

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7.30PM ON WEDNESDAY, 29 FEBRUARY 2012

**C1, 1ST FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE CRESCENT,
LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor Mohammed Abdul Mukit MBE (Chair)

Councillor Joshua Peck (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Alibor Choudhury

Councillor Ann Jackson

Councillor Craig Aston

Other Councillors Present:

Officers Present:

Simon Kilbey	– Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development
Isabella Freeman	– Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services)
Gordon McFarlane	– Human Resources
Evelyn Akoto	– Democratic Services

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence was received from Councillor Gloria Thienel for whom Councillor Craig Aston was deputising.

RESOLVED

That the apologies for absence be noted.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of personal or prejudicial interests were made.

3. REPORTS OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES

A member raised concerns as to the urgency and lateness of this report. He asked why the report had not been prepared for consideration earlier given that the legislation has been in place since late 2011, and enquired if the

Council has a process in place to forward plan for emerging legislative and policy changes.

Simon Kilbey (Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development), explained that the Government's statutory guidance had not been in place, moreover time was needed to consider the LGA / ALACE Code of Practice and that he had also wanted to review the approach that other boroughs were taking, given that some areas were discretionary. The Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development highlighted that in terms of timescales, Tower Hamlets is in a similar position to number of other boroughs.

Reasons for Urgency and Special Circumstances **Agreed.**

3.1 Localism Act 2011 - Pay Policy Statement 2012/13

Simon Kilbey (Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce Development) presented the Pay Policy report and explained that due to the Localism Act receiving Royal Assent on 15 November 2011, under Section 38(1) of the Act, the Council is required to adopt a pay policy statement for each financial year, commencing with 2012/13. The statement for 2012/13 should be approved and adopted by 31 March 2012 to enable it to be published by the start of the new financial year.

He explained that the pay policy statement sets out the Council's current policies and practice in relation to pay for all parts of the workforce, with the exception of school based employees. He highlighted that in relation to low pay, Tower Hamlets' pay practice is ahead of many other boroughs, with the Council paying just above the London Living wage as a minimum level.

With regards to section 6.5 of the report, the Service Head of Human Resources and Workforce Development stated that the Pay Policy guidance requires that a properly constituted Remuneration Committee be created to help ensure that the approach to reward is seen to be objective and transparent. He noted that the Human Resources Committee has a relevant function contained within its terms of reference to 'determine major policy on the terms and conditions on which staff hold office within allocated resources' to undertake this role.

During discussions about pay settlements a member asked whether officers have discussed the annual pay awards with trade unions. The Service Head of Human Resources and Workforce Development confirmed this and stated that the Council is part of national pay bargaining, with negotiations happening at a national level between the employers' side and trade unions. He agreed that this point could be made more explicit within the document.

With regards to any future proposed amendments to the pay policy, a member highlighted that the document does not explain the processes for making changes. The Service Head of Human Resources and Workforce

Development, agreed to add to the report more information on how any changes would be made within the year that the policy is effective for.

With regards to additional payments and allowances, a member asked about the allowances given to shift workers, for example night allowances, and also raised concerns about health and safety issues for staff finishing work late at night. The Service Head of Human Resources and Workforce Development replied that rather than reflect this specific point in the Pay Policy, the Council can brief managers separately on their responsibilities in relation to these groups of employees.

The Chair of the Committee asked officers to complete a benchmarking report on severance policies in place. Officers agreed to provide the committee with this at the next meeting.

A member asked for more information to be brought back to the Committee relating to the policy on awarding acting-up and honoraria payments.

RESOLVED that

- 2.1 the draft pay policy statement be agreed prior to publication and prior to onward recommendation to full Council for adoption; and
- 2.2 that if any changes to the 2012/13 Pay Policy Statement are proposed by HR Committee prior to publication of the statement, that the Chief Executive be authorised to agree the final version after consultation with the Chair of the Human Resources Committee, Assistant Chief Executive (Legal Services) and the Service Head (Human Resources & Workforce Development).

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Members asked officers to provide the committee with the following information:

1. whistle blowing policy
2. quarterly information on new staff recruited with details of names and roles
3. information on the graduate trainee scheme recruitment

The meeting ended at 8.00pm

Chair, Councillor Mohammed Abdul Mukit MBE
Human Resources Committee