

## **The Cabinet**

**9<sup>th</sup> January 2019 at 3.30pm  
at the Sandwell Council House, Oldbury**

**Present:** Councillor Eling (Leader of the Council - Chair);  
Councillors Carmichael, Costigan, Gavan,  
Hackett, D Hosell, Khatun, Moore, Shackleton and  
Trow.

**Apologies:** Councillors E M Giles, Rollins and Underhill.

**In attendance:** Councillors Ahmed, Downing and P Hughes.

1/19

### **Minutes**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup>  
December, 2018 be confirmed as a correct record.

### **Strategic Items**

2/19

#### **Digital Strategy 2018 - 2021 (Key Decision Ref. No. SMBC09/11/2018)**

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Core Council Services sought approval to the Council's Digital Strategy 2018 to 2021.

The Strategy 2018 – 2021 would bring significant transformation of services, demonstrating Sandwell's high-level vision, principles and ambitions for Digital Transformation both within its workforce and its communities.

## **The Cabinet – 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

The outcomes detailed in the strategy were determined following extensive engagement with the Council's workforce and Sandwell's communities. The focus of the strategy centred not only on developing digital services, but ensuring residents were at the heart of it, by supporting them in a digital environment. The Cabinet Member also reported that with shifts to online channels, such as the increased use of My Sandwell, which had 88,000 users a year, there was a need to ensure all sectors of the community, including those with complex needs or who were vulnerable, could access online services.

Whilst the Strategy had been considered by the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, the Chair of the Board felt earlier scrutiny consultation would have been beneficial. The Chair felt that a review should be undertaken in 12 months, to consider implementation plans, and sought reassurance that vulnerable groups and the elderly would be catered for in the implementation of the strategy. The Chair also raised concerns regarding public sector reform and information sharing between local authorities and the NHS in particular.

In response, the Cabinet Member for Culture and Core Council Services stated that lessons had been learnt regarding consultation with wider communities. The Council would not be developing implementation plans and was now adopting a different approach by helping to change the culture and raising the aspiration of communities within Sandwell.

**Resolved** that the Council's Digital Strategy 2018 to 2021 be approved.

3/19

### **Implementing the 2019 Pay Award (Key Decision Ref. No. SMBC29/11/2018)**

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Core Council Services sought approval to implement a revised pay structure to comply with the National Joint Council for Local Government pay structure and spine from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

In December 2017, Cabinet agreed to a two year agreement regarding a 2% pay increase at each point of the pay structure, effective from April 2018.

## **The Cabinet – 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

The proposed recommendations sought to implement a new series of points between 1 – 22 to future proof the structure and take account of factors such as a rise in the National Living Wage. This was agreed at Joint Consultative Panel.

The new pay spine was based on the following:

- a bottom rate of £9.00 per hour on new Spinal point 1 (equivalent to the old Spinal point 6);
- ‘pairing off’ old spinal points 6 to 17 inclusive to create new spinal points 1 to 6 inclusive;
- equal steps of 2% between each new spinal point 1 to 22 inclusive (equivalent to old spinal points 6 – 28);
- the introduction of 5 new spinal points to allow for the equal steps;
- on new spinal points 23 and above (equivalent to old spinal points 29 and above), a 2% increase would be applied.

The Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board commended the Council for implementing the strategy amid a squeeze on the income of lower paid workers due to policies pursued by the Government.

**Resolved** that the Council implement a revised National Joint Council (NJC) pay structure and spine from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 as set out in the Appendix.

4/19

### **Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/20 (Key Decision Ref. No. SMBC09/12/2018)**

The Leader of the Council presented the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2019/20.

The scheme provided critical support to low income families in the borough and was based on income bands to enable residents on very low incomes to receive 100% support. It was stated that Sandwell was the only council in the West Midlands to provide up to 100% support.

## The Cabinet – 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019

Due to the introduction of Universal Credit, it was proposed to amend Sandwell's Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme to include the following features:

- replace the current weekly means tested approach with a series of income bands for different household sizes;
- simplify the claiming process and maximise entitlement to Local Council Tax Reduction for all applicants by treating the notification received from the Department for Work and Pensions of a person's entitlement to Universal Credit as a valid claim for the scheme;
- make all new applications to Council Tax Reduction effective from the date they happen;
- introduce a £5 per week deduction for non-dependants not in work. This was a presumed contribution other adults in the household should make towards Council Tax;
- having only two income bands for families with children as follows:
  - families with 1 child
  - families with 2 or more children
- reduce the capital cut-off limit to £3,000

The Leader of the Council stated that via the scheme, Sandwell continued to protect the lowest income families against the cuts made by Government.

**Resolved to recommend to Council** that the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2019/2020 be approved.

5/19

### **Proposed New Structure for Law and Governance (Key Decision Ref. No. SMBC10/12/2018)**

The Cabinet Member for Culture and Core Council Services sought approval to the proposed new structure for the Law and Governance directorate and to the change in title from Director – Monitoring Officer to Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer.

The identified business need detailed within the Business Case required the current staffing structure to change to ensure that the business need was effectively met and opportunities were maximised. The proposed staffing restructure set out in the Business Case was essential to meeting the business need.

## **The Cabinet – 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

The proposals addressed the current financial challenges adversely affecting the Directorate and helped ensure the longer term financial sustainability and stability of the Directorate. This was critical if the Directorate was to be an agile and responsive service provider with the capability and capacity to deliver high quality professional advice and support across the Council.

The proposed realignment of staff and other resources set out within the Business Case would be supported by a Transformation Programme for the Directorate. The Transformation Programme would help drive change, efficiency and performance by:-

- embedding revised values and working principles;
- exploring and implementing digital solutions;
- imposing sound financial management and discipline; and
- adopting an insightful and emotional intelligent approach to making improvements.

The Business Case and Transformation Programme together created key opportunities to develop a highly skilled and agile workforce with the capacity to deliver the identified business need and support the Council in delivering Vision 2030. To achieve this, and the financial challenge, a revised structure was proposed.

The revised structure divided the Directorate into three thematic areas covering the following services/functions:

- **Democracy**
  - Civic and Member Services
    - Member Development/Support
    - Civic Support
    - Executive Secretariat Support (which is subject to a separate review forming part of the Executive Member Development Programme).
  - Committee Services
    - Committee Administration
    - Scrutiny
    - Constitutional Matters
  - Electoral Services
    - Elections
    - Electoral Registration

## **The Cabinet – 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

- Legal and Assurance
  - Corporate Services
  - Traded Legal Services
  - Social Care Services
  - Governance and Business Support
- Registration
  - Registrars
  - Bereavement Services
  - Coronial Services

In addition to delivering:–

- a more resilient and capable workforce;
  - greater opportunities for staff;
  - a more agile workforce; and
  - the ability to better succession plan

In response to questions raised by the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, the Vice Chair of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board and the Chair of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board, the Cabinet Member for Culture and Core Council Services confirmed that:-

- there were currently opportunities within Committee Services to generate additional income through the administering of the school admission and exclusion appeals;
- the scrutiny function would be underpinned by a Scrutiny Lead and a Project Support Officer who, alongside the Statutory Scrutiny Officer, would help to ensure the appropriate level of capacity necessary to conduct a scrutiny review, raise the profile and prominence of the scrutiny process and encourage greater engagement;
- a review of neighbourhood working was underway which was focusing on refreshing the town and neighbourhood model which included improvements to its processes, governance structures and safeguards being developed. Committee Services would help support any constitutional changes that were required and provide advice and assistance to help effective locality working and decision-making;
- under the proposed structure, Electoral Services Officers roles within the team would be multifunctional and the Deputy Electoral Services Manager would take the lead on

## **The Cabinet – 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

developing and implementing a refreshed Electoral Participation and Engagement Plan. The proposed structure was designed to build on both previous and recent successes, as well as capitalising on the renewed momentum generated by the Electoral Participation Committee's work.

The Cabinet Member felt that the proposed structure would embed greater resilience and confidence and the rigour applied to the process, including its depth and need for it, as well as aligning to the Vision 2030 values, provided a framework which future restructures should follow.

### **Resolved:-**

- (1) that the directorate's title change from "Director – Monitoring Officer" directorate to "Law and Governance" directorate be approved with immediate effect;
- (2) that the Director's change in title from "Director – Monitoring Officer" to "Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer" be approved with immediate effect;
- (3) that the identified business need and analysis detailed within the Business Case be received;
- (4) that the proposed restructure set out in the Business Case be approved as the basis of formal consultation with all affected staff and Trade Unions;
- (5) that subject to Resolution (6) below, the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer be authorised to determine and confirm the revised restructure for the Law and Governance directorate, having regard to all responses received during consultation as referred to in Resolution (3) above;

## **The Cabinet – 9<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

- (6) that in the event that significant changes are to be made to the proposed restructure, as set out in the Business Case, following formal consultation, a further report shall be presented to Cabinet concerning the proposed restructure of the Law and Governance Directorate.

(Meeting ended at 4.08 pm)

This meeting was webcast live and is available to view on the Council's website (<http://sandwell.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>).

Contact Officer: Andrew Grant Democratic Services Unit 0121 569 3040
--



# National Employers Pay Offer - 1 April 2018 till 31 March 2020

Current Pay Structure - 2018			
SCP	Grade	01-Apr-18	Hrly £
6	A	16394	8.50
7		16495	8.55
8		16626	8.62
9	B	16755	8.68
10		16863	8.74
11		17007	8.82
12		17173	8.90
13		17391	9.01
14	C	17681	9.16
15		17972	9.32
16		18319	9.50
17		18672	9.68
18		18870	9.78
19		19446	10.08

Assimilation Rules - 2018 to 2019	
SCP	New SCP
6	1
7	1
8	A2
9	B2
10	3
11	3
12	4
13	4
14	5
15	5
16	6
17	6
18	7
19	8

Proposed Pay Structure - 2019			
SCP	Grade	01-Apr-19	Hrly £
1	A	17364	9.00
2		17711	9.18

2	B	17711	9.18
3		18065	9.36
4		18426	9.55

20	D	19819	10.27
21		20541	10.65
22		21074	10.92
23		21693	11.24
24		22401	11.61
25		23111	11.98

20	9
21	11
22	12
23	14
24	15
25	17

26	E	23866	12.37
27		24657	12.78
28		25463	13.20
29		26470	13.72
30		27358	14.18
31		28221	14.63
32	F	29055	15.06
33		29909	15.50
34		30756	15.94
35		31401	16.28
36		32233	16.71
37		33136	17.18
38	G	34106	17.68
39		35229	18.26
40		36153	18.74
41		37107	19.23
42		38052	19.72
43		39002	20.22
44	H	39961	20.71
45		40858	21.18
46		41846	21.69
47		42806	22.19
48		43757	22.68
49		44697	23.17
50	I	45651	23.66
51		46608	24.16
52		47581	24.66
53		48567	25.17
54	J	49564	25.69
55		50586	26.22
56		51628	26.76
57		52669	27.30

26	19
27	20
28	22
29	23
30	24
31	25
32	26
33	27
34	28
35	29
36	30
37	31
38	32
39	33
40	34
41	35
42	36
43	37
44	38
45	39
46	40
47	41
48	42
49	43
50	44
51	45
52	46
53	47
54	48
55	49
56	50
57	51

5	C	18795	9.74
6		19171	9.94
7		19554	10.14
8		19945	10.34
9	D	20344	10.54
11		21166	10.97
12		21589	11.19
13		22021	11.41
14		22462	11.64
15		22911	11.88
16		23369	12.11
17	E	23836	12.35
18		24313	12.60
19		24799	12.85
20		25295	13.11
21		25801	13.37
22		26317	13.64
23	F	26999	13.99
24		27905	14.46
25		28785	14.92
26		29636	15.36
27		30507	15.81
28		31371	16.26
29	G	32029	16.60
30		32878	17.04
31		33799	17.52
32		34788	18.03
33		35934	18.63
34		36876	19.11
35	H	37849	19.62
36		38813	20.12
37		39782	20.62
38		40760	21.13
39		41675	21.60
40		42683	22.12
41	I	43662	22.63
42		44632	23.13
43		45591	23.63
44		46564	24.14
45		47540	24.64
46		48533	25.16
47	J	49539	25.68
48		50555	26.20
49		51598	26.74
50		52661	27.30
51		53722	27.85

	Overlapping grade
	Removal of new SCP10
	New points