

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7.00 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 13 APRIL 2016

**ROOM MP701, 7TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE
CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor Clare Harrisson (Chair)
Councillor Dave Chesterton (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Rachel Blake
Councillor Julia Dockerill
Councillor Shafiqul Haque
Councillor Sirajul Islam

Officers Present:

Simon Kilbey, (Service Head, HR and Workforce Development)
Sarah Williams, (Team Leader, Legal Services)
Charles Yankiah, (Senior Committee Officer, Democratic Services)
Seye Aina, (Committee Services Officer, Democratic Services)

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

No declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests were made.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

The unrestricted minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on 21 January 2016 were presented for approval.

RESOLVED

That the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 21 January 2016 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record of the proceedings.

Matters Arising:

1. 3.1 - Human Resources & Workforce Development Update

Simon Kilbey (Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development) informed the Committee that arrangements are being made for an officer involved in recruiting apprenticeships to give a presentation to Members.

2. 4.3 - Pay Policy 2016/17

Simon Kilbey informed the Committee that the additional information requested relating to the National Insurance changes would be circulated to members and also to the Pensions Committee/Board.

3. REPORTS OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES

3.1 Workforce Strategy

Simon Kilbey (Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development) presented the report on a new Workforce Strategy which covers a five year period from 2016/17 to 2021/22. The Strategic plan sets out the priority outcomes from 2016 - 2019 and links into the corporate policy procedures and the organisational change Best Value Improvement Plan.

The activities of the Workforce Strategy for the next 5 years include:

- Some of our services will be 'Integrated'.
- We will operate from a new Civic Centre in Whitechapel with a local presence at John Onslow House. These will be supported by small offices in the community.
- We will have a 'mixed market' of service provision.
- We will continue to reduce the total workforce expenditure.
- More of our back office services will be consolidated into single teams.
- We will have a flatter management structure.
- We will undertake open recruitment for the majority of our positions.
- Our workforce will have the skills to deliver public sector services in the future.
- Apprenticeship placements will form part of our service structures.
- Improvements in digital technology will change the way we engage with our customers.

The vision of the Workforce Strategy is:

- Great people
- Great performance
- Great place
- Great partnerships

The Chair welcomed the report and noted that the Corporate Management Team (CMT) has agreed the new Workforce Strategy. At the invitation of the Chair, the Members enquired about the following:

- How the Workforce Strategy timetable fits in with the financial plans for 2017 and the planned move to the Civic Centre.

- How do we ensure that the Workforce Strategy is reflective of the community.
- Are we preparing the workforce to be more technically-minded.
- How was the information for the Workforce Strategy compiled.
- Were there any difficulties in accessing the workforce.

In response to the questions from Members, Simon Kilbey agreed that details of the re-organisation plan needs to be clearer and more information included in the Workforce Strategy. The Workforce Strategy does not capture every single action but should include information on staff costs and financial savings. Separate information will be provided to the Committee on the saving plans for each year and on the terms and conditions review. The Service plan for Human Resources will include each service and capture more actions including the move to the Civic Centre, customer management, the workforce and customer access.

Simon Kilbey agreed that information on how the Workforce Strategy was compiled and access to the workforce is missing from this report. He confirmed that there had been a consultation process but no focus groups. He also stated that the Authority had taken steps year on year to make improvements to the workforce and make sure it is more reflective of the community. He also informed the Committee that Louise Russell's team had conducted a lot of research in this area.

Councillor Shafiqul Haque stated that the Authority need to move away from being insular and be more outward looking. He stressed the need to reach out more and in particular engage with the Somali community who are currently under-represented in the workforce. Members agreed that how we brief recruitment agencies is a key factor if we wish to attract a diverse pool.

During discussions Members agreed that if the Authority is making improvements in digital technology this work needs to be joined with the work on improvements to our customer access link to employment. Simon Kilbey informed the Committee that performance management and technical support will be articulated to make sure this is on target and this will be monitored by Human Resources as a separate piece of work.

Resolved that:

1. The report be noted.
2. Additional comments made by the Committee Members on the Workforce Strategy be reported back to the Corporate Management Team (CMT).
3. A Service plan for Human Resources be reported to the next meeting.

3.2 Pay Policy Update

Simon Kilbey (Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development) presented an update on the Pay Policy 2016-17 report, considered at the last committee meeting on 21 January 2016. The Pay Policy statement for 2016/17 was approved by Council at its meeting on 3 March 2016. At the meeting, the Committee were provided with an additional paper with Benchmarking information on London Borough pay ratios for 2016 - 17. The pay ratio for Tower Hamlets from the highest median to the lowest median is compared to 20 other London Boroughs.

At the invitation of the Chair, the Members enquired about:

- London Living Wage
- The single status issue
- Lower grades
- The senior management grades

In response to questions from the Members, Simon Kilbey informed the Committee that it will be a decision for Council whether to include the 8 staff based at Gorsefield in the London Living Wage (LLW) increase. Any decisions or updates on this issue will be reported to a future meeting.

Simon Kilbey informed the Committee that the single status issue may not be an issue depending on the outcome of the pay award. An interim arrangement is currently in place and the pay claim is under review by the both the Employers and the Unions. The Employers side has offered a two-year pay award with a 1% increase in 2016 and 2017, in addition to increasing the bottom pay points up to 6% to take account of the new National Living Wage. He further stated that the pay award for Chief Executive is 1% for the next two years, with the pay set to increase from next year.

Resolved that:

1. The report be noted.
2. Any additional updates on the pay policy or further legislative changes be reported at a future meeting.

3.3 Senior Manager Recruitment Update

Simon Kilbey (Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development) presented the update on current senior management vacancies and actions being taken to secure permanent appointments are concluded as soon as possible. The report provided further information on the Chief Executive performance management arrangements with details on the progress on

recruitment to Senior Management vacancies, the position in relation to continuation/termination of the current interim arrangements for covering senior management vacancies and the arrangements for appraisal of the Chief Executive.

Additional information was provided at the meeting with a report setting out the executive search timetable for the posts of the Service Head Legal and Democratic Services, Service Head Corporate Strategy and Equality and the Service Head Education and Partnerships.

At the invitation of the Chair the Members enquired about:

- The long gap from the close of applications to shortlisting.
- The necessary for Councillors to be on the Appointments Panel.
- What other Councils do regarding senior appointments.

In response to questions from the Members, Simon Kilbey informed the Committee that the closing dates for applications for the posts of the Service Head Legal and Democratic Services, Service Head Corporate Strategy and Equality and the Service Head Education and Partnerships is on 15 April 2016. Councillor representation is being canvassed and this will be followed by longlisting. He acknowledged that it can be onerous for Councillors to be on the Appointments panel, some Councils adopt the same appointments process as we have whilst others are devolved.

Simon Kilbey informed the Committee that the arrangements for the appraisal of the Chief Executive are being implemented alongside the conclusion of the probationary process for the Chief Executive. Appraisal training has commenced and the next stage is to set objectives. There has been a slippage in the planned timetable to review the objectives but a meeting on this is planned for 13 May 2016. Arrangements are also being made to appoint an Independent Advisor to the process.

The Chair welcomed the update on senior management vacancies and on the Chief Executive performance management arrangements. Committee Members made the following additional comments:

- Councillor Julia Dockerill expressed the view that as part of the governance review Members should have a voice on the level of their involvement in senior appointments.
- Councillor Dave Chesterton expressed the view that a proper record of the appraisal of the Chief Executive is important. It is key that this is carried out by an Independent person.
- Councillor Julia Dockerill expressed the view that as part of the induction process it would be nice for Members to meet the new Senior Managers.

Resolved that:

1. The report be noted.
2. Comments made by the Committee Members on the Senior Management Update/Recruitment to Vacancies be reported back to the Corporate Management Team (CMT).

3.4 Closed Recruitment in the Public Sector

Simon Kilbey (Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development) presented the report on the Business Innovation and Skills consultation and 'call for evidence' on the closed recruitment practices in the public sector. The closing date for the consultation is 15 April 2016.

The Committee received and noted the response of the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Council's draft response to the consultation. The Committee agreed that there is a similar approach in both responses and agreed with the Council that there is a need for greater transparency which would require regular reports to Government on the amount of internal recruitment undertaken.

Resolved that the report be noted.

3.5 Human Resources Committee Work Programme

Simon Kilbey (Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development) presented the report setting out a draft Human Resources Committee Work Programme 2016/17.

Resolved that:

1. the report be noted.
2. an updated work programme report be considered at the next meeting which should include:
 - a. The workforce and the planned move to the Civic Centre.
 - b. Senior Management Induction plans.
 - c. Numbers on Appointment Panels.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

There was no other business which the Chair considered urgent.

5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Wednesday 27 July 2016 at 7.00pm in Room MP701, 7th Floor, Town Hall, Mulberry Place, 5 Clove Crescent, London, E14 2BG.

The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Clare Harrisson
Human Resources Committee