

ASPIRE GROUP AMENDMENT TO THE MOTION ON RECRUITMENT OF SENIOR COUNCIL OFFICERS

Proposed by: Councillor Saied Ahmed

Seconded by Councillor Kabir Ahmed

Additions: Red and Underlined

Deletions: Red and struckthrough

This Council notes:

- The importance of local government officers to Tower Hamlets Council, where officers contribute to the vital professional expertise needed to deliver the policy framework agreed by elected Councillors. This enables the Council to deliver the highest levels of service to residents of Tower Hamlets.
- That, with the exception of Political Advisors, officers work to the instructions of their senior officers within the Council framework.
- When the previous Labour administration took over from Tower Hamlets First in 2015. ~~the majority of the Corporate Leadership Team were interim, including the Chief Executive, which was not good for the stability of a functioning local government authority, and the Labour administration worked with the Government Commissioners to have these positions filled. They inherited a management regime that had delivered some of the best performing education services, libraries, social care services and parks anywhere in the UK. In spite of this, the Labour Group set out to remove every manager in the top two tiers of the organisation with no thought about the resulting loss of stability of the organisation.~~
- It is not unusual for there to be senior management staff churn in a local authority following a change of administration. In the first seven months of the Aspire administration, there have been a number of interim roles amongst the Corporate Leadership Team. This includes the important roles of Chief Executive and the Corporate Director of Finance, a legacy inherited from the previous Labour administration. As with the Corporate Director of Finance not all interim arrangements are the result of staff churn. Some may be necessary cover for temporary absence where this absence may be for an extended period. Where senior managers have left or are leaving the organisation, work has been progressing swiftly and transparently to recruit suitable high-quality replacements. Recruitment to the most senior roles in local government will typically take around six months from the point at which market recruitment activity begins, inclusive of the standard three month notice period that most

senior officers are required to give their employers. It is long established best practice and common sense, therefore, to ensure continuity of management by securing experienced interim managers to cover this period.

- The appointment of the Interim Chief Executive was reported to and ratified by Full Council explaining the interim role as it related to the recruitment of the Permanent Chief Executive. The Opposition can be assured that they will be involved in the appointment process of the permanent Chief Executive and that all relevant constitutional obligations are and will continue to be followed'
- ~~— Concern that the main Opposition Group was not notified of the appointment of an Interim Chief Executive or the process until the moment it was published to all Council employees, thereby excluding the Opposition Group from the selection process.~~

This Council believes:

- That interim appointments to senior local government officer roles are ~~not healthy for a Local Government Authority and should only be used as a last resort, as it threatens the stability and continuity of good governance and provides uncertainty to their Council employees.~~ sometimes essential and necessary to ensure continuity of effective management and/or where there are limited periods in which extra capacity is required to ensure the delivery of the Council's priorities. The notion held by the Opposition that the use of interims threatens the stability and continuity of good governance is foolhardy as it does exactly the opposite, and in fact ensures that the Council meets its statutory obligations.
- That it is good practice to ensure any recruitment of a senior local government officer in Tower Hamlets Council should be done in a fair and transparent way with the inclusion of all elected representative of the Council, including those of the opposing party to the current administration and representatives of the trade unions operating in the Council. The recruitment processes for the appointment of a permanent Chief Executive and a Corporate Director of Resources are entirely in line with the requirements of the Council's Constitution.

This Council resolves:

- That interim managers should continue to be appointed where justified to ensure continuity of management or to add time-limited capacity to ensure the delivery of the Council's priorities.

~~To call on the Executive Mayor of Tower Hamlets to immediately publish a timeline on the recruitment of the current Interim Local Government Officer positions, including the Chief Executive role~~

To note that the General Purposes Committee will meet on March 28th to consider a proposed timeline and process for the recruitment of a permanent Chief Executive Officer and Corporate Director of Resources.

- To commend the Mayor for supporting the ~~To strengthen the~~ process in which senior appointments, such as the Chief Executive, are made where the administration works with Opposition members, partners ~~an independent body~~ and trade unions to ensure that the recruitment is fair, transparent and includes input from all the major stakeholders.