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REMUNERATION COMMITTEE - 6 July 2022

Present: Councillors R Sleight OBE (Chairman), I Courts, T Dicicco, A Mackiewicz, M McLoughlin, S Caudwell, M Carthew

Officers: A Cattell - Head of Human Resources
P Rogers - Democratic Services

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor S Rymer, for whom Councillor S Caudwell was substituting, and Ms. Maggie Hurt (Co-Opted Member).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

3. QUESTIONS AND DEPUTATIONS

No questions or deputations were received.

4. MINUTES

The Remuneration Committee:

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the minutes of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 21st March 2022 be approved as a correct record.

5. TRADE UNION FACILITY TIME PUBLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The report informed the Remuneration Committee of the 2021-22 Trade Union Facility Time information in respect of the Council and schools. The Head of Human Resources presented the report.

Members were informed that the Trade Union (Facility Time Publication Requirements) came into force on 1st April 2017. Trade Union officials include employees who undertake their Trade Union role on a full-time basis, apt-time and those who have a substantive job but also undertake a Trade Union role. Those employees who were Trade Union representatives and recognised by the Council were permitted reasonable time off during working hours to perform certain trade union duties.

Different Trade Union roles entailed different roles and responsibilities, for example, negotiations with the employer side and accompanying trade union members at disciplinary hearings.

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Paid trade union activities were calculated regarding the undertaking of such activities as attending trade union conferences, attending trade union branch meetings and similar activities. Whilst calculating the associated costs involved with trade union representation, factors such as National Insurance and pension costs must be included in the calculation.

The Council was reliant on the respective Trade Unions to provide information on time spent on certain trade union activities. Four specific areas of information were required to be provided to the Council under the Facility Time Publication Requirements, which related to *Relevant Trade Union Officials*, *Percentage of Time Spent on Facility Time*, *Percentage of Pay Bill Spent on Facility Time* and *Paid Trade Union Activities*. These categories apply to both the Council side and schools.

The Head of Human Resources advised Members of the Committee that the overall percentage of the pay bill for 1st April 2021-31st March 2022 was comparable to the previous year, with a slight increase reported. The school's pay bill had increased by 0.016% compared to the previous year, which was attributable to the total pay bill reducing, but the total cost of facility time increasing. It was reported to the Committee meeting that across the West Midlands Region, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council had reported the second lowest figures regarding expenses for core Council costs.

Having received the introduction to the report from the Head of Human Resources, Members of the Committee raised further pertinent questions in relation to the report, which in summary included the following matters:

Councillor McLoughlin noted that regarding appendices A and B to the report, as a percentage of time spent on trade union activity a difference existed, whereas the total pay spent on time allocated to trade union activity did not converge. Councillor McLoughlin queried whether this was due to more trade union representatives present in schools combined with lower trade union representation in the core Council representation, or a case of simply less trade union activity being required within the core Council.

The Head of Human Resources advised the Committee that the proportion of time spent on trade union activity was dependent upon how good employer relationships were with the workforce. Members were informed that in the case of the Council the relationship between the Council and workforce was strong and largely delivered through partnership working. Trade Union representation in the Core Council was through Unison and GMB Trade Unions, with representation also cutting across schools which, therefore, led to a proportion of school related costs being paid to those trade unions.

Councillor Diccio noted that it was positive to hear that there were good trade union relations within the Core Council, which presumably if it were not the case then the percentage of time allocated to trade union activities would increase leading to attributable higher costs.

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The Head of Human Resources clarified that an increase in required trade union activity and representation would not necessarily mean that the Trade Union Branch Secretary would be able to address most of those issues. If more workplace issues did arise it would likely lead to greater involvement of trade union workplace representatives and therefore the proportion of their time on trade union duties would rise accordingly.

Councillor Diccio stated his appreciation for the good work the Trade Union Representatives undertook on behalf of their members and for their positive interactions with the Council side in undertaking their duties.

Having considered the report, the Remuneration Committee:

RESOLVED:

- (i) To approve the publication of the information contained within Appendix A and Appendix B in accordance with legislative requirements.

The Remuneration Committee meeting closed at 6:17 p.m.