

**MINUTES OF THE STAFFING AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE
MONDAY, 29 JUNE 2015**

Councillors Amin (Chair), Arthur, Berryman (Vice-Chair) and Elliott

Apologies Councillor Vanier

SRC60. FILMING AT MEETINGS

The Chair referred Members present to agenda item 1 in respect of filming at this meeting, and Members noted the information contained therein.

SRC61. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Vanier.

SRC62. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

SRC63. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SRC64. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / PRESENTATIONS / QUESTIONS

There were no such items.

SRC65. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the unrestricted minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 January 2015 and the special meeting of the Committee held on 19 February 2015 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

SRC66. FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the report on the Staffing and Remuneration Committee work plan, as introduced by Carole Engwell, Quality Assurance Manager, Human Resources. The report set out upcoming issues for the Committee, and Members were invited to propose items in the coming months.

In response to a question from the Committee, Jacquie McGeachie, Assistant Director, Human Resources, gave an update on the appointment processes for the Director of Children's Services and Director of Adult Services, and the Committee was advised that special meetings of the Committee would be required to make these appointments before the next scheduled meeting in September.

RESOLVED

That the Committee approve the forward plan.

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SRC67. UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTING THE WORKFORCE PLAN

The Committee considered a presentation by Jacquie McGeachie, Assistant Director, Human Resources, on the latest position in respect of recruiting apprentices and interns. The Committee was advised that 7 apprentices had been appointed in April 2015 and that a further recruitment drive was planned with the aim of appointing a new cohort of 20 apprentices in September 2015. It was reported that four business areas had made a request for interns, but that appointing to these internships had so far been a greater challenge.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the difficulties in appointing to internships, Ms McGeachie advised that a more effective means of engaging those who might be interested in internships was needed. The Committee suggested that promoting such opportunities online and via social media platforms may have a greater impact. In response to further questions from the Committee, Ms McGeachie advised that internships at the Council would be for a three-month period, and that interns would be reimbursed for expenses only. The Committee asked about the type of experiences that would be offered to interns as part of their placements – Ms McGeachie advised that it was planned that interns would be involved in project work, an example within HR would be the current project around developing new policies, and not routine administrative functions. The purpose was to give interns a taster of the workplace, and enhance their employment prospects.

The Committee noted the difficulties that some recent graduates would face in taking on unpaid work for a three month period, and asked whether it would be possible to explore what the cost to the Council would be of paying interns. It was agreed that this could be looked at. It was also suggested that services offering internships should be given some brief guidance on the type of work they should be offering, in order to maximise the benefit the interns gained from their experience. The Committee felt that it was important for the Council to seek feedback from the interns regarding their experiences, and to keep in touch with them after their internships in order to track their subsequent paths into employment, and requested that the Committee be kept updated about their progress.

A further update would be provided to the Committee at the September meeting.

NOTED

SRC68. WORKFORCE HEALTH AND WELL BEING STRATEGY

The Committee considered the report on the Workforce Health and Wellbeing Strategy, as presented by Tamara Djuretic, Assistant Director of Public Health. The report set out the three main priorities supporting the strategy, the outcomes associated with these and progress in implementing the strategy so far.

The Committee asked about the training that had been delivered for staff and managers on mental health awareness and it was reported that this was a three hour session which covered specific mental health issues as well as the broader impacts of organisational change on wellbeing and behaviour. Dr Djuretic advised that a follow up session had also been commissioned for those who may have been uncomfortable discussing these issues in a formal training setting.

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The Committee welcomed the report and the work taking place around delivery of the strategy, but suggested that some of the measures of success relating to the outcomes needed further development in order to be more meaningful. Dr Djuretic agreed that finding appropriate measures of success had been a challenge and that further work would be undertaken to improve these.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding how this work was being communicated to staff, Dr Djuretic advised that this was via the 'Healthy Haringey' webpage, and that specific messages were promoted via pop ups on the home intranet page. In addition to online communications, messages were disseminated by the Health and Wellbeing Champions throughout the organisation, and via the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board. A health and wellbeing event specifically for Haringey staff was also planned for September 2015. It was noted that efforts would need to be made to sustain the momentum around this work.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the target for reducing staff sickness, Ms McGeachie advised that there was a corporate target of reducing the number of sickness absence days to 6 per employee, but that it would be difficult to assess how much of any reduction in sickness absence could be directly attributable to the work around the health and wellbeing strategy.

The Committee mentioned the approach being adopted by some companies of discouraging the use of email outside of normal office hours, or over specific periods, for example Christmas and New Year. Dr Djuretic advised that this was among the various approaches that the Council was looking into.

Looking again at the measures of success, the Committee noted that the Council needed to think about how ambitious it wanted to be in respect of corporate health and wellbeing. It was felt that more information was needed in order to make decisions on reasonable targets, and it was agreed that Dr Djuretic would undertake some work around this and bring proposals back to the September meeting of the Committee. It was also noted that it was important to recognise that there would be variation between services in respect of the levels of sickness absence and injuries, due to the nature of the roles within them.

RESOLVED

That the Committee endorse Haringey's Workforce Health and Wellbeing Strategy and champion workforce health and wellbeing at the senior and strategic level in order to embed the Strategy across the Council and in parallel with the Workforce Plan.

SRC69. RESTRUCTURE POLICY, REDEPLOYMENT POLICY AND VR PROCEDURE - UPDATED POLICIES

The Committee considered the report on the updated restructure policy, redeployment policy and voluntary redundancy procedure, as presented by Amanda Mays, Interim Head of Workforce Development. The report set out the changes that had been made to each of the policies.

In response to a question from the Committee regarding the reported change to the scope of the redeployment policy, Ms Mays advised that this was to reflect that the redeployment pool should not be used for staff who had been reinstated following a

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Member appeal procedure or relocations – any such redeployments should be managed within the service. In response to a further question from the Committee regarding the response of the trade unions to the changes to these policies, it was reported that the Council had worked closely with the unions on updating the policies and that this working relationship had been very constructive.

The Committee asked about the trade unions' concern in respect of the contractual status of the Council's HR policies. It was reported that the unions wanted clarification on which policies were contractual, and could therefore not be amended without varying all employees' contracts. Identifying which policies were considered to be contractual would be a significant undertaking. It was reported that, where policies were not contractual, the Council had greater flexibility as an employer to update policies as required, in line with the Council's governance processes.

RESOLVED

That the Committee:

- a) Approve the revised Restructure Policy;
- b) Approve the revised Redeployment Policy; and
- c) Approve the revised Voluntary Redundancy Policy.

SRC70. WORKFORCE PLAN, MTFS AND CORPORATE PLAN - EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS

The Committee considered the report on the feedback from the trade unions to the consultation on headcount implications in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and the Council's response, as presented by Amanda Mays. It was reported that while there were some requests from the unions that the Council had not been able to agree, as set out in the report, dialogue with the unions in general had been very constructive.

The Committee asked about the Council's approach to the use of agency staff. It was reported that in service areas subject to significant transformation, the use of agency staff on a short term basis prior to a restructure could provide additional flexibility and help to minimise the need for compulsory redundancies, however it would be expected that services would then have a plan in place to move to a more stable staffing structure. Jacquie McGeachie advised that the Chief Executive had recently asked all services to review their use of agency staff as there was a concern that in some areas agency staff had been assimilated into the permanent structure rather than being used in a strategic way.

In response to a question regarding the Council response to the unions' concerns regarding the timescale for the modern reward strategy, it was reported that the timescales had been amended and that weekly update meetings were held with the unions on this piece of work.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report be noted.

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SRC71. WORKFORCE DATA - JANUARY TO MARCH 2015

The Committee considered the report on the workforce data for the period January to March 2015, as presented by Carole Engwell. The report set out information on the organisational profile, headcount, formal action cases, agency and consultants, sickness absence and equalities, and included details of the process for engaging a non-employed worker.

In respect of the data regarding consultants and interims, the Committee asked about the column entitled 'Asst. Director' – it was clarified that this referred to the line manager for the post referred to and it was agreed that the name of this column should be amended for clarity, for example to 'hiring manager'. The Committee expressed particular concern regarding the costs flagged as red in the spreadsheet, and requested that more information on the recruitment timescales was required in order that these posts could be monitored more effectively. Ms Engwell advised that the Chief Executive had recently asked all Assistant Directors to review the use of consultants in their service areas in order that this could be managed better. It was noted that due to the reporting timescales, the current end date for certain posts may have changed since the report was produced.

The Committee asked about the Project Delivery Manager post reported to have been extended 17 times; it was reported that this was a specialist IT post and that this was an area in which recruitment to permanent posts was very challenging. It was agreed that the relevant assistant director would be asked for information on whether appointing to a fixed term contract for this post had been explored.

The Committee asked about the use of Hays, and it was reported that the Council had a framework contract in place with Hays in line with procurement guidelines. It was reported that the fee payable to Hays varied according to post. The Committee expressed concern at the costs associated with individual posts supplied through contractors such as Hays over a long period, and noted that, once fees were taken into account, the remuneration received by the individual may not differ substantially from what they would receive if employed directly, but at a significantly higher cost to the Council. It was advised that this was one of the reasons for the Chief Executive's recent push to review the use of consultants in the organisation. In response to a question from the Committee, it was confirmed that this report only covered data relating to individuals contracted as consultants and interims and did not cover contracts with organisations such as iMPower.

The Committee noted the recent reductions in female and BME employees in the top 50% of earners. It was reported that this was as a result of resignations; this would be monitored, but it was not felt at this stage to reflect a trend that would be a cause of concern.

The Committee considered how they could have a constructive role in monitoring and managing the workforce data, in particular around the use of consultants. The Committee requested further detail on recruitment timetables for those posts to be recruited to on a permanent basis, and further detail on the end dates for short-term posts. It was agreed that details of recruitment attempts, reasons for the use of a consultant in this post, etc, needed to be provided for every post, in particular those flagged as red in respect of net cost / value for money status, and the Committee

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would review the explanations given, starting from the next meeting of the Committee in September. Where the Committee had further concerns after receiving this information, the relevant Cabinet Member and senior officers would be asked to comment and, where it was felt to be useful, the relevant Assistant Director would be invited attend a meeting to discuss the issue further with the Committee.

RESOLVED

That the Committee note the report.

SRC72. REMOVAL OF THE DESIGNATED INDEPENDENT PERSON REQUIREMENT FOR THE DISMISSAL OF THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE, THE MONITORING OFFICER AND CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

The Committee considered the report on the removal of the Designated Independent Person requirement for the dismissal of the Head of Paid Service, the Monitoring Officer and Chief Finance Officer, as presented by Carole Engwell. The report set out the legislative changes, which had come into force on 11 May 2015, and which would be reflected in an update to the Council's Constitution.

RESOLVED

That the Committee note the legislative changes as set out in the report.

SRC73. DELEGATED DECISIONS, SIGNIFICANT ACTIONS AND URGENT ACTIONS

The Committee noted the content of the report.

SRC74. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no new items of urgent business.

SRC75. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items as they contain information defined as exempt information under paragraphs 1 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely that it contains information relating to any individual and information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the authority or a Minister of the Crown and employees of, or office holders under, the authority.

SRC76. EXEMPT MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the exempt minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 January 2015 and the special meeting of the Committee held on 19 February 2015 be approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

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SRC77. MODERN REWARD STRATEGY UPDATE ON SENIOR MANAGERS PAY AND GRADING REVIEW

The Committee received a presentation on the Modern Reward Strategy, and agreed the recommendation as set out in the report.

SRC78. CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

The Committee agreed the recommendations of the report.

SRC79. PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR - HUMAN RESOURCES

The Committee agreed the recommendation of the report.

SRC80. NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT URGENT BUSINESS

There were no new items of exempt urgent business.

The meeting closed at 2145 hrs.

Cllr Kaushika Amin

Chair