

**EXEMPT/ UNRESTRICTED MINUTES OF THE STAFFING AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 26 JANUARY 2015**

Councillors Arthur, Elliott, McShane, Meehan (Chair) and Vanier

LC38. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence.

NOTED

LC39. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

NOTED

LC40. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

NOTED

LC41. DEPUTATIONS/ PETITIONS/ PRESENTATIONS/ QUESTIONS

The Chair advised that a request had been received from Chris Taylor on behalf of the Trade Unions to address the Committee in relation to agenda item 6 – Haringey Academy’.

The Chair agreed to receive the deputation and advised that the address would be for no more than 3 minutes.

Mr Taylor addressed the meeting and stated the following points:

- The Unions welcomed the proposals, particularly the apprenticeship programme and the commitment to provide opportunities for young people leaving care and/or who were not in education, employment or training. But the intake from these groups would require to be monitored to ensure that opportunities were actually being offered to them.
- The main issue of concern was that the Council would not pay apprentices the London Living Wage in the first year, when in fact it paid the living wage to all directly employed staff, and therefore apprentices should be no exception.
- The reason for not paying was that paying only the minimum wage would allow 8 more apprentices to be taken on per year, but the argument that paying less than a living wage, pay poverty wages, so that more staff could be taken on was a spurious and dangerous one, and not an argument that the Unions expected a Labour council to be making. For an apprentice, the cost of living was still the same as for any other worker, and the wage should reflect this.

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- With reference to paragraph 6.7 of the report, the proposal on pay was positively benchmarked against other neighbouring boroughs, but paragraph 6.6 stated that Islington Council paid the living wage to apprentices, so if Islington could pay it, why should Haringey not. The paragraph also stated that providers had reported that the higher the salary then the better the response and the calibre of applicants – and this would appear to be a very good argument for paying the living wage.
- In the Unions view the amount of money being used was a pittance and that the Unions believed that the council could easily afford to pay the living wage and take on 8 more apprentices. This was the council that was currently spending £20,000 a day on consultants and interims. A tiny proportion of this could be spent on providing opportunities for people who will be the organisation's future.
- The report stated that paying the living wage to apprentices would cause tension with existing employees who were fully trained to fulfil their roles. This was a somewhat grim and negative view of staff, which there was no evidence to support. In the past, some people would have argued that there should not be equal pay for women because it would make men angry. A small number of people may think like that, but this should not be pandered to, and apprentices would only be paid 80% of the weekly living wage as they would be at college for one day a week, so pay differentials should not be an issue. Employees in some areas where there were apprentices would be paid above the living wage anyway, so it would not be an issue there. For those employees that were on the living wage only, consideration could be given to an uplift in their pay to maintain a differential.
- That it was noted that the interns would be paid at scale 4, and were likely to be graduates from more affluent backgrounds, probably more likely to be white. The Unions felt that it was wrong that interns should be paid a living wage while apprentices, who will be more likely to be from disadvantaged backgrounds and marginalised groups, would be paid poverty wages, and that it was rather disappointing to see people on well over £100,000 a year arguing for others to be paid poverty wages.
- Finally, in terms of appendix 1 of the report the Unions queried why it was deemed to be preferable for apprentices to have GCSE Maths and English, particularly if the aim was to provide access to people who were from marginalised groups such as those leaving care, who may not have had full access to educational opportunities. In line with council recruitment, if qualifications were not essential to the job, which they obviously were not as they were merely preferable, then they should not be mentioned at all.

There being no points of clarification from the Committee the Chair thanked Mr Taylor for his address.

NOTED

LC42. MINUTES

RESOLVED

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That the unrestricted minutes of the Staffing & Remuneration Committee held on 20 November 2014 be agreed and signed as an accurate record of the proceedings.

LC43. HARINGEY ACADEMY - ENTRY SCHEMES AND APPRENTICESHIPS FOR EXISTING STAFF

The Chair asked for a brief introduction of the report.

The Human Resources Advisor – Ms Rowing advised that the report before the Committee proposed a number of entry level schemes and an apprentice-like offer of qualification training for existing staff., and would form part of the of the Haringey Academy which included principles and processes for managing Haringey’s capability and talent, together with ill providing clear career paths, and development opportunities for the skills that Haringey needed in the future. Ms Rowing, in highlighting that the Haringey Academy was part of the Council’s Workforce Plan, intended to create an agile workforce that would help achieve the goals set out in the Corporate Plan, outlined the main objectives which were detailed in paragraph 5.2 of the report and were:

- a) Contribution to the re-balancing of the workforce profile
- b) To develop job ready employees with the right skills
- c) Increase job opportunities for Haringey residents
- d) To introduce entry level schemes in the Council to employ a minimum of 20 apprentices and provide ten internships each year for the next three years
- e) Provide a co-ordinated and consistent programme within the organisation and contribute to Priorities 1 & 4 in the new Corporate Plan
- f) Develop career pathways and skills for the future in the Council
- g) 90% successful completion of an apprenticeship framework
- h) 80% retention – with apprentices gaining permanent employment within the Council or with its’ partners and contractors

Ms Rowing further commented that as expressed in the deputation, whilst the joint Trade Union & HR Corporate Committee had in discussions given their support to the proposals they had been clear that all apprentices should be paid the London Living Wage bas detailed in Option 2 of recommendation 4.2. Ms Rowing commented that it was for the Committee to decide on which of the options it would prefer to agree or make recommendations on an alternative course of action.

The Committee briefly discussed the proposals and were responded tro on a number of points - the following main points were noted:

- That there needed to be some strengthening of the performance and specific outcomes for those entering and proceeding through the scheme, in the form targets and performance indicators;
- That in terms of the issue raised by the Unions in respect of the level of salary to be paid to apprentices, and whether there should be a London Living wage paid from the outset, it was felt that as a compromise the London Living Wage should be paid after 6 months on the scheme – which would then give some incentive for individuals to work towards reaching the six month point.

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The Chief Operating Officer – Mrs Evans advised that officers would report further on the drawing up of targets and performance indicators.

There being no further comments, on a **MOTION** by the Chair it was:

RESOLVED

- i. That approval be given to the delivery of an Apprenticeship Programme aimed at 16 – 24 year old Haringey residents or those aged at least 16 attending a school in the London Borough of Haringey, from April 2015;
- ii. That approval be given to the delivery of a programme for Traineeships from April 2016 which would be an education and training programme, with work experience, focused on giving young people the skills and experience that employers were looking for, aimed at those who would be leaving care and/or who were Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) who may require more support in preparation for Apprenticeships, as detailed in appendix 5 of the report;
- iii. That approval be given to the delivery of a programme for internships, also aimed at Haringey residents and that the salary for Internships be confirmed as detailed in para 9.6. of the report;
- iv. That approval be given to the level of wage to Apprentices being paid as set out in Option 1 of the report but with an amendment to this option to allow for Apprentices to be at the London Living Wage after month 6 of the apprenticeship;
- v. That approval be given to the payment of expenses to Traineeships as set out in Section 9.2 of the report;
- vi. That existing staff (where appropriate) be offered the opportunity to follow Apprenticeship Qualification Frameworks, as part of their skills development. As detailed in Section 8.1 of the report; and
- vii. That officers report back to the Staffing & Remuneration Committee giving details of strengthening of the performance and specific outcomes for those entering and proceeding through the scheme, in the form targets and performance indicators .

LC44. REPORT ON THE PROCESS FOR MANAGING CONSULTANTS & INTERIMS INTO THE ORGANISATION

The Chair asked for a brief introduction of the report.

The Human Resources Adviser – Ms Engwell advised the Committee that at the beginning of December 2014 Assistant Directors were asked to submit a business case by 23 December for each Consultant or Interim working in their business area. The information provided was used to update the central register and a copy of the final information relating to Quarter 3 was attached at Appendix 2.

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Ms Engwell advised that the new process was introduced on 1 January 2015 and required a business case to be completed by the hiring manager, authorised by their Assistant Director and finally signed off by both the Assistant Director HR and the Chief Operating Officer. The new process was more robust and ensured that value for money was evidenced both at the initial engagement stage and when an extension to the contract was requested. Ms Engwell advised that a comparison of the data for Q2 and Q3 was attached at Appendix 1 of the report and overall, there had been seven fewer Consultants/Interims engaged at the end of December 2014 compared to the end of September 2014 with each category showing a slight reduction in contractors. The Christmas period was seen as a natural end point for contracts and the majority of those leaving left in December. As a result, the overall estimated annual cost also reduced by £530,880.

Ms Engwell also advised that the estimated off contract spend also reduced considerably due to the reduction in contracts but more significantly, due to work that had been done with business unit managers to move contractors to one of the Council's framework agencies. At the end of the quarter only eight contractors would be engaged through an agency not on the framework and work would continue during the next quarter to further reduce the number. Ms Engwell advised that there would from now on be a quarterly report to the Staffing & Remuneration Committee detailing and updating on the position.

The Committee then briefly discussed the details of the appendices circulated and officers responded in relation to the status of a number of consultants and interims. In particular members clarified the differing levels of rates paid to consultants and seeming variations, together with the length of time a number had been in post.

In response Ms Evans advised that the differing levels in pay was attributed to different sensitivities in certain posts, and that this was then reflected in the rate of fee. Ms Evans advised that employing service heads or Assistant Directors were now required to give a clear business case in terms of value for money, and were now challenged in terms of covering established posts, and that outcomes needed to be defined, and likely achievement.

The Interim Director of Children Services – Mr Abbey advised the Committee that in relation to Children's Services and the number of positions being filled either by interims or consultants, it was a fact that the position was a reflection of the acute situation facing the service and that this was highlighting a 29% vacancy rate within Children's services, and that across London there was a 40% vacancy rate in this service as a whole. Mr Abbey advised that he was striving to manage the level of consultants and interims but there was also need to ensure that services were maintained and set targets and improving services were met, and also that the delivery and outcomes highlighted by OFSTED were a priority and the Council was being held to account in terms of meeting these. The aim was to ensure that the current structure in terms of interims and consultants was permanently recruited particularly at senior management level. Mr Abbey advised that there were currently 53 vacant posts across the service area and there had been 36 voluntary resignations.

There being no further points of clarification the Chair then summarised and it was:

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- i. That the report be noted; and
- ii. That a further report be brought to the next meeting of the Staffing and Remuneration Committee on 30 March 2015 on the latest position on interims and consultants.

LC45. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THE CHAIR CONSIDERS TO BE URGENT

Nil.

Signed by Chair

Date