

MINUTES OF THE STAFFING AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE MONDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2015

Councillors Amin (Chair), Jason Arthur, Patrick Berryman (Vice-Chair), Sarah Elliott and Bernice Vanier

SRC96. FILMING AT MEETINGS

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

SRC97. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS (IF ANY)

There were no apologies for absence.

SRC98. URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business.

SRC99. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

SRC100. DEPUTATIONS / PETITIONS / PRESENTATIONS / QUESTIONS

There were no such items.

SRC101. MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Remuneration Committee held on 29 June 2015, and of the special Staffing and Remuneration Committee meetings held on 15, 16 and 30 July 2015 be approved and signed by the Chair.

SRC102. INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY PRESENTATION

The Committee received a presentation by Alaba Okuyiga from the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEI) on the equality audit they had undertaken for the Council. The presentation set out the objectives and methodology of the review, key findings and recommendations, and proposed next steps. The full report produced by ENEI would be ready by the end of September, and this would be circulated to the Committee separately. It was proposed that the action plan arising from this work would be brought back to the December meeting of the Staffing and Remuneration Committee for consideration. Mr Okuyiga advised the Committee that Haringey were to be commended for undertaking such an in-depth review.

The Committee asked for comparison with other London boroughs, and Mr Okuyiga advised that Haringey compared very favourably in terms of its equalities impact assessments (EQIAs), however cumulative equalities impacts and improved equality training had been identified as areas for improvement. The Committee welcomed the quality of the presentation, but noted that it would have been useful to have received it

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in advance of the meeting, as this would have enabled them to give more consideration to questions they wanted to ask.

One of the issues arising from the interviews was making equalities 'part of the day job' and the Committee asked what this might mean in practice. Mr Okuyiga indicated that staff wanted to feel that characteristics such as their age, their ethnicity had been fully taken into account when decisions were made affecting their work, and should be taken into account as part of everything the Council did in terms of service delivery, given the very diverse nature of the borough. Mr Okuyiga said that this would be covered within the final report.

The Committee asked about the responses in the survey relating to staff reporting barriers to progression, and whether it was possible to identify whether these were perceived barriers or barriers in reality. Mr Okuyiga advised that the perception of such barriers was one of the key drivers for the review and that one of the findings was that people were not seeing people like themselves in senior roles at the Council. The Committee asked what could be done to address this issue, particularly in terms of changing the structures within the organisation that support staff to reach senior posts. It was noted that this was one of the issues that would be addressed in the full report at the end of the month, and that the emerging Haringey Academy would play a significant role. It was also noted that the Council's graduate trainee scheme had a role to play in this work, as the graduate trainees were very visible throughout the organisation, and were expected to take on senior roles in future. Mr Okuyiga reported that some form of positive discrimination was often considered as a means of addressing diversity in a visible way quickly, however he advised that there were downsides to this approach that the Council would have to consider if it adopted positive discrimination.

The Committee noted that culture change was an essential outcome, and asked Mr Okuyiga to identify which of the recommendations set out in the presentation would have the greatest impact in achieving this. Mandatory training in equalities issues was highlighted as one of the central recommendations for culture change, and also making equalities and inclusion a core part of every decision making process in the Council. The Committee asked whether there were examples of mandatory equalities training having an impact, in response to which Mr Okuyiga advised that one non-London authority found a 30% reported increase in awareness of equalities issues a year after the introduction of such training. Mr Okuyiga noted that the recent engagement of a number of policy officers to look at equalities and inclusion was a positive step by the Council.

Nick Walkley, Chief Executive, agreed that the findings in respect of the need for cumulative equalities impacts accurately reflected the current position, and would help the Council to focus on moving forward with this. It was noted that the work around the new values and brand identity was positive, but that there were still legacy issues relating to organisational culture that needed to be challenged. The Chief Executive advised that the forthcoming launch of the new brand and values had been discussed as an opportunity to re-induct all members of staff, and this was something that could be linked in with the review's recommendation regarding mandatory equalities training.

Incorporating equalities issues into learning and development was emphasised as a means of addressing the perceived 'glass ceiling'. It was also evident from the survey

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results that individual staff members' experiences of management were very different from the experience at more senior levels, and suggested that training for first and second level managers should be a priority.

The Chair welcomed the findings of the review as interesting and challenging, and noted that it was valuable to get an idea of different perceptions of the organisation. It was hoped that this work would lead to a change in culture and of the perception of the Council in respect of equalities and inclusion, and that equalities would now start to be looked at in a more cohesive manner across the Council.

The Committee and Chief Executive expressed their satisfaction with the work undertaken by the ENEI, and thanked Mr Okuyiga for his presentation. As next steps, it was noted that the full report would be produced at the end of September and circulated to the Committee directly. Work would then begin on developing an action plan, which would be brought to the Committee at its December meeting for consideration. It was agreed that it was important for it to be communicated to all staff that this work was taking place, in order to be as transparent as possible.

RESOLVED

- a) That the content of the presentation be noted.
- b) That the Committee agree to receive a final Action Plan and actions already completed at the December 2015 committee meeting.
- c) That the Committee agree to monitor progress during 2016.

SRC103. CHILDREN'S SERVICES SOCIAL WORKERS RETENTION OFFER

The Committee considered the report on the Children's Services recruitment and retention officer, presented by Jon Abbey, Director of Children's Services, and Andy Briggs, Interim AD Business and Resources. The report set out the challenges in relation to the recruitment and retention of experienced children's Social Workers and proposed implementing a financial offer to attract new social workers and retain the existing workforce. The report set out different options that had been looked at, and the Committee also received a presentation on the recruitment and retention offers in other London boroughs. It was proposed that a more detailed social care recruitment and retention offer be brought back to the Committee for consideration in December 2015.

In response to a question from the Committee, it was confirmed that exit interviews had been carried out with children's social workers leaving the Council, and that the reasons given for leaving had included salary, ways of working, training and development opportunities, greater stability and having contacts at other authorities. A more detailed analysis of the reasons staff gave for leaving would be reported up to the Committee in December, although in response to a question from the Committee regarding the weighting of financial incentives relative to other factors, Mr Abbey advised that pay and stress were the top two issues raised at social work forums.

The Committee asked what would happen if no improvement in recruitment and retention rates was demonstrated in the 12 to 24 months after agreeing to implement a financial offer as recommended in the report. It was reported that it was intended

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that a review be undertaken in 18 to 24 months time, which would tie in with the wider work on the Council's reward strategy. Without prejudicing this wider reward work in any way, it was reported that it was important to start to address the shortage of experienced social workers as quickly as possible.

It was noted that it was essential to improve stability in the service by being competitive in terms of remuneration, but also in terms of the wider offer such as links with higher education authorities, mentoring, coaching, succession planning and offering manageable caseloads. It was suggested by the Committee that positive aspects of Haringey such as schools and childcare could form a part of the offer for attracting people to work here, and it was agreed that this was something that would be considered as part of the report to the December meeting. The Committee also suggested that succession planning should be one of the issues covered as part of My Conversation.

The Committee asked about performance monitoring, and how to ensure that new recruits stayed for a reasonable period of time. Mr Briggs advised that the models set out in the report proposed rewards on an incremental basis to encourage retention, with performance being monitored as part of My Conversation. The possibility of whether certain payments could be recovered if people left within a certain period was also being explored. The Committee advised that any proposed reference to staff contracts regarding the possibility of payments being reclaimed needed to be worded very carefully so as not to act as a disincentive for new staff to join, as there was a risk that this could damage trust between the employee and the Council.

Some concern was expressed that there was insufficient evidence that financial incentive was the most effective way of addressing the issue, and that there was a need for more information on what was being done on the non-financial side. The Chief Executive clarified that the current report set out the need to address the recruitment and retention issues for experienced social workers as a matter of urgency, and that adopting a financial incentive was proposed at this point as the Council was currently competing to recruit alongside other authorities who had already adopted similar offers. It was agreed that considering the wider offer, including non-financial elements, was necessary and this would be considered by the Committee at its December meeting.

In light of the Committee's discussion, it was suggested that the recommendation of the report be amended such that delegated authority sought for the Director of Children's Services be in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Resources and Culture, Cabinet Member for Children and Families and the Section 151 Officer, and it was agreed that this was a sensible way forward.

RESOLVED

That the Director of Children's Services be given delegated authority to implement Option 3 as described in the report, in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer, Cabinet Member for Resources and Culture and Cabinet Member for Children and Families.

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SRC104. FORWARD PLAN

The Committee considered the report on the forward plan of future reports and presentations to the Staffing and Remuneration Committee as presented by Carole Engwell, Quality Assurance Manager, Human Resources. The Committee noted the proposed agenda items for the December meeting.

RESOLVED

That the forward plan as set out in the report be noted and approved.

SRC105. UPDATE ON THE WORKFORCE PLAN

The Committee received a presentation on the progress of the Workforce Plan from Daksha Desai, Head of Workforce Programme. The presentation outlined progress so far, key next steps and details of the My Conversation map, My Career portal, the new learning platform, job families and faculties and the restructure toolkit.

The Committee welcomed the presentation and agreed that an e-learning platform with the emphasis on learning being available when you needed it was a positive step forward. In response to a question as to how staff would be encouraged to upload content to the new platform, it was reported that it was anticipated that this would happen through staff participating in Faculties and online communities. It was noted that 20 videos had been produced as a result of the recent Haringey Expo, demonstrating that there was an interest in participating in this way. The Committee suggested that the e-learning platform should be linked in with work around coaching and mentoring.

It was further suggested that the e-learning platform should also have a role in offering support and training for elected Members, and that any training that was mandatory for officers should also apply to Members.

RESOLVED

That the content of the presentation be noted.

SRC106. CONSULTANT AND INTERIMS REPORT - APRIL- JUNE 2015

The Committee received the report on the number of consultants and interims engaged across the Council during the period 1 April to 30 June 2015, presented by Carole Engwell. It was noted that the report for this quarter included the additional information requested by the Committee at its previous meeting.

The Committee queried the reported spend for the previous quarter as set out in this report (£969,473), compared with the report for the same quarter at the previous meeting (c£875k). It was agreed that this would be looked into and the reason for the discrepancy identified. The Committee welcomed the increased level of information provided in the report.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report be noted.

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SRC107. PROPOSED NEW SENIOR PAY PRINCIPLES AND GRADING STRUCTURE

The Committee considered the report on the proposed new senior pay principles and grading structure, presented by Nick Walkley, Chief Executive. The Chief Executive outlined the background to this work and the recommendations of the report, and highlighted the proposal to move away from the national pay bargaining and outcomes from the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities (JNC) as a key element to providing greater flexibility of approach.

The Committee asked for more information regarding the JNC, and Jacquie McGeachie, Assistant Director, Human Resources, advised that this formed part of the national pay bargaining framework. The Chief Executive noted that this national framework was currently responsible for decisions regarding the remuneration for roles that, in some cases, were unique to Haringey, and that this resulted in a complicated set of reward arrangements for certain posts which were difficult to manage. The Committee noted that the proposal was to break the link with national pay bargaining for senior officers only.

It was noted that the proposals were for decisions regarding senior officer remuneration to be made by the Staffing and Remuneration Committee, supported in its decision-making by information including benchmarking with other local authorities, the recommendations of the JNC and independent evidence and advice. It was emphasised that it was essential for the Committee to have the relevant advice and information available to it in order to be confident in its decisions.

The first decisions required from the Committee on this issue would be made in December 2015, when the composition of the senior manager cohort was established, following the Tier 3 review. The Committee would use the performance grid (as set out in the report) as part of its deliberations. The Committee noted that there was potential for inequity in the way in which appraisals were conducted, and asked how this would be mitigated; it was reported that the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) would be involved in moderating the appraisals process to ensure consistency and fairness of approach. Assistant Directors would need to provide SLT with a strong evidence base for their decisions and recommendations.

The Committee welcomed the proposals as a significant improvement on the current system and noted that this work should also tie in with the previous discussion on equalities, and should lead to greater accountability. The Committee requested that a briefing be provided for Members on this work, and re-emphasised the need for robust information and evidence to support any decisions required of the Committee in respect of senior officer remuneration. It was suggested that a separate workshop be held for the Committee on senior officer remuneration before being asked to make any decisions in December.

One Committee Member expressed concern that they did not feel that they had enough information to make a decision on the proposals at this time, however on a vote it was:

RESOLVED

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- a) To approve and agree the implementation of the Reward Principles as detailed at Appendix A of the report – Reward Principles.
- b) To approve and agree the implementation of the pay structure for senior managers as detailed at Appendix B of the report – Pay Structure.
- c) To agree a period of 30 days consultation with senior managers as shown in Appendix F of the report – Timeline.
- d) To approve and agree that any pay progression will be contribution led based on individual, team and organisation performance as outlined at 3.8.2 of the report.
- e) To agree to break the link with national pay bargaining and the outcomes from the Joint Negotiating Committee for Chief Officers of Local Authorities (JNC). This does not preclude the Staffing and Remuneration Committee in taking their recommendations into account when considering future pay awards for this population.
- f) To agree an annual agenda and timetable by which the Staffing and Remuneration Committee will plan, agree and review pay within the Council.
- g) To agree for the Head of Paid Service to manage any anomalies (including recruitment and retention supplements) that may occur utilising the principles as referred to at 3.7 and 3.8 of the report. The Head of Paid Service will report to the next available S&R Committee meeting instances where this discretion has been exercised.

SRC108. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no new items of urgent business.

SRC109. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items as they contained exempt information as detailed in Part 1, Section 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, paragraph 1; namely that they contained information relating to any individual.

SRC110. EXEMPT MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the exempt minutes of the meeting of the Staffing and Remuneration Committee held on 29 June 2015, and of the special meetings of the Staffing and Remuneration Committee held on 15, 16 and 30 July be approved and signed by the Chair.

SRC111. NEW ITEMS OF EXEMPT URGENT BUSINESS

There were no new exempt items of urgent business.

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The meeting closed at 9pm.

Cllr Kaushika Amin

Chair