

**MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE
THURSDAY, 10 MARCH 2011**

Councillors Meehan (Chair), Khan, Waters, Whyte, Rice (Vice-Chair) and Bloch

Apologies Councillor Wilson

Also Present: Councillor Williams, Ian Bailey, Peter Lewis, Stuart Young, Dave Burn, Bob Garnett, Jean Croot, Kevin Bartle, Graham Oliver.

MINUTE NO.	SUBJECT/DECISION
GPCO87.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (IF ANY)</p> <p>Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Wilson. Cllr Williams substituted for Cllr Wilson in accordance with the Constitution rules on substitutions as set out in part 4, rules of procedures, section B, Committee rules, and paragraph 55.</p>
GPCO88.	<p>URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>No items of urgent business were considered.</p>
GPCO89.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</p> <p>There were no declarations of interests submitted.</p>
GPCO90.	<p>DEPUTATIONS/PETITIONS</p> <p>The Committee received deputations from Sean Fox and Andrea Holden (Employee side Representatives) on agenda items:(5) – Summary of the Children and Young People’s Service Restructuring Proposals, (6) Proposals for the reorganisation and Re – alignments of Core Statutory Services within the School Standards and Inclusion Service , (8) – Financial Management Support Functions Review (9) – Future of Neighbourhood Management 11. Details of their comments are recorded under the relevant minute below.</p>
GPCO91.	<p>SUMMARY OF THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE RESTRUCTURING PROPOSALS</p> <p>The Director of the Children’s and Young People’s service presented this report and set out the context of the report and the necessary changes required to the service which were predicated on the loss of grant funding to the directorate. The Committee noted that the Children and Young People’s Service was to be restructured to respond to three key drivers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming an excellent authority for the delivery of services to children and young people together. • Dealing with the current budget position of considerable reductions in grant funding, core budgets and changes to the DSG.

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- The changes in policy recently announced by the Government, particularly relating to the changed relationship with schools.

The proposals, set out in the report, sought to respond to these challenges. The Committee considered the details of the transformation agenda for the directorate that would ensure the Borough (including partners) could secure support for the most vulnerable whilst not losing sight of the need for universal and early interventions that prevent escalation into greater difficulty. In summary this was the development of a clear balance, within available resources, of universal, targeted and specialist provision.

In noting the reduction in the directorate's delivery business units from four to two, It was important to understand that schools now had direct responsibility for their own improvements with funding from government directly provided to them for this function. Whilst schools could choose to continue to buy services from the local authority, this was implicitly (if not explicitly) discouraged by central government. There was also no indication from schools that they would purchase support functions from the local authority .Therefore the directorate was obliged to respond to these circumstances by making the necessary changes to the service. Although the funding arrangements between schools and the local authority was changing, this would not equal a total disintegration of support provided by the local authority but would mean that alternative ways and means of supporting schools to ensure success with pupils could continue to be delivered. This was the current priority of the newly re –organised School Standards and Inclusion team. In further responding to the cuts in funding, there were also discussions with neighbouring borough, Enfield, on which functions can be shared which will accommodate the breadth and depth of the services.

A table setting out the proposed restructures and unit closures was included, in section 4 of Appendix 1, for the Committee's comments and consideration. For those still to conclude staff consultation, it was proposed that the Committee agree to either delegate the final decision to the Director of the Children and Young People's Service (for those affecting fewer than 20 staff) or require a report to a future meeting of the Committee. In all cases the final recommendations would be accompanied by a full account of the consultation, a response to points raised in consultation and an Equalities Impact Assessment.

In considering the table of proposals for the restructure and closure of services within the Children and Young People's service, the Employee side raised concerns on the following: the necessity to agree smaller unit staff changes by delegated authority, the level of information contained within the individual reports on the unit restructures or closures as they did not provide information on the future vision for the service, the consultation concerning the closure of the travellers unit which had not sought the view of users of this service, the delayed restructure of staffing in Children's Centres which was resulting in high anxiety levels amongst staff and more generally the numbers of SM1 and SM2 graded staff that seemed not to have been overly affected by the changes in the service. The Employee side further mentioned that they had received information on Equality Impact Assessments only after the consultation period and not before.

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The Director of the Children and Young People's service responded to the concerns raised by the representative of the Employee side and reiterated that the significant reduction in grant funding to the service would inevitably affect the wide range of services provided by the directorate. The task of re-organising the service had been made more difficult by the late notification on the detail of the grant reductions. The cuts in funding were front loaded meaning that local authorities had a short time to make changes to services, prompting immediate consultation on them. It was noted that many grant funding streams had been incorporated into the new Early Intervention Grant and that this had then been cut. This meant making difficult choices on the services that could continue to be provided. In relation to decisions taken by delegated authority, the committee would decide which restructures would be agreed this way and these options were set out for the committee's consideration.

In answer to the concern on the participation of service users in consultation exercises, the Youth, Connexions and Participation consultation was highlighted as an example where user comments were informing the shape and the future delivery of the service. The Committee learned that this consultation had been extended to the 1st of April meaning that the report would need to be considered at a later Committee date. The consultation on the closure of the traveller's education unit had also been extended by an extra week to allow union comments.

In relation to the to the number of senior posts affected by the staffing restructures in the service, it was noted that the directorate contained 33 posts at SM grade which would be reduced to 20. The Committee were asked to keep in mind that in some circumstances, staff would be expected to work in high demanding environments and therefore their salaries would need to accord with the more intensive duties that they would have.

In response to disquiet expressed on the sharing of equalities information, the Director of Children and Young People's service agreed to provide the Employee side with copies of the Equalities Impact Assessments completed on all of the restructures and unit closures in his directorate.

The staffing restructure in the Children's centres was discussed and, the Chair requested that information be compiled for the Committee on the likely timeframe for a report on this to be considered by the General Purposes Committee. The Chair further requested that the Equalities Impact Assessment on this restructure be sent to the Employee side as soon as completed. The Committee were informed by the Director that the public consultation on this key service had begun and would end on 22nd April. This would be followed by staff consultation that would end in mid May. The staff consultation period would also be run concurrently and be completed by mid May enabling a report to potentially be considered by the Committee in June 2011. The Employee side queried why the restructures in Early Years Team and Children's Centres could not be conducted concurrently to enable displaced staff in the Central Early Year's team to be considered for posts in the Children's Centres structure. Currently consultation on the Central Early Years restructure was due to complete on the 14th March and be considered at the Committee meeting on March 29th 2011. In response to this query, it was noted that not all Central Early Years team staff would be eligible to compete for posts

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in the Children's Centres re – organisation. However, there would be a case by case analysis of staff displaced by the Central and Early Years team restructure to understand if they were eligible to be considered for posts in the Children's Centres staffing restructure.

Members of the Committee raised concerns about the reduction of the delivery business units from four to two and how this would impact on the Council's determination to be an excellent authority for the delivery of services to children and young people. The Director of the Children and Young People's service advised the Committee that the local authority had little choice in reorganising the service into two delivery areas as the School Standards and Inclusion team were mainly funded by government to support school improvements and, as previously outlined, this funding had now transferred to schools. The School Standards and Inclusion team had been reorganised, following a previous decision by the Committee, and were now actively examining how the service could support and challenge schools to continue their improvements. The government had provided a clear steer that schools should have accountability for improvements and that local authorities should monitor and intervene where necessary.

The Committee discussed the provision to the traveller's community and the impact the closure of the traveller's education unit would have. The Committee noted that the directorate were seeking to utilise on available external funding for the traveller community with potential for application to the European Union for funding. It was acknowledged by the Committee that the provisions for pupils of this community by schools was much improved. However, there was felt to be a corporate responsibility for this group of children and young people as they had specific needs and the Committee would need to feel satisfied that the providers, picking up these duties, were fully able to meet them. Therefore it was agreed that the report on this unit closure be considered at the Committee meeting on the 22 March.

In considering this report which emphasised the impact of the budget reductions on the staffing organisation of the Council, the Chair made an enquiry to officers about how widely and effectively displaced staff were able to access and be considered for agency filled posts. This question arose from the Chair's enquiries into the number of agency staff employed by Urban Environment which was higher than he had envisaged. Concerns were also expressed by the Employee side regarding the co-ordination of and matching of displaced staff to suitable agency covered posts. The Assistant Chief Executive advised that this information was compiled by Human Resources and shared with services and staff on a regular basis. However he agreed to examine the process for how this information is co-ordinated and shared to provide a report to the Committee on this matter.

The Committee sought clarification on the rules of delegations in relation to staff matters. The Chair referred to the Council Constitution, Appendices, section E, details of delegations to officer, page 85, which set out the authorisation powers for officers in Personnel matters. Decisions on Personnel matters that were outside this described scope were the responsibility of the General Purposes Committee as the non executive decision making body of the Council. The Chair requested that a copy of this section of the Constitution be provided to members of the

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Committee by the clerk. It was further noted that the Constitution contained a clause to allow decisions to be taken under urgency by the Chair of the Committee and the appropriate director should the decision be deemed too urgent to wait the next available Committee meeting.

RESOLVED

- i. That the overview of the current and proposed future shape of the service and summary of proposed restructures set out in Appendix 1 of this report be noted.
- ii. That the following restructure decisions be delegated to the Director of the Children and Young People's service in consultation with the Chair of the General Purposes Committee following the conclusion of formal consultation and taking account of the appropriate Equality Impact Assessment.
 - Behaviour
 - Children's & Families Administration Review
 - Extended services
- iii. That further reports be considered by the Committee following the conclusion of staff consultation on the following proposed restructures:
 - Youth connexions & Participation
 - After School Childcare
 - Central Early Years Service
 - Children's Centres
 - Travellers Education service
 - Vulnerable Young Person's Drugs worker

GPCO92. PROPOSALS FOR REORGANISATION AND RE-ALIGNMENT OF CORE STATUTORY SERVICES WITHIN THE SCHOOL STANDARDS AND INCLUSION SERVICE

Proposals were put forward to reduce the staff at the Professional Development (PDC) Administration Team following the cessation of a range of funding and restructuring of the school improvement team. This was a commensurate decision, following the agreement by the Committee in October, to the reduction in professional staff based in the school standards service. The Committee considered the attached consultation document which set out the background information to the recommendations and provided a list of posts which were placed at risk, together with the processes designed to ensure the minimum number of redundancies ensued.

RESOLVED

- i. That it be noted that formal consultation on these proposals began on 18 January 2011 and was concluded on the 18 February 2011.
- ii. That the comments received from staff and trades unions and the

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	<p>management response to these which were included in Appendix 2 of the report be noted.</p> <p>iii. That the proposed reduction in staff as set out in the consultation document (appendix 1) be agreed.</p>
<p>GPCO93.</p>	<p>PROPOSALS TO DELETE THE POST OF PUPIL AND FAMILY MEDIATION OFFICER</p> <p>Members considered the proposal for the deletion of the post of Pupil and Family Mediation Officer, a non statutory post. This proposition was initially driven by the requirement to make budget savings by the Children’s Service. However the duties of this post would have been reviewed following the establishment of the Octagon School. This new school would be supporting the work on behaviour across schools and as part of this new streamlined service there would be development and embedding of good practice around working with parents and children. Mediation would be an integral remit of posts within the new structure.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>i. It be noted that formal consultations on these proposals was conducted between the 20th January 2011 and the 21st February 2011.</p> <p>ii. That the statement from the Pupil and Mediation officer be noted.</p> <p>iii. That the proposed reduction in staff as set out in the consultation document attached in Appendix 1 be agreed.</p>
<p>GPCO94.</p>	<p>FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT FUNCTIONS REVIEW</p> <p>The Committee were advised that as part of the Haringey Efficiency and Savings programme a review of the financial management function across the Council had been undertaken in order to arrive at a revised finance structure and a new model of delivery of the finance function of the Council. Essentially the report proposed a centralisation of the of the finance structure of the Council. This would involve a significant reduction of staff employed in the finance environment. There would be a refocus of accountability for budget holders of services with transition work and training undertaken with them to fully ensure that their responsibilities were realised.</p> <p>The Committee were asked to refer to section 6.4 of the report which set out the total reductions in posts and the costs between the current and proposed structure. The original target of 50% reduction in cost had been reduced to 40% to allow the Council to be in a safer position to deliver its statutory responsibilities and ensure that financial control risks were fully mitigated against. This would be particularly pertinent over the next two years.</p> <p>The Committee learned that there had been three consultation events with staff on the restructure proposals, which had been well attended by staff. The Employee</p>

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side concurred that this had been an inclusive exercise where staff had participated in the consultation process. The Lead Finance Officer had also offered a series of one to one meetings which had been fully utilised by staff. There had been effective liaison with the trade unions and their comments on the consultation were attached.

Following concerns expressed by staff and unions in the consultation process on the grading structure and the number of posts being deleted at SO1, PO1, PO2 level, there had been some posts at this level added to the structure. There were also some range grades added to improve prospects in some positions.

The Committee expressed concern about the amount of responsibility for financial management that would be given to managers and enquired what mechanisms were in place to monitor their performance and ensure that the risks associated with this transfer of duties was managed. It was noted that there was a transition plan compiled with the support of Organisational Development to manage this change process. There were also early plans to develop the SAP system to a more accessible and usable tool for managers which would in turn contribute to supporting them with their increased financial role. As communicated earlier, there would be additional courses offered to managers based on their knowledge and experience levels.

Clarification was sought on how single status rulings would be applied to posts in this restructure. In response it was noted that this was an ongoing process, which would continue even after the agreement of the restructure, to review posts in the old structure and resolve anomalies and understand if there was a right of appeal regarding single status. It was noted that this would not be applicable to the posts in the new structure.

In their consultation response, the Employee side had requested the use of closed ringfences in the appointment process instead of open ringfences to provide more opportunity for existing staff to fill the posts in the new structure. The Committee noted that where there was a change in duties to a post then the use of an open ring fence was applicable. The priority was to ensure that candidates had the right skills match to the position being applied for, which the open ring fence allowed. The aspiration of the Lead Finance officer was to employ, to the new posts, from the existing pool of staff.

RESOLVED

- i. That the outcome of the consultation with staff and trades unions outlined in the attached appendices be noted.
- ii. That following due regard to the authority's public sector duties including the consideration of the attached equalities impact assessment, the proposed new centralised finance structure as set out in the report be approved.

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GPCO95.	<p>FUTURE OF NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The Committee had previously, at their meeting on the 15th February 2011, agreed in principle to the deletion of the Neighbourhood Management Service and further agreed that the Director of Urban Environment with the Chair of the General Purposes Committee be delegated authority to agree the deletion of the service following the consultation process and providing nothing of a substantive matter arose during the consultation period and process. In keeping with this resolution the Committee were informed that key issues were raised in the consultation period about the displacement of eleven community development project officer's posts when four similar posts were being created in the new single frontline service in the later part of the year. Officers had investigated how these post holders could be given the opportunity to apply for these posts in the single frontline service. Advice from Human Resources and Legal services had been sought and it was proposed, to the Committee, that the creation of these four community engagement posts, in the single frontline service, be brought forward by use of delegated authority powers. This would avoid the Council's budget incurring the cost of salaries unnecessarily and allow the eleven displaced staff the opportunity to apply for a similar position. The Committee were asked to endorse the waiver of consultation rights to allow these officers to be ringfenced for these new posts. The Committee noted that the job descriptions for these posts had been compiled but not as yet consulted on with the Trade Unions. The Committee appreciated the work undertaken by officers to provide these staff with a redeployment opportunity and avoid as much as possible compulsory redundancy.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">i. That notice is served on all posts within the Neighbourhood Management Service, except for the community development /project officer posts.ii. That the creation of four community engagement posts be brought forward and subsumed into the new single frontline structure. That the displaced eleven community engagement post holders, located in Neighbourhood Management team, be ringfenced for these four available posts.iii. That the Committee endorse the waiver of consultation rights, on these posts, subject to consideration by the Employee side, to allow the recruitment process to be expedited and avoid the Council incurring unnecessary salary costs.
GPCO96.	<p>RETHINKING HARINGEY - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Members of the Committee were provided with the equality impact assessment completed on re- organisation of the Council as at February 2011.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">i. That the contents of the attached Equality Impact Assessment as at February 2011 be noted.

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	<p>ii. That the full assessment be brought back to the Committee should any further decisions on Rethinking Haringey be required.</p>
GPCO97.	<p>RETHINKING HARINGEY - MEMBER APPOINTMENTS PANELS</p> <p>The Committee considered a report which listed the member appointment panels which needed to be established to agree the necessary staffing changes arising from the Rethinking Haringey report.</p> <p>RESOLVED</p> <p>i. It be noted that the consultation on the proposed changes in Rethinking Haringey was ongoing and yet to complete.</p> <p>ii. That the Member appointment panels as described at paragraph 6.3 and 6.4 of the report be established.</p>
GPCO98.	<p>NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT URGENT BUSINESS</p> <p>NONE</p>

Councillor George Meehan

Chair