Belfast Health and Social Care Trust
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FOI/38295

23 October 2026

Senior Estates Staff Job Evaluation and Regrading

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, please provide the following information and responses regarding the recent and ongoing regrading of several senior Estates staff within the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust.

1. Business Case, Governance, and Financial Sign-Off

a. Was a formal business case produced and approved by the appropriate Executive Director to demonstrate that the regrading of multiple senior Estates staff was justified, affordable, and sustainable?

A formal business case was not produced or approved by Executive Director. In accordance with Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Belfast Health and Social Care Trust can confirm it does not hold the information requested.

b. If a business case (or associated decision / sign-off documentation) was produced, please provide a copy as part of this FOI response.

A formal business case was not produced.

In terms of associated decision / sign-off documentation, relevant information has already been disclosed in response to FOI 36218. This information is publicly available via Belfast Trust's Disclosure Log: Disclosure logs | Belfast Health & Social Care Trust website

Accordingly, the Trust is applying Section 21 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Information Accessible by Other Means), as the information is reasonably accessible to the applicant and is not required to be provided again.

Estates do not hold any further recorded information falling within the scope of this request. The Job Evaluation process was undertaken, and Estates hold no additional records relating to the matters requested.

c. Were Executive and Non-Executive Directors informed of regional concerns from other Northern Ireland Health and Social Care (HSC) Trusts regarding the impact of these senior Belfast Trust Estates regrades on the wider regional workforce framework?

Not applicable. Under Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Belfast Trust can confirm that it does not hold recorded information in relation to this request.

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2. Organisational Hierarchy and Operational Governance

a. Did the Trust Board approve the revised organizational hierarchy resulting from these regrades and were formal assessments conducted to ensure the new structure is operationally effective and structurally sound?

Not applicable. Under the Job Matching and Evaluation Protocol, Trust Board approval is not required for a changed job application.

b. Is it Trust Board policy or accepted practice to permit subordinate senior Estates staff to be placed on the same pay band as their direct managers?

The job evaluation processes are not within the general remit of Trust Board. The NHS Job Evaluation Scheme is used to determine the pay bands for all posts on Agenda for Change (AFC) contracts.

Under the job matching process, posts are 'matched' to national profiles by a panel of two trained management side and trade union side matchers. They are also consistency checked by a trained management side and trade union side job evaluation lead. If, following the job matching and consistency checking process, it is agreed by the panel and consistency checkers that the post being matched falls within a new band range, it is possible for post holders to be placed on the same pay band as their direct managers.

c. Has the Trust Board evaluated whether these simultaneous senior regrades were part of a coordinated strategy by senior Estates management to leverage subordinate-manager grading impacts to achieve higher-grade outcomes at the very senior management level?

Not applicable. Under Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Belfast Trust can confirm that it does not hold recorded information in relation to this request.

3. Equal Pay, Workforce Morale, and HSC Values

a. What formal risk assessments or equality impact evaluations were conducted prior to these regrades to ensure they do not create pay inequalities or expose the Trust to future equal pay claims?

Not applicable. Under Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Belfast Trust can confirm that it does not hold recorded information in relation to this request.

b. Has the Trust Board evaluated the impact on workforce morale of upgrading multiple senior staff simultaneously while lower-grade staff have not received similar reviews, specifically regarding the risk of creating a two-tier system or the perception of preferential treatment for senior staff?

Not applicable. Under Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Belfast Trust can confirm that it does not hold recorded information in relation to this request.

c. Does the Trust Board consider the regrading process applied to these senior Estates roles to be fair, transparent, and aligned with core HSC values?

Not applicable. Under Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Belfast Trust can confirm that it does not hold recorded information in relation to this request.

4. Integrity of Submissions and Corrective Oversight

a. Did the Trust Board or senior Executive team independently verify that the evidence and job descriptions submitted by senior Estates managers to justify regrades, back-pay claims, and pension calculations were accurate and not embellished?

The job evaluation process does not involve input from either Trust Board or senior Executive team. As such, there was no requirement for approval or verification from them for the regrade or any of the associated actions, including the back pay, pensions and so forth.

b. If any impropriety, inaccurate submissions, or governance failures are identified regarding these regrades, what formal commitment will the Trust Board make to take immediate corrective and disciplinary action in the interest of transparent leadership?

This question appears to be speculative in nature and in accordance with Section 1(1)(a) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Belfast Trust can confirm it does not hold the information requested.