

Personnel Committee – 15 March 2021

1% Pay Increase to Recognise and Reward Staff for their Hard Work and Resilience through the Covid Pandemic

1. Summary

The purpose of this report is to recognise the hard work and resilience shown by all employees in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in doing so say thank you by seeking approval to increase by 1%, pay for all Walsall Council staff. This change will be with effect from 01 April 2021.

2. Recommendations

- To recognise the hard work and resilience shown by all employees in response to the COVID 19 pandemic.
- By way of a thank you to approve an increase in pay of 1% for all those employees in scope with effect from 01 April 2021.

3. Background Information

Aim

- 3.1 The proposed increase in pay as detailed in this report is an acknowledgement and thank you to employees for all of the hard work and commitment they have shown during what has been an unprecedented and very challenging year. Staff have not just delivered business as usual in challenging times but have played a key role supporting the citizens and businesses of Walsall and continued to deliver existing and new Council Services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposed increase would not only acknowledge the above and beyond work our employees have undertaken but serve as a thank you from the Council and recognition of the value of our employees, serving to boost morale and motivation in what continues to be an unprecedented and challenging time.

Know

- 3.2 The current Walsall Council pay scales compared to the proposed new pay scales (applicable from 01 April 2021 if approved) re-aligns to national pay scales (where applicable) for NJC Local Government Employees, Soulbury, JNC for Youth & Community Workers and Unattached Teachers as shown in **appendix 1**. Where there is no equivalent national pay scale, the new scale has been calculated by payroll, based on an increase of 1% per spinal column point. This increase also applies to corporate apprentices (which will mean that they are paid 1% above the national minimum wage) and to Walsall Council's locally agreed JNC Chief Officer pay scales applicable to Directors/Chief Executive where 1% has been added to the pay scales as shown in **appendix 2**.

For the staff who TUPE'd across to Walsall Council on NHS Terms and Conditions, they will receive 1% increase but this increase will be on their current pay spine

which is independent of any nationally agreed pay rates for NHS workers. This change will be with effect from 01 April 2021.

- 3.3 The recommendation is for all those in scope to receive the applicable uplift effective from 01 April 2021, as this is a thank you for the hard work and commitment shown over the last 12 months related to the Covid pandemic.
- 3.4 If approved this proposal is independent of the pending national pay awards for 2021/22.
- 3.5 This proposal excludes those employees working in schools who are employed by the council but are “direct” schools employees (such as teachers, teaching assistants, administration and business support staff; school apprentices and school management).

Council corporate plan priorities

- 3.6 There are no direct contributions to the achievement of the council’s corporate plan priorities from this report. However, there is a potential impact on staff engagement through the positive appreciation of increasing pay by 1%, acknowledging the hard work undertaken during the pandemic, indirectly supporting the delivery of the *Internal Focus* priority. It will directly support the Proud promise of improved employee satisfaction and engagement.

Response

- 3.7 Subject to Personnel Committee approval, Payroll will increase pay by 1%. The intention will be for this to be paid in April 2021 salary payroll subject to no negative impact on the roll-out of the One Source project.
- 3.8 There is no intention to pay any back pay (before April 2021), the change will only be effective from 01 April 2021.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 If approved the additional cost of this proposal is estimated at circa £1 million. The additional cost has been included within the medium term financial plan agreed by Council in February. Members should note that this proposal re-aligns the council’s pay points with the national pay scales (where applicable) and will not be part of any future negotiations on the pay scales currently under discussion with the Trade Unions and the National Employers, This is a stand-alone proposal independent of any national negotiations.

5. Legal Considerations

- 5.1 There are no legal obligations on, nor consequences for, the Council arising from the proposals.

6. Risk Management

6.1 There are no identifiable risks associated with this implementation.

7. People

7.1 There is no direct impact on our citizens as a result of this report. The Equality Impact Assessment is attached **appendix 3**.

8. Consultation

8.1 The national pay scales (NJC Local Government Employees, JNC Youth Workers, and Soulbury) are negotiated with respective employer's bodies and trade unions.

8.2 The trade unions are consulted regarding any changes to the council pay policies. This proposed increase is welcomed by the trade unions, to acknowledge the hard work and commitment of all employees in response to the COVID 19 pandemic.

8.3 CMT considered this report on 11 March 2021.

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