

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 23 NOVEMBER 2016

C1, MULBERRY PLACE, 5, CLOVE CRESCENT, LONDON E14 2BG

Members Present:

Councillor Danny Hassell (Chair)
Councillor Denise Jones (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Shah Alam
Councillor David Edgar
Councillor Aminur Khan
Councillor Muhammad Ansar Mustaqim
Councillor Helal Uddin
Councillor Peter Golds (Substitute for Councillor Craig Aston)
Councillor Ayas Miah (Substitute for Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed)

Apologies:

Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed
Councillor Craig Aston

Officers Present:

Will Tuckley	(Chief Executive)
Runa Basit	(Head of School Governance & Information)
Mark Norman	(Legal Advisor & Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Stuart Young	(Interim Divisional Director, HR & Transformation)
Joel West	(Senior Democratic Services Officer)

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

There were no declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests.

2. MINUTES

The unrestricted minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 14 September 2016 were agreed and signed as a correct record, subject to the following amendments:

- Minute 3.1 – Elections Update – replacing ‘police officers understood’ with ‘police officers increasingly understood’ in the first sentence of the final paragraph.
- Minute 3.2 – Organisation Structure – to add that a discussion had taken place regarding the assimilation of current staff into the new structure.

- Minute 3.3 – Workforce Diversity – replacing ‘LGA’ with ‘GLA’.
- Minute 7 – Any Other Business’: Adding ‘Some’ to the beginning of the first sentence.

Matters arising

Further to Minute 3.3 - Workforce Diversity – the Chair asked that the previously requested information on gender and ethnic-blind recruitment options and report on sickness management be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

3. REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 Local Authority Governor Applications

Runa Basit, Head of School Governance & Information, introduced the report, which summarised applications from five persons who had applied to be nominated for appointment as a local authority governor at Tower Hamlets maintained schools.

Following consideration of the information supplied, including both unrestricted and restricted reports, the Committee agreed to nominate all five applicants to the school governor position each had applied for.

RESOLVED -

1. That the applications for Local Authority Governors as detailed in the report be approved as follows:
 - a. That Tat-Seng Chiam be nominated for appointment as a governor at Harry Gosling Primary School under the 2012 School Governance (Constitution) Regulations.
 - b. That Daniel Murshad be nominated for appointment as a governor at Stepney Green School under the 2012 School Governance (Constitution) Regulations.
 - c. That Louis Coiffait be nominated for appointment as a governor at Olga Primary School under the 2012 School Governance (Constitution) Regulations.
 - d. That Jack Gillet be nominated for appointment as a governor at Lawdale Primary School under the 2012 School Governance (Constitution) Regulations.
 - e. That Isobel Cattermole be nominated for appointment as a governor at Beatrice Tate Special School under the 2012 School Governance (Constitution) Regulations.

3.2 Council Restructure Update

Will Tuckley, Chief Executive, introduced the report and explained the key changes to the organisational structure proposal that had been received at the previous meeting of the Committee.

In response to queries from some members of the Committee, Stuart Young, Interim HR, OD & Transformation Manager, explained that the requested delegated authority for posts technically meeting the definition of Deputy Chief Officer related to anomalies in the current structure, whereby junior staff report directly to Directors. He agreed to provide a list of all such posts to the Committee along with an updated Council structure chart that accounted for the changes proposed since the September 2016 Committee meeting.

Some members of the Committee indicated concern with the proposal from the report to appoint a recruitment agency to support appointments and external recruitment to any vacant posts that remain after the restructure. They felt such an approach contains a risk of the Council becoming dependent on such services and questioned whether this represented value for money. Will Tuckley, Chief Executive, explained that, as it is proposed to carry out a recruitment campaign for a number of posts, this will provide better value for money than if the services were used for a one-off appointment.

Mr Young also outlined engagement of trade unions since the previous meeting. Comments had been received from GMB, Unison and Unite. Mr Young had advised the Unite Branch Secretary that he could address this meeting of the Committee, but it appeared he had chosen not to attend.

RESOLVED that the Committee -

- a) Notes the responses to consultation as described at paragraph 3.4 of the report and subsequent changes to the structure at paragraph 3.5 of the report.
- b) Notes the arrangements put in place by the Chief Executive acting as Head of Paid service to implement the new management structure.
- c) Agrees to the proposal at paragraph 3.12 of the report that those posts technically meeting the definition of Deputy Chief Officer are delegated for appointment to the Head of Paid Service.

4. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

1. That in accordance with the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the remaining agenda item contained information defined as exempt or confidential in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

5. EXEMPT MINUTES

The exempt minutes of the General Purposes Committee meeting held on 14 September 2016 were agreed and signed as a correct record.

Matters arising

In response to questions from members of the Committee, Mr Tuckley advised:

- he hoped to be in a position shortly to provide an update on the resolutions of item 6.2 (Council Organisational Structure - Staffing Implications).
- he will investigate whether the Council's constitution, policies and guidance on Councillors' access to information is appropriate, including Councillors' access to restricted/exempt reports and documents.

6. EXEMPT REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

6.1 Exempt Appendices for Local Authority Governor Applications

The appendices for Local Authority Governor Applications were considered during item 3.1 on the unrestricted part of the agenda.

6.2 Council Restructure Staffing Implications

The Committee considered a restricted report on staffing implications of the Organisation structure update report considered in the unrestricted part of the agenda.

Members discussed the report and agreed the recommendations as set out.

The meeting ended at 8.50 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Danny Hassell
General Purposes Committee