

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

MINUTES OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

HELD AT 7.35 P.M. ON WEDNESDAY, 28 JANUARY 2015

**ROOM MP702, 7TH FLOOR, TOWN HALL, MULBERRY PLACE, 5 CLOVE
CRESCENT, LONDON, E14 2BG**

Members Present:

Councillor Clare Harrisson (Chair)
Councillor Rachel Blake
Councillor Dave Chesterton
Councillor Alibor Choudhury
Councillor Craig Aston (Substitute for Councillor Julia Dockerill)
Councillor John Pierce (Substitute for Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed)
Councillor Gulam Robbani (Substitute for Councillor Oliur Rahman)

Apologies:

Councillor Khaled Uddin Ahmed
Councillor Julia Dockerill
Councillor Oliur Rahman

Officers Present:

David Galpin	– (Service Head, Legal Services, Law Probity & Governance)
Stephen Halsey	– (Head of Paid Service and Corporate Director Communities, Localities & Culture)
Simon Kilbey	– (Service Head, Human Resources and Workforce Development)
Robert McCulloch-Graham	– (Corporate Director, Education Social Care and Wellbeing)
Louise Russell	– (Service Head Corporate Strategy and Equality, Law Probity & Governance)
Matthew Mannion	– (Committee Services Manager, Democratic Services, LPG)

1. DECLARATIONS OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTEREST

Councillor Clare Harrisson declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 3.3 (Pay Policy 2015-16) as she worked for a Trade Union who had national policy positions on this issue. However, her work did not involve the

Local Government sector and she was not involved in the formulation of those policies. She would therefore take part in the discussion of that item.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

RESOLVED

1. That the unrestricted minutes of the Extraordinary Human Resources Committee meeting held on 11 December be agreed, and signed by the Chair, as a correct record of proceedings subject to the following amendment:
 - Agenda Item 3.2 – fourth paragraph after ‘Adjournment’ – the text be altered to make it clear that Members had ‘strong concerns’ about the progress of the review.

3. REPORTS OF CORPORATE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES

3.1 Quarterly Report - New Starters

Simon Kilbey, Service Head, HR and Workforce Development, introduced the quarterly update on new starters. In particular he drew Members’ attention to efforts to recruit apprentices from all parts of the community. He explained that the recruitment process was ongoing and that there had been a good response with around 90 candidates currently through to the assessment centre stage.

He also drew Members attention to the workforce to reflect the community monitoring information.

Members discussed the report and in response to questions, Simon Kilbey responded that:

- The apprentice applicants was a good mix of candidates.
- The apprentice recruitment process had been assessed on an equalities basis and experienced staff were involved in managing the process from two directorates.
- The next cohort, starting in the summer, was likely to be useful for school leavers. He would provide more details on how schools were to be engaged later in the year.
- Apprentices entered a variety of service areas and the aim was to continually expand these options.

Simon Kilbey agreed to produce a follow-up report providing a general update but also specifically looking at:

- Details of the equalities breakdown on apprentices who entered particular types of work following the completion of the first phase of recruitment in spring 2015.
- Pay rates with reference to the London Living Wage).

- How the authority measured the progress of the apprentices over time, including how many remained (and progressed) at the authority and how the success of the scheme was measured.

Following the discussion the Chair also requested that a report be prepared to provide equivalent information on Leavers including turnover, demographics, exit interview data and similar. This would also be attached to the spring report.

RESOLVED

1. To note the report.

3.2 Employment Options Update

Simon Kilbey, Service Head, HR and Workforce Development, introduced the update report on the employment options programme. In particular he asked Members to note a number of points including that:

- A few individuals were starting to depart the organisation but most requests had resulted in reorganisations and those reviews were now starting, with 30 in progress and another 16 planned.
- The trade unions were fully involved in the process.
- Plans were also being put in place to cover bumped redundancies.
- In respect of the Homecare service, the report provided details on how redeployment options were being reviewed.
- Whilst a few individuals were receiving redundancy payments above £100k, these were consistent with the Council's standard redundancy terms which award payments relating to age and length of service and salary level.

The Chair began the discussion of the report by highlighting serious concerns she had received that Homecare workers were very worried about the risks of redundancy and the lack of suitable matched posts. She urged officers to give the concerns more attention and ensure all staff were properly supported and fully understood the process.

In response, Simon Kilbey stated that:

- People Board Operations had discussed the timeline and decided that it was best to proceed in advance of the final decision on the savings to ensure the timetable could be met.
- Officers would work hard to ensure that staff understood the process and all of their options.
- There looked to be a reasonable number of suitable job matches and redeployee opportunities.
- He would update the Committee Members with more details on the Homecare situation.

Robert McCulloch-Graham, Corporate Director, Education, Social Care and Wellbeing, confirmed that they had been engaging with officers and trade unions and trying to allay fears and avoid compulsory redundancies. He asked that Members pass on to him any concerns they hear about.

The Chair thanked officers for the information provided but as there were still concerns she asked that the Committee be kept properly updated on the Homecare situation and in particular on the progress on job matches at Scale 3.

RESOLVED

1. To note the report.

3.3 Pay Policy 2015-16

Simon Kilbey, Service Head, HR and Workforce Development, introduced the report on the Pay Policy for 2015-16. He reported that the attached Pay Policy was similar to last year's. He also drew Members' attention to a number of points including:

- The recommendation that asked for authority for Service Head HR&WD to make minor changes to the Pay Policy, in consultation with the Chair and Monitoring Officer, before submission to Council should that prove necessary. Specifically, a change may have to be made following the completion of negotiations on the Senior Officer Pay Award.
- That the last meeting had asked him to look at the rules around people returning to work after redundancy.

Simon Kilbey responded to a number of questions raised during discussion of the report including:

- He would look into whether other Boroughs were including details from schools in the pay multiples information.
- He would look to see what information about schools and also apprentices was already included in the pay multiples information or that could be included in the future.

The Committee then discussed the different options proposed in relation to officers coming back to work for the council following earlier redundancy. It was reported that the Trade Unions had been asked to consider the issue and come back with their views. Members expressed a number of views including that:

- There was less concern over returnees who had been made compulsorily redundant than those who had originally left through voluntary redundancy.
- Any tightening of the process should happen after the current employment options round had completed.

- A number of Members were not in favour of Option Two (moving to a two year gap for all staff).

It was agreed that Members could consider this again once the trade unions had been given a reasonable time to respond.

Looking at other issues, Simon Kilbey informed the Committee that, following the imminent completion of the Chief Officer pay settlement, he would be providing the Committee with a paper providing details on a trade union request to slightly increase the recent pay award to a small group of staff who had not benefitted to the full extent from the national agreement. As part of HR service plan next year, Chief Officer job evaluation would be considered to check that the scheme is still fit for purpose.

The Chair thanked Simon Kilbey for his report and agreed to discuss at a later date the content of appropriate reports back to future Committee meetings on the above raised matters.

RESOLVED

1. To note the report.
2. To agree the draft Pay Policy Statement be submitted to Full Council and recommend its approval.
3. To agree that the Head of Paid Service may make changes to the 2015/16 Pay Policy Statement subject to consultation with the Chair of the Human Resources Committee and with the Monitoring Officer.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Nil items.

5. 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.

6. EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Subject to an alteration, the Exempt/Confidential Minutes of the Extraordinary Human Resources Committee meeting held on 11 December 2014 were agreed.

7. EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS FOR CONSIDERATION

7.1 Senior Management Vacancies

Members were provided with an update on senior management vacancies

7.2 Education, Social Care and Wellbeing Organisational Structure

Members received a report on the organisational structure of the Education, Social Care and Wellbeing Directorate.

8. ANY OTHER EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

Nil items.

The meeting ended at 9.38 p.m.

Chair, Councillor Clare Harrisson
Human Resources Committee