

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD AT 6.30 P.M. ON TUESDAY, 26 FEBRUARY 2013

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

Members Present:

Councillor M. A. Mukit MBE (Chair)

Councillor John Pierce (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Rajib Ahmed

Councillor Alibor Choudhury

Councillor Zenith Rahman

Councillor Gloria Thienel

Officers Present:

Stephen Halsey

– Head of Paid Service

Simon Kilbey

– Service Head, Human Resources & Workforce
Development

John Williams

– Service Head, Democratic Services

Jill Bell

– Head of Legal Services (Environment) (items 1-4
only)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Rania Khan.

2. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

No declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests were made.

3. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended, the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that the business to be transacted contains information defined as Exempt in Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

4. SENIOR MANAGEMENT VACANCIES

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Paid Service which provided information on the current senior management staffing structure and made recommendations on how to cover vacant posts to ensure that there was stability and leadership at the highest levels of the organisation.

Simon Kilbey (Service Head, Human Resources and Workforce Development) introduced the report, highlighting the key matters for consideration. In relation to Chief Officer posts, the Head of Paid Service had powers to make temporary appointments of up to three months. Longer appointments were subject to Member decision overseen by the Human Resources Committee.

Mr Kilbey noted that the Council had invested in staff development and there were talented officers in many parts of the organisation. He considered therefore that subject to a fair process being followed, internal staff should be given the opportunity to be considered for senior positions. This would also reduce the risk of redundancies and the recommendations in the report reflected this. Members of the Committee endorsed this approach and also stressed the importance of Member involvement in senior management appointment procedures.

The Committee then discussed in turn the various posts covered in the report.

Corporate Director - Education, Social Care and Wellbeing

In relation to the new Corporate Director post, Mr Kilbey reported that arrangements were underway to cover the post through an internal acting up process following the imminent retirement of Isobel Cattermole. In the longer term the report set out three options:-

- Immediate recruitment via an internal only process to recognise the fact that there are potential candidates within the organisation who already have the skills and expertise to make a successful application (recommendation 2.1);
- Delaying recruitment for six months to allow assessment of the performance of any interim postholder in this role (2.2); or
- Immediate recruitment via an external and internal process (2.3). The recruitment process was likely to take up to 17 weeks as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

Committee Members commented that whilst they were very keen to provide opportunities for internal talent, the Corporate Director post was a new role and a very important and significant one for the authority so there was a need in this case to test the external market. The Chair agreed and also asked that if possible the recruitment process be undertaken more quickly than the 17 weeks envisaged.

Stephen Halsey (Head of Paid Service) undertook to try and undertake the recruitment process within a 13 week period. He noted that a short-term

acting up arrangement would still be required as Isobel Cattermole would retire on 31 March and it would not be appropriate to leave this important post vacant for any time.

Service Heads in the Education, Social Care and Wellbeing Directorate

The Committee noted the information in the report on the arrangements that were in place to cover the service head posts in the new directorate. Regarding the Service Head – Resources and Service Head – Adult Social Care posts, the report proposed that these be recruited to via an internal process to try to mitigate compulsory redundancy (recommendation 2.4).

The Chair and Members endorsed this proposal and noted that a Member-level Appointments Sub-Committee would be convened to interview only internal candidates for the posts.

Corporate Director - Resources

In relation to the post of Corporate Director – Resources, Mr Kilbey proposed as set out in the report that either the current interim postholder's tenure should be extended by a further 3 months, or alternatively a further expression of interest process should be conducted for this extended period, so as to allow the Head of Paid Service to conclude and report on the proposed review of central support services.

The Chair favoured the latter option, with an Appointments Sub-Committee being established to conduct a further internal-only recruitment process. He proposed that this interim appointment should be made for up to 12 months or other period necessary to enable adequate time for the review of central support services to be completed. Other committee members endorsed the Chair's proposal.

The Head of Paid Service advised that the initial expression of interest process for this interim appointment had included those officers who would have a potential assimilation claim in the event of a reorganisation. He proposed that the same process should be repeated for the new interim appointment, and undertook to consider further the process and timetable in order to ensure that the central services review would be completed. This was agreed by the Committee.

Other posts

The Committee noted the information included in the report about other senior posts and endorsed the deletion of the post of Service Head – Economic Development and Olympic Legacy in the Development and Renewal Directorate as set out at paragraph 8.1 of the report.

RESOLVED

1. That the recruitment process begin for the vacant post of Corporate Director – Education, Social Care and Wellbeing in accordance with recommendation 2.3 and Appendix 1 of the report but that officers attempt to complete the process within 13 weeks if possible. Interim arrangements would continue until such time that the new post holder takes up his/ her duties.
2. That two of the vacant service head posts within the Education, Social Care and Wellbeing Directorate, namely Service Head – Resources and Service Head – Adult Social Care be recruited to via an internal-only process including a member Appointments Sub-Committee, to try to mitigate compulsory redundancy; and
3. That a further internal-only expression of interest process including a member Appointments Sub-Committee be held to appoint to the post of Corporate Director – Resources for a period of up to 12 months or other period necessary in order to allow the Head of Paid Service to conclude a review of the central support services and functions. A timetable for this process to be agreed between the Chair and the Head of Paid Service.

5. CONFIDENTIAL REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE

The Committee considered a confidential report of the Head of Paid Service and made a number of decisions in relation to the matters in the report.

The meeting ended at 9.47 p.m.

Chair, Councillor M. A. Mukit MBE
Human Resources Committee