

Report of the Executive Director

EVALUATION AND RE-EVALUATION OF POSTS POLICY1. Purpose of report

To seek the Joint Committee's recommendation of the revised Evaluation and Re-evaluation of Posts policy reflecting feedback from the senior management team, Unions and a review of the policy by Project HR working with East Midlands Councils.

2. Background

A review of the current Evaluation and Re-evaluation of Posts policy was commissioned by the Council in November 2019 and was delivered in July of 2020 (an extract from the report is provided at appendix 1), feedback was also sought from the senior management team. In addition, the Unions have requested changes to the Job Evaluation Panel configuration to allow an appropriately trained Branch Union Representative to be a member of the decision making panel and clarity for employees in respect to attendance at meetings of the panel when re-evaluating their post.

The review completed by Project HR was received by the Council in July 2020, it was a broad review which include the Evaluation and Re-evaluation of Posts Policy. The review highlighted that:

- selecting the Job Evaluation panel from a wide group of senior managers can potentially result in inconsistencies.
- the approach taken by the Council in respect of panel members is one of the common approaches used by organisations but that another approach includes allowing a Union Representative to be a member of the Panel.
- a change to the policy is recommended which allows employees / managers to use, in evidence, comparisons with other internal posts.
- the Council should consider its approach to the use of the scarcity rating arrangement.

The first three points have been addressed within the revised policy, along with the issues raised by senior managers and the Unions, a copy of which can be found in appendix 2. Details of the specific changes proposed can be found in appendix 3. The fourth point has already been addressed in June 2021 as a result of the new Market Supplement policy being adopted by the Personnel Committee.

3. Financial implications

There are no financial implications as a result of the changes proposed.

Recommendation

The LJCC is asked to RECOMMEND the amended Evaluation and Re-evaluation of Posts policy to Personnel Committee.

Extract from report for Broxtowe Borough Council from Project HR

Many Councils use two job evaluation schemes to evaluate all of their jobs. Schemes such as the GLPC scheme and the NJC scheme tend to be less suitable for very senior management and executive roles and the Hay scheme is often used to complete job evaluation from top to bottom in an organisation. As the schemes are used vertically and the switch between one scheme and the other is high in hierarchical terms there is very little concern that an employee from the GLPC scheme would compare themselves to an employee covered by the Hay scheme.

The Council has a comprehensive job evaluation and appeal policy for both schemes that covers employee and management led job evaluation requests. The process described is fairly typical within a local authority setting. However, the following comments are made:

- The process involves relatively high-level officers. Two or three Heads of Service are used for JE panels and Heads of Service and/or Chief Officers are used for appeal panels. The pool of evaluators is quite large – whilst this arrangement draws on the experience of a wide range of evaluators it does have some issues too. As the number of evaluations per year is relatively low, evaluators can find it difficult to keep their job evaluation knowledge and skills up to date (i.e. they can become a bit ‘rusty’). Having a wide pool of evaluators can also lead to inconsistent evaluations as different evaluators interpret the scheme and local conventions differently. Reducing the number of evaluators increases consistency of job evaluation outcomes.
- Different Councils adopt different approaches to job evaluation. The three usual approaches are i) to hold a job evaluation panel (either with or without [JE] trained union representatives); ii) to hold a panel with a union ‘observer’; or iii) to hold a panel without union involvement and then send the JE outcomes to the union for comments/challenge – within a specific time period (usually less than one week)
- It is common practice that JE panels involve at least one officer from HR, but this is not strictly necessary. All that is required is that the people involved in evaluations are trained and competent in the use of the scheme and do not have any conflict of interest with the job being evaluated.
- The policy states in several places (section 3.2, page 9 – second paragraph; section 3.6, page 12 – second paragraph; section 4.3, page 14 – third paragraph; section 8.1, page 18 – third paragraph; section 9, page 19 – third paragraph; section 10.2, page 21 – third paragraph) that comparison with other posts, internal or external, is not allowed. Whilst I agree that comparing to external posts should not form part of an evaluation, I think that internal comparison is valid for several reasons. Firstly, job evaluation is about creating a fair and robust rank order of jobs that can be used to develop and maintain a grade structure. I therefore think that if an employee can ‘see’ another job that is comparable to theirs, which is graded higher, it is fair to cite that as a reason or evidence of potential grade change. Secondly, equal pay legislation includes a comparison of ‘work of equal value’ so, as long as there is a difference of gender, citing another post within the organisation is used in law. I therefore think it is incongruous not to allow a comparison to an internal post. Lastly, job evaluation should be seen to be fair and consistent. Not allowing an internal comparison may undermine how the scheme and process are viewed by employees and the integrity of the grading structure.

- Scarcity Rating – It is noted that East Midlands Councils have provided a more detailed report on this aspect of the pay arrangements. The policy states that either a 5% or 10% increase is applied to the job evaluation score if certain recruitment difficulties are experienced. I have never seen this approach before. It is usual practice that a reward

problem (not being able to recruit) needs a reward solution and not a job evaluation solution. Generally, in situations where an employer cannot recruit, market data is gathered and then compared to the salary offered. If there is a significant gap that is considered to be a major factor in the recruitment difficulty then a temporary market supplement is agreed. I cannot see the point in limiting a job evaluation score increase to either 5% or 10% - this is likely to cap any increase at one grade. At the end of the day if the Council needs to recruit a particular post and the market rate significantly exceeds the job evaluation outcome then the Council needs to pay a market supplement to 'bridge the gap' and not limit any increase – otherwise the recruitment problem may persist.

REFERENCED