

Employee Forum 15 April 2026

Member Representatives Present:

Councillor M Bowen, Dr M Havard, Mrs S Hoss, Councillor B Price, Councillor V Thomas and Councillor C Williams

Staff Representatives Present:

C Broome, D Hughes, B Jones, G Jones, T Jones, R Lovell, A McConchie, B Rees, and Alannah Simonson.

Officers Present:

J Arkley (Head of People Services), TD Jones (Chief Executive), C Llewellyn (Democratic Services Manager – Minutes).

Union Representatives Present:

J Lewis (Unison).

(Virtual Meeting: 10:00am – 10:40am)

1. Election of Chair for the meeting

On the proposal of TD Jones, it was **resolved** that G Jones take the Chair for the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from K Gravell, Mr G A Jones and C Price.

3. Introductions

All those present introduced themselves.

4. Disclosures of interest

No disclosures of interest were received.

5. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on the 12 March 2025 were presented for confirmation and signature.

T Jones (Staff Representative) highlighted that he had incorrectly been recorded as being present at the previous meeting despite not having been in attendance. It was agreed that the attendance list of the previous meeting be amended.

On the proposal of Councillor V Thomas, seconded by Councillor M Bowen, it was **agreed** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 12



March 2025 be authenticated, subject to the above amendment.

6. Action Log

With regards to action 944, the Living Wage Accreditation, the Chief Executive confirmed that although the Authority continued to pay staff the living wage, accreditation had not yet been obtained due to changes in procurement processes and the way this would impact upon contractors. Despite this challenge, it was confirmed that the Authority still aimed to achieve the accreditation and had sought guidance from Cynnal Cymru to progress the matter.

Noted.

7. Pay and Grading Review Report

The Head of People Services presented a report that provided a review of the Pay and Grading Review and featured details regarding the process, staff engagement, the main outcomes, the financial impacts, the timescale, the appeals, and the lessons learnt from the process.

A Staff Representative queried whether staff would have the opportunity for their roles to be reevaluated again in future should their duties evolve. The Head of People Services confirmed that all staff were entitled to request that their roles be re-evaluated 12 months after the Pay and Grading Review providing there had been a fundamental change in their role. It was agreed that the appeal process and form would be uploaded onto Parcnet as a reminder for staff.

The Head of People Services offered to host briefing sessions for staff on the job evaluation process and Staff Representatives agreed to seek expressions of interest from staff in their areas.

It was noted that in total, West Midlands Employers were paid £27,084 for the work that they undertook on the Pay and Grading Review and a Staff Representative queried whether the Authority considered this to be value for money. In response, the Chief Executive confirmed that he considered the cost to be appropriate and justified given the level of work conducted by WME during the process. The Chief Executive acknowledged that the timescale had been longer than anticipated which had impacted costs however the Authority had developed a good working relationship with WME and had subsequently delivered a satisfying outcome for staff and the organisation.

With regards to lessons learnt as a result of the process, a Member commented that more frequent communications with staff on the progress of the Pay and Grading Review could have been beneficial and this was acknowledged by Officers.



It was noted that as a result of the Review, First aid allowances would be phased out over time. In response to a Members query, the Head of People Services confirmed that the allowance had been a historical arrangement with only a small number of qualified first aiders within the Authority receiving it therefore it had been agreed that it be phased out.

The Chief Executive took the opportunity to thank UNISON for supporting the Authority and individual staff throughout the review process. In response, UNISON commended the Authority for their approach to the Review which had been clear and transparent, and for including the UNISON Representatives at all appropriate junctures to ensure roles were assessed fairly and correctly.

Noted.