

Rother District Council

Report to: Licensing and General Purposes Committee

Date: 31 August 2022

Title: Pay Award 2022/23

Report of: Maria Benford – Human Resources Manager

Purpose of Report: To agree the staff pay award for 2022/23

Officer

Recommendation(s): **Recommendation to COUNCIL:** That the staff pay award proposal for 2022/23 be agreed.

Introduction

1. On 4 April 2022, the Licensing and General Purposes Committee (L&GPC) met to consider the staff pay award for 2022/23. The problem of staff recruitment is a national issue and concerns were raised at the meeting around the recruitment difficulties local authorities were facing for professional posts. The Committee was mindful that Rother needed to remain competitive within the recruitment market.
2. A pay proposal was agreed by the Committee and has since been sent to UNISON, the Council's approved union body, for consideration. At the time of writing the original report, the national pay award offer was unknown.

Details of the proposals

3. The proposal from the original meeting was for 2.5% or £500 whichever is the greater to be applied to the current scale points with the rate decreasing as it is applied to the upper pay scales until the budgeted figure was achieved. The Chief Finance Officer has since costed this proposal and the total cost to the Council is £113,000 per annum, which is just about affordable within the funding envelope of £110,000. The proposal was shared with UNISON and their response is shown in Appendix A.

Other Options

4. The UNISON consultation feedback needs to be considered. The proposal is aligned with the UNISON NJC Pay Claim 2022/23 and would see Rother employees receive either £2,000 or an increase in line with the current rate of RPI, whichever is higher. This proposal is highly concerning because it would cost £930,000, which is £820,000 higher than the funding envelope. It would put significant pressure on our budgets and may well result in posts being cut.
5. The National pay offer being made to unions is currently an increase of £1,925 on all NJC pay scales. This also includes a proposal of 4.04% increase to all allowances. They also propose an increase of one day to all employees' annual leave entitlement from April 2023. This is currently being

considered by all unions. The cost of this proposal would be about £465,000, which is £355,000 higher than the funding envelope.

6. Members may wish to consider an alternative offer of which is to pay all staff a one-off amount of £500 plus a 1% increase on their pay scale point. This option is a more affordable proposal and will not put the Council at risk of overlapping our pay scales and potentially losing valuable staff. This will also put the Council in a more secure position with regards recruitment for vacant posts within the Council. This will also ensure we are following our own commitment to equal and fair pay across the Council. Finally, it will protect the Council from a large increase in the cost of its base budget. The cost of this proposal is £196,000, which is £85,000 more than the funding envelope.

Conclusion

7. The costs of the proposals have been set out in paragraphs 3 to 6 and are summarised in the table below:

Proposed pay award	Cost £	Funding Envelope per MTFP (£)	Funding Shortfall (£)
2.5% or £500 on a sliding scale – see paragraph 3	113,000	110,000	3,000
The higher of £2,000 or 12.3% - (current RPI rate) - see paragraph 4	930,000	110,000	820,000
£1,925 plus 4.04% increase in allowances – see paragraph 5	465,000	110,000	355,000
Single payment of £500 plus a 1% pay point increase – see paragraph 6	196,000	110,000	85,000

8. The L&GPC is recommended to agree to the pay award proposal for 2022/23. It is likely that whatever increase / proposal is recommended, it will be outside the budgeted amount and will therefore be a recommendation to full Council.

Other Implications	Applies?	Other Implications	Applies?
Human Rights	Yes	Equalities and Diversity	Yes
Crime and Disorder	No	Consultation	Yes
Environmental	No	Access to Information	No
Risk Management	Yes	Exempt from publication	No

Executive Director:	Malcolm Johnston
Report Contact Officer:	Maria Benford
e-mail address:	maria.benford@rother.gov.uk
Appendices:	Appendix A - Unison Consultation
Relevant Previous Minutes:	LG21/18
Background Papers:	NONE
Reference Documents:	NONE



Rother Unison Staff Side Pay Claim 2022-23

With reference to the Licensing and General Purposes Committee 4 April 2022 it is noted Members are keen to support the Council's employees on the lower pay grades. Rother Unison welcomes this support and have accordingly revised our pay claim. Rother Unison however cannot accept that staff pay will only rise overall by 2.5%.

Since Rother Unison's original pay claim, inflation has continued to rise and it is now, as at 21 July 2022, 9.4% and a recent forecast made by the Bank of England is that the inflation rate will reach 11% later in 2022. It should be noted the Government have recently accepted the following recommendations on public sector pay from the public sector review bodies. Pay rises this year for the following public sector workers are as follows:

NHS staff in England: The lowest earners, will see a 9.3% increase in their basic pay. Dentists and doctors will receive a 4.5% pay rise. Minimum award for nurses is 4%, most will receive a higher award. These NHS figures are back dated to April 2022.

Police in England and Wales: All police officers, from September 2022, will get the equivalent of a 5% overall pay rise.

Teachers in England: Pay rises from September 2022 between 5% and 8.9%.

Armed Forces: All members will receive an increase in base pay of 3.75%, with accommodation charges capped at 1%. Source: BBC

Local Government: Employers have offered a flat rate pay rise of £1,925 to all council staff. Source: Local Government News.

With the above pay awards agreed by Central Government for public sector workers it would be totally unacceptable for local government workers at Rother District Council to be treated in a different way.

Our 2022 claim (which has the overwhelming support of members) aligning with the Unison [NJC Pay Claim 2022-23](#) would see council employees receive either a £2,000 rise at all pay grades or the current rate of RPI (presently 11.8%), whichever is higher for each individual.

Unions nationally say staff working in local government have seen an average of 27.5% wiped from the value of their pay since 2010.

Rother Unison fully appreciate the financial pressures Rother District Council is under, however employees, at all levels, at Rother District Council are personally under their own extreme financial pressures at home.

**Rother Unison Staff Side
On behalf of Unison members**

27 July 2022