

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE, 14 SEPTEMBER 2016

The Branch Secretary, Tower Hamlets UNISON has asked that the Committee be made aware of the following comments on Item 3.2 from tonight's agenda- Organisation Structure.

Unison Comments On Item 3.2 - Organisation Structure

1. We have had a very short period of time to look at this proposal. Our first concern is the paucity of information. We have asked for, but not been provided with, a copy of the current structure that this will replace. Without this it is not entirely clear where existing posts will be deleted. Our concern on this is not solely or predominantly about the impact on current individual post holders but the implications for the services themselves.
2. It is not clear to us that even at a senior managerial level there has been much scope for input and an initial glance at the proposed structure would raise concerns for example: does locating Ideas Stores under a customer access AD imply a dilution of the critical role they play in learning and cultural activity in favour of a model we see in some other places of a type of One Stop Shop approach which may not suit the needs of Tower Hamlets; do all sports, leisure and culture sit well in Children's or Community Safety in Adults; does such a wide remit as regeneration, housing and economic regeneration provide adequate recognition of the need for high level skills and experience in critical areas with quite distinct needs; does subordinating benefits within a wider revenues role have implications for a function that provides vital support in our local community . Are you being asked to reach potentially quite far reaching decisions on limited information?
3. Also it is not clear whether the Assistant Director level represents a change in management level and pay or a change in nomenclature. It would appear hard to justify any creation of a higher tier of management when staff are being expected to take on wider roles at lower levels of the structure usually without any increase in pay.
4. It is not clear what is being proposed in relation to assimilation other than that interviews may be appropriate and that the process below Chief Officers will be the responsibility of the Chief Executive. We would expect a transparent process where equal criteria apply, recognising that criteria may vary at some levels (for example the requirement for member appointments). For the avoidance of doubt it would seem to us to be potentially automatically unfair if more recently appointed officers were to be given direct assimilation claims but more longstanding officers given no claims or to be required to compete at interview.