed.

RESOLVED that the decision be deferred until a proper investigation had taken place to whether the two posts could be combined.

CHAIRMAN

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**LOCAL JOINT COMMITTEE
18 JULY 2018
4.00 - 4.20 PM**

Present:

Councillors Leake (Chairman) and Allen
David Allais, UNISON
Lorna Cameron, UNISON

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors Angell

6. Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

7. Minutes from Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2018 were approved as a correct record.

8. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

9. Employment Committee: Agenda and Related Matters

i) Annual Review of Bracknell Forest Supplement

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that the report addresses the fourth annual reassessment of the Bracknell Forest Supplement which would have taken effect from 1 April 2018. The decision had been delayed due to the delay in confirming the 2018 NJC pay award. Due to the national action on low pay it had been concluded that the Bracknell Forest Supplement was largely irrelevant as the low pay amount was higher than the Bracknell Forest Supplement, therefore there was no longer any staff members in receipt of the supplement. The report recommended to the Employment Committee that they agree to discontinue the local supplement payments.

Unison were supportive of the proposal, however suggested that the matter be kept under review as a change in future pay scales nationally was unknown.

ii) Market Premia Requests For Posts In Corporate Property

The Chief Officer: Human Resources reported that a request would be taken to Employment Committee to request that market premia payments are added to the Head of Property Maintenance post and the post of Strategic Head of Asset Management in the Property department within the Resources directorate. The request had been made due to ongoing failure to appoint any suitable applicants after

3 recruitment attempts to the post of Head of Property Maintenance over an 8 month period. The most recent recruitment attempt had been in the last week, where the post had been advertised with the potential of the 20% market supplement, as a result there had been sixteen applications.

External independent research and internal benchmarking had been undertaken which had suggested that the median salary for the Head of Property Maintenance was up to 20% above the Council's current salary band and the Head of Strategic Asset Management is between 25% and 40% above the salary level that the Council was able to offer.

Unison commented that although a job evaluation had been undertaken in the past few years it was felt that this had not been undertaken with due diligence and not done correctly. Unison felt that they constantly had been involved in conversations regarding pay grading and job evaluations and thought that there had always been a salary issue in Bracknell Forest which was something that need to be looked at closely.

10. **Matters to be Raised by Trade Unions**

No matters were raised by the Trade Unions.

CHAIRMAN

**EDUCATION EMPLOYMENT SUB
COMMITTEE
20 NOVEMBER 2018
5.37 - 6.10 PM**



Present:

Councillors Allen (Chairman) and Leake

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Urgent Items of Business

There were no urgent items of business.

3. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 3 February 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4. Exclusion of Public and Press

That pursuant to Regulation 21 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) Regulations 2000 and having regard to the public interest, members of the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of item 13 which involves the likely disclosure of exempt information under the following category of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972:

- (3) Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person.

5. NJC pay award

The Committee received a report on the Options for Bracknell Grade – New Spinal Column Points, which was tabled at the meeting.

The report detailed the latest national agreement including the introduction of new spinal points into the current model. The report gave an overview of the changes to the spinal column points and the potential impact and issues that may arise as a result of these changes. The report also detailed the job roles within schools which would be effected by the changes.

It was requested by Member's that an external legal view be sort on the equality issue that could arise as a result of the changes.

The Committee were informed that the report would also form part of the wider NJC Pay Award report which would be an agenda item on the Local Joint Committee and Employment Committee meetings on the 12 December 2018.

As the Committee was inquorate, they noted the requirements of the pay scale changes and noted that the options for introduction would continued to be explored.

CHAIRMAN

TO: EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE

DATE: 12th December 2018

**TRANSPORT DEVELOPMENT SECTION - RECRUITMENT
MARKET PREMIA PAYMENTS
(Director of Place, Planning & Regeneration)**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Employment Committee approval to add market premia payments to specific vacant Senior Engineer posts within the Transport Development Section.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Employment Committee approve the application of market premia payments as set out in paragraph 5.13 of this report.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Council must recruit to these specialist engineering posts (long standing vacancies) in order to ensure the delivery of strategic transport and development related infrastructure. Market forces are currently impacting upon the Council's ability to recruit and retain staff within these posts and this presents the following significant risks:

- (a) Failure to deliver high profile strategic transport projects;
- (b) Failure to deliver development related highway infrastructure projects;
- (c) Loss of Government/LEP awarded Local Growth Funds;
- (d) Damage to the Council's reputation.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Continue engaging recruitment agencies and seek suitable temporary agency staff for placement with the Council. However, during the past 12 months no acceptable candidates have been presented to the Council, regardless of its flexible approach towards potential charge rates. This option is not viable.
- 4.2 Continue seeking consultancy support in the form of employee secondments to the Council. However, due to their own recruitment pressures in this specialist area no consultancy can be found willing to accept such a commission. This option is not viable.
- 4.3 Not to respond to market forces and continue attempts to recruit to these long-term vacancies based on the current offer. This exposes the Council to single points of failure within its staff structure which could result in a stall of major transport and development infrastructure projects and the potential loss of associated Government funding. This option is not viable.

5. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Transport Development Section contains 5 teams responsible for: Transport Strategy, Development & Adoptions, Transport Engineering, Network Management and UTMC (urban traffic management & control).
- 5.2 A primary function within the Transport Engineering and Development & Adoptions teams is the delivery of key highway infrastructure. Capital projects are designed, co-ordinated and delivered by experienced highway engineers and provide the necessary infrastructure improvements needed within the Borough to accommodate and facilitate development growth. These projects are routinely high profile with links to successful Government/LEP funding bids alongside negotiated developer contributions. As such, project delivery timetables form part of the Council's commitment from an early stage.
- 5.3 Both the Transport Engineering and Development & Adoptions teams experience long-standing vacancies for specific posts, namely:
 - A. Senior Engineer (Transport Engineering)
 - B. Senior Engineer (Development Management)
- 5.4 Post A has been vacant for 13 months (3 unsuccessful recruitment drives) and post B has been vacant for 20 months (5 unsuccessful recruitment drives). These posts are key to supporting the respective team managers in delivering high profile projects and services.
- 5.5 In both cases, repeated advertisements on public sector recruitment websites (LG Jobs, Jobs Go Public), national trade press (Surveyor Magazine and Surveyor online) and LinkedIn (including targeted posts) have failed to attract any suitable candidates at the current salary. Furthermore, numerous specialist engineering recruitment agencies have also been unable to source any suitable temporary candidates for placement with the Council, regardless of the flexible approach towards potential charge rates. It is acknowledged within the industry that there is both a national shortage of these specialist engineers and a consequential drive from the private sector to secure these resources through premium salaries and/or employment benefits.
- 5.6 Private sector consultancies equally rely on these specialisms in order to fulfil their commitments and grow their businesses - often selling back these resources to Local Authorities through commissions and contracts where individual's hourly charge rates are three times that paid to Council staff at this level. Indeed, it has been necessary to use such consultancy resources in order to cover the critical functions exposed by these vacancies, but this continues to be very costly and impractical.
- 5.7 In the case of post A, such a consultancy arrangement (a secondment three days per week) has been rescinded by WSP Ltd given their own recruitment pressures in this specialist area. No other temporary consultancy arrangement has been secured at present due to the overall shortage of available specialists. Consequentially, the full impact of this vacant post now heightens the Council's risk of failing to deliver key transport infrastructure, especially given the £15m of highway improvements due to be delivered over the next 3 years. These include major design and construction projects on A322 Downshire Way and A3095 Crowthorne Road, alongside many other transport capital projects.
- 5.8 In the case of post B, some limited consultancy support has been achieved but its scale and suitability cannot offset the wider impacts and risks associated with carrying this vacant post. Current and future levels of development growth within the Borough must include the delivery of highway mitigation works as part of development proposals and securing specialist engineers to identify, secure and co-ordinate these improvements is key. Development related transport improvements are a critical

component within the Council's overarching transport infrastructure proposals, for example, providing for over £2.5m of construction within the forthcoming A3095 corridor project.

- 5.9 The consequences of recruitment and retention issues in this area could be far reaching. Government funding for infrastructure is increasingly reliant on successful bids which focus strongly on the ability to deliver projects within tight funding envelopes. Local Enterprise Partnerships also play a key role in the award of Government Local Growth Funds and equally focus on Authorities' ability to deliver projects. As such, risks to the Council include the loss of current/future programmed funding and damage to its good reputation within this arena, which in-turn could be reflected within future bid scoring/success.
- 5.10 The response of individual Local Authorities exposed to these market forces varies, with many reflecting the current circumstances through an increased salary offer at recruitment. Others are carrying long-term vacancies. As a Unitary Authority, Bracknell Forest is exposed to increased risk due to its smaller scale specialist teams and the single points of failure that can result. Therefore, steps should be taken to positively influence the likelihood of recruitment to these critical posts.
- 5.11 Posts A and B are graded BG-E with a top pay scale point of £43,757. As infrastructure delivery roles at this level vary, in terms of job title and focus, a sample of vacancies elsewhere (public and private) has been matched against the Bracknell Forest vacant posts to provide the following comparison of current market salaries:

Bracknell Forest Council Senior Engineer	£39,002 - £43,757
Wokingham BC Capital Scheme Project Managers (3 posts)	£42,806 - £53,386
Thurrock Council Senior Highway Engineer	£37,266 - £48,600
Reigate & Banstead BC Project Engineer	£37,770 - £53,352
Kingston Upon Thames BC Senior Engineer Development Control	£36,372 - £46,608
ARM consulting (London) Senior Highway Engineer	£45,000 - £52,000
Conrad consulting (Guildford) Senior Civil Infrastructure Engineer	£45,000 - £55,000
Hays consulting (for a London UA) Senior/principal Development Control Engineer	£40,000 - £48,000
Strata consulting (Watford) Senior Infrastructure Engineer	£40,000 - £55,000

- 5.12 Within the private sector, the recruitment market for experienced individuals from these engineering disciplines is very competitive. As a result, salaries are rarely advertised and instead applicants are able to negotiate terms based on their likely charge rate to both public and private sector clients. The Transport Development Section has past experience of Senior Engineers vacating posts to take up significantly higher salaries within the private sector, for comparative responsibilities.
- 5.13 Given the industry shortage of engineers within these disciplines it is extremely unlikely that any further recruitment drive would be successful unless the salary was attractive. This situation is no doubt exacerbated by higher housing costs within the region. It is therefore proposed that a market premium scope of up to 20% is applied to both Posts A and B, with the actual level applied being dependant on the circumstances of individual appointments. This brings the maximum salary offer to £52,508 which is

considered sufficiently competitive with equivalent public and private sector roles to attract more candidates.

- 5.14 Post A reports to the Transport Engineering Manager and post B reports to the Development and Adoptions Manager. In both cases, the application of a market premia payment will have a consequential effect upon the remuneration of the respective line managers due to the compact structure of the salary grading. Whilst linked to the appointment of the Senior Engineer posts, the scope of premia applied to the line manager roles would not exceed 12.5%. One Senior Engineer is currently in post and would also be subject to a market premia payment. The collective financial impact of applying this market premia payment will vary dependant on the premia required to appoint Senior Engineers. The maximum additional costs relating to the 5 (4.8 fte) affected posts would be £53,810.
- 5.15 Approval to apply market premia payments to these specific Senior Engineer posts will enable Officers to engage with internal HR and Communications teams on the development of a revised recruitment plan. A broad promotional network will be established to maximise exposure of the competitive salary and benefits which the Council is offering. This campaign will include a focus on reaching potential candidates not actively looking for current opportunities elsewhere but who may respond to the competitive package available at Bracknell Forest.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 There are no specific legal implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

Director: Finance

- 6.2 The financial implications are contained within the report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Not applicable.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Noted in the previous ECC risk register under ECC03 reduced resources results in more pressure on staff to deliver same and ECC10 loss of key employee or several employees in one service

Contacts for further information

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Background Papers

None

By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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