



## General Purposes Committee

**Thursday 3 April 2014 at 7.00 pm**

Board Room 7&8 - Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way,  
Wembley HA9 0FJ

### Membership:

#### Members

Councillors:

Butt (Chair)  
R Moher (Vice-Chair)  
Brown  
Hirani  
Hopkins  
Kansagra  
Lorber  
McLennan  
J Moher  
Pavey

#### first alternates

Councillors:

A Choudry  
Jones  
Beck  
Van Kalwala  
Sneddon  
Colwill  
Hunter  
Al-Ebadi  
Chohan  
Arnold

#### second alternates

Councillors:

Krupa Sheth  
Kabir  
Matthews  
Aden  
Green  
BM Patel  
Leaman  
Naheerathan  
S Choudhary  
Mrs Bacchus

**For further information contact:** Bryony Gibbs, Democratic Services Officer  
020 8937 1355, [bryony.gibbs@brent.gov.uk](mailto:bryony.gibbs@brent.gov.uk)

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**The press and public are welcome to attend this meeting**

# Agenda

Introductions, if appropriate.

Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members

Item	Page
<b>1 Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests</b>	
Members are invited to declare at this stage of the meeting, any relevant financial or other interest in the items on this agenda.	
<b>2 Minutes of the previous meeting</b>	1 - 4
<b>3 Matters arising</b>	
<b>4 Deputations (if any)</b>	
<b>5 Appointments to Sub-Committees / Outside Bodies</b>	
<b>6 Stopping Up Order - Carriageway to the rear of Nos. 302 to 308 Preston Road</b>	5 - 14
This report seeks authorisation to make a stopping-up Order for an area of public highway to the rear of Nos. 302 to 308 Preston Road, under Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990).	
<b>7 HR Strategy 2014 - 2017</b>	15 - 38
This report sets out the Human Resources Strategy 2014 – 2017 and action plan for member approval. The HR Strategy proposes five strategic aims to provide a modern and responsive HR service that delivers value for money for the council.	
<b>8 Politically Restricted Posts</b>	39 - 46
The local government Housing Act 1989 and the Local Democracy, Economic Development Construction Act 2009 make provision for certain posts in local authorities to be politically restricted. The purpose of the legislation is to ensure political neutrality; and to prevent advice and decisions from being improperly influenced by separate loyalties. This report sets out the requirements of the legislation and identifies those posts which are covered by the definition for 'politically restricted' posts.	

## 9 Recruitment and Selection

47 - 60

This report provides details of the proposed new recruitment and selection policy which will replace the current policy and the supporting operational arrangements.

## 10 Any other urgent business

Notice of items to be raised under this heading must be given in writing to the Democratic Services Manager or his representative before the meeting in accordance with Standing Order 64.



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- The meeting room is accessible by lift and seats will be provided for members of the public.

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## LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

### MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE Wednesday 12 February 2014 at 7.00 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Butt (Chair), Councillor and Councillors Hirani, Hopkins, Kansagra, McLennan, J Moher and Pavey

Apologies for absence were received from: Councillors R Moher, Brown and Lorber

1. **Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None declared.

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED:

that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 January 2014 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

3. **Matters arising**

None.

4. **Appointments to Sub-Committees / Outside Bodies**

None.

5. **Localism Act 2011 - Pay Policy Statements**

Cara Davani (HR Director) introduced the report to the committee and explained that the Localism Act 2011 required local authorities in England and Wales to publish a Pay Policy Statement for each financial year. The Statement had to be approved by 31 March and was scheduled to be considered by Full Council at its meeting on 3 March 2014.

Cara Davani drew members' attention to the Pay Policy Statement attached at appendix 1 to the report and explained that it outlined Brent's policy on pay and benefits for all employees, excluding Schools. In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, the Statement included details of the remuneration of chief officers and lowest paid employees and the relationship between the remuneration of chief officers and all other employees. The Statement reflected current practice and there were no proposals to make any policy changes. Several key updates to the Statement were highlighted to the committee, including the amendment of the Pay Multiple to account for the employment of Brent's Interim Chief Executive; the

implementation of the London Living Wage; and, the transfer of Public Health staff to the Council. The Pay Policy Statement also referred to the impending new HR Strategy for 2014-17 which was currently in the final stages of development.

With reference to the recommendations set out in the report, Andrew Potts (Senior Employment Lawyer) advised that the committee was being asked to note the attached Pay Policy Statement.

In the subsequent discussion, the committee raised several queries. A member noted that an employee's annual pay progression was subject to satisfactory performance and queried how this was defined. It was similarly queried what constituted the minimum period referred to in relation to the re-employment of a former employee by the council and, the exceptional circumstances under which a temporary member of staff might be permitted to cover a permanent role. The committee agreed that the Pay Policy Statement should be amended to clarify these points, with reference made to the relevant policies.

In response, Cara Davani advised that the Pay Policy would be amended as suggested and explained that the appraisal process allowed the council to define satisfactory performance. With regard to the re-employment of a former employee, the minimum period was strictly set out in the Managing Change Policy. It was further explained that a lot of work had been undertaken to reduce the number of temporary staff employed by the council and a temporary employee would only be required to cover a permanent role where this was absolutely necessary; this could include interim cover for a senior post during a period of recruitment.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the Pay Policy Statement, as attached at appendix 1 to the report, be amended to clarify the points raised by the committee;
- (ii) that the amended Pay Policy Statement be noted as an accurate and factual representation of the council's pay arrangements for 2014/15;
- (iii) that it be noted that the Pay Policy Statement would be submitted for approval to Full Council on 3 March 2014 and that any subsequent amendments to the Pay Policy Statement required during the year would be brought back to the General Purposes Committee for consideration before being submitted to Full Council for approval.

## 6. **Review of Disciplinary Appeals Process**

The committee received a report from Cara Davani (HR Director) regarding the council's Disciplinary Appeals process. Members were reminded that in January 2013 the committee had agreed that a pilot scheme be established for a period of twelve months trialling new appeals arrangements. These arrangements required that appeals against dismissal for gross misconduct would be heard by a senior officer, rather than a member Panel, unless requested otherwise by the appellant. A request for a member panel was required to be approved by the HR Director. The report set out a review of this pilot scheme and recommended the continuation of the arrangements.

Cara Davani advised that the scheme had worked well and drew members' attention to the breakdown of appeals held within the period. There had been 13 disciplinary hearings held that had resulted in dismissal and 10 subsequent appeal hearings heard in accordance with the new arrangements. There had been no requests for an appeal to be heard by a member Panel. The Trade Unions had been consulted as part of the review of the pilot scheme and had confirmed that they were content with for the arrangements to continue.

In the ensuing discussion, members commented that they were pleased that the new arrangements had been successful. It was noted that union representation at appeals was less than might be expected and it was queried what number of appellants chose to be accompanied by a colleague. With reference to the breakdown of representation at appeal hearings set out in the report, it was noted that there had been incidences of appellants being represented by Trade Unions not recognised by the council; a member subsequently queried which unions the council did not recognise. Assurance was also sought that requests for member Panels could be made by an appellant.

Cara Davani advised that Trade Unions could not refuse to provide representation to their members if requested. Appellants were informed in writing of their rights regarding the appeal, including that they could be accompanied by a colleague if they wished. It was also confirmed to the committee that the new arrangements allowed an appellant to request that their appeal be heard by a member Panel. With regard to unions recognised by the council, Cara Davani explained that the council worked with the Teachers' Unions, the GMB and UNISON.

The committee thanked the officers for their contribution to the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (i) that the findings of the pilot be noted;
- (ii) that appeals against dismissal for gross misconduct be heard by senior officers, except where an application for the appeal to be heard by a member Panel has been made and agreed by the HR Director.

#### 7. **Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm

M BUTT  
Chair

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**General Purposes Committee**  
3 April 2014

**Report from the Director of  
Environment and Neighbourhoods**

Wards Affected: Barnhill

**Stopping Up Order – Carriageway to the rear of Nos. 302 to  
308 Preston Road**

**Not for publication ('below the line')**

Appendix 2 of this report is not for publication

## **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 This report seeks authorisation to make a stopping-up Order for an area of public highway to the rear of Nos. 302 to 308 Preston Road, under Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990).
- 1.2 This Order is required to complete the development of the site at Nos. 302 to 308 Preston Road and provide off-street parking related to the conversion of the second floor from office use (Class B1) to residential use (Class C3).

## **2.0 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That the Committee authorises the making of a Stopping Up Order for an area of public highway to the rear of Nos. 302 to 308 Preston Road.

## **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 Planning consent was given on 10th September 2012 for the conversion of the second floor of Nos. 302 to 308 Preston Road (inclusive) from office (Use Class B1) to residential (Use Class C3) comprising 1 x 1-bed and 2 x 2 bed self-contained flats, formation of refuse and cycle store at ground floor and installation of replacement windows.
- 3.2 A condition for development was the submission of plans to include six no. car park spaces which can each be accessed independently. These shall not be used for any purpose other than the parking of cars and shall be retained for the lifetime of the development. The reason for this is to ensure that the

proposed development does not prejudice the free flow of traffic or conditions of general safety along the neighbouring highway and to ensure satisfactory standard of amenity by providing and retaining adequate on-site car parking. There will be no other significant change to the design or traffic management on the highway to be stopped up.

- 3.3 A draft Stopping Up Order was duly made and advertised under Section 247 TCPA 1990 on 20th February 2014 to enable the creation of 6 parking places for redevelopment to take place. A copy of the draft Order is attached at Appendix 1 together with the relevant plan showing the proposed area to be stopped-up and the notice advertised on 20th February 2014 in the local press and the London Gazette.
- 3.4 In addition to the usual statutory consultees, (utility companies with infrastructure at the site and the Greater London Authority), the Council also consulted the properties fronting the highway to be stopped up. None of the statutory consultees objected to the advertised Stopping Up Order. Two responses were received from the frontagers.
- 3.5 A verbal concern was raised by Mr Martin Lewis of the Chartered Certified Accountants FosterLewisStone, 302-308 Preston Rd, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 0QP, that his firm would be denied access to the land for parking purposes. No objection was made. They are satisfied with assurances from VDBM Chartered Surveyors that their current parking arrangements will be maintained. E-mail correspondence with them is attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.6 An objection was received from Burrows Solicitors, 298/300 Preston Road, Harrow, Middlesex HA3 0QB. The objection was based on the claim that the area in question is not public highway, but a private parking area in which they have 2 dedicated parking spaces. However, records held electronically by the Transportation Service indicate this area of land is public highway. Following discussions with Brent Officers and VDBM Chartered Surveyors this objection was retracted and Burrows Solicitors will support the stopping-up. A copy of the e-mail confirming their support to the scheme is attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.7 Members are now requested to approve the making of the Stopping Up Order in order to complete the development.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications for the Council as the Stopping Up Order making costs will be met by the developer.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 Officers have taken the Council's legal advice in all aspects of the promotion of the Stopping Up Order. If it is agreed to make the Order then the making of the Order will be publicised, although it is not open to further objection by the public or other authorities.

## **6.0 Diversity implications**

6.1 There are no diversity implications associated with the approval of this Stopping Up Order.

## **7.0 Staffing / Accommodation Implications**

7.1 None.

### **Appendices**

Appendix "1" – Stopping Up Order with notice and plan

Appendix "2" – Responses to consultation

### **Background Papers**

Correspondence of Highway and Transport Delivery File TO/23/015/EAM  
Planning Approval, 10th September 2012, Case No. 12/1732

### **Contact Officers**

Eric Marchais – Transportation Service, 5th Floor North Wing, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 0FJ. Telephone: 020 8937 5452. E-mail [eric.marchais@brent.gov.uk](mailto:eric.marchais@brent.gov.uk).

Paul Chandler – Head of Transportation Transportation Service, 5th Floor North Wing, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 0FJ Telephone: 020 8937 5151. E-mail [paul.chandler@brent.gov.uk](mailto:paul.chandler@brent.gov.uk).

## Appendix 1 – Stopping Up Order with notice and plan



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT (STOPPING UP OF HIGHWAYS) (NO. \*) ORDER 201\*

1. **NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that The Mayor and Burgesses of the London Borough of Brent propose to make an order under Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("The Act") to authorise the stopping up of an area of public highway described in Schedule 1 to this notice.
2. If the order is made, the stopping up will be authorised only in order to enable the development described in Schedule 2 to this notice to be carried out in accordance with the planning permission granted by the London Borough of Brent as Local Planning Authority on 10th September 2012 under Reference No. 12/1732.
3. A copy of the draft order and of a plan of the relevant area can be inspected and a copy requested free of charge during normal office hours on Mondays to Fridays inclusive until the expiration of a period of 28 days from the 20th February 2014 at Brent Customer Services, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 0FJ.
4. Persons desiring to object to the making of the proposed order should send a statement in writing of their objection and the grounds thereof, to the Head of Transportation, Transportation Service, 5th Floor North Wing, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 0FJ, quoting the reference TO/23/015/EAM, within the period of 28 days from the 20th February 2014.
5. In preparing an objection it should be borne in mind that the substance of it may be imparted to other persons who may be affected by it and that those persons may wish to communicate with the objector about it.

Dated 20th February 2014.

Paul Chandler  
Head of Transportation

### SCHEDULE 1

The area of public highway to be stopped up comprises of an irregular shaped length of carriageway at the rear of Nos. 298 to 308 Preston Road, bounded by the north-eastern boundary wall of No. 296 Preston Road, the rear walls of the buildings at No. 298 to 308 Preston Road and an imaginary line drawn between the southernmost extremity of No. 308 Preston Road and the north-easternmost extremity of No. 296 Preston Road.

### SCHEDULE 2

Conversion of the second floor from office (Use Class B1) to residential (Use Class C3) comprising 1 x 1-bed and 2 x 2 bed self-contained flats, formation of refuse and cycle store at ground floor and installation of replacement windows.



**THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT**

**TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990**

**THE LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT (STOPPING UP OF HIGHWAYS) (NO. \*) ORDER 201\***

**Made \* 201\***

The Mayor and Burgesses of the London Borough of Brent, in exercise of their powers conferred by Section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("the Act") hereby make the following order:-

1. The Mayor and Burgesses of the London Borough of Brent authorises the stopping up of an area of highway described in Schedule 1 to this order and shown hatched grey on the deposited plan, in order to enable development described in Schedule 2 to this order to be carried out in accordance with the planning permission granted under Part III of the Act by the London Borough of Brent as Local Planning Authority on 10th September 2012 under Reference No. 12/1732.
2. Where immediately before the date of this order there is any apparatus of statutory undertakers under, in, on, over, along or across any area of highway authorised to be stopped up pursuant to this order then, subject to section 261(4) of the Act, those undertakers shall have the same rights as respects that apparatus after that area of highway is stopped up as they had immediately beforehand.
3. In this order "the deposited plan" means the plan deposited in the offices of the Transportation Service, Brent Civic Centre, Engineers Way, Wembley, Middlesex, HA9 0FJ under Drawing No. 13.1697.01.
4. This order shall come into force on the date on which notice that it has been made is first published in accordance with section 252(10) of the Act, and be cited as The London Borough of Brent (Stopping Up Of Highways) (No. \*) Order 201\*.

**SCHEDULE 1**

The area of public highway to be stopped up comprises of an irregular shaped length of carriageway at the rear of Nos. 298 to 308 Preston Road, bounded by the north-eastern boundary wall of No. 296 Preston Road, the rear walls of the buildings at No. 298 to 308 Preston Road and an imaginary line drawn between the southernmost extremity of No. 308 Preston Road and the north-easternmost extremity of No. 296 Preston Road.

**SCHEDULE 2**

Conversion of the second floor from office (Use Class B1) to residential (Use Class C3) comprising 1 x 1-bed and 2 x 2 bed self-contained flats, formation of refuse and cycle store at ground floor and installation of replacement windows.

The Common Seal of THE MAYOR AND )  
BURGESSES OF THE LONDON BOROUGH )  
OF BRENT was hereunto affixed in the )  
presence of: )

.....  
Solicitor

A3



SITE PLAN  
SCALE 1:500

ASSOCIATED DRAWINGS

NO.	TITLE

NOTES



 AREA TO BE STOPPED UP.  
TOTAL HATCHED AREA = 1539m<sup>2</sup>

SERIAL	DESCRIPTION	AUTH	DATE

CLIENT  
VDBM

JOB LOCATION  
302-308 PRESTON ROAD  
HARROW  
MIDDLESEX

DRAWING TITLE  
SITE PLAN

DRAWING NO  
13.1697.01

SCALE  
1:500

DATE  
OCTOBER 2013

**RICS**  
**THOMAS & THOMAS**  
CHARTERED BUILDING SURVEYORS  
306 GREEN LANE  
NORTHWOOD, MIDDLESEX, HA6 2QB  
TEL: 020 8990 9444  
EMAIL: [enquiries@tandt.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@tandt.co.uk)

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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 <b>Brent</b>	<b>General Purposes Committee</b>  <b>3 April 2014</b>  <b>Report from HR Director</b>
Wards affected: ALL	
<b>HR Strategy 2014 – 2017</b>	

## **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 The People Strategy 2010 – 2014 provided an overall framework for all Human Resources and people related activities. Aligned to the council's One Council priorities this four-year strategy and accompanying workforce development plan built on the council's vision to be an employer of choice.
- 1.2 The People Strategy expires in April 2014 and will be replaced by a new three-year HR Strategy and action plan.
- 1.3 The new HR Strategy builds on the previous activities and proposes five strategic aims to provide a modern and responsive HR service that delivers value for money for the council.

## **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 The General Purposes Committee is asked to approve the new Human Resources Strategy 2014 - 2017 and action plan.

## **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 The People Strategy 2010 – 2014 was the council's second strategy, which provided an overall framework for all Human Resources and people related activities. Aligned to the council's One Council priorities this four-year strategy had an accompanying workforce development plan that built on the council's vision to be an employer of choice.
- 3.2 The People Strategy 2010 – 2014 identified six strategic priorities that lead to the creation of a number of related activities.
- 3.3 By April 2014 this strategy will expire and will be replaced by the new HR Strategy 2014 – 2017. A review of the council's performance against the people strategy

2010-14 is contained in the new draft strategy. The new strategy has a particular focus on how the HR function will continue to deliver value for money for the council.

- 3.4 The proposed HR Strategy has been created following a review of the existing People Strategy and takes into account the 2013 -2014 review of the Borough Plan, and a review of reports submitted to PMO relating to HR's One Council project activities. This has enabled analysis of performance data to ensure that ongoing improvement activities are included in the new HR strategy, and to ensure that the Strategy objectives and the council's current borough plan are aligned.
- 3.5 Stakeholder engagement took place to elicit their views and to encourage 'buy in' from managers and staff on HR's key priorities for 2014 – 2017 and have been reflected in the draft strategy.
- 3.6 Consultation with HR's stakeholders occurred throughout February and March 2014 with the aim of identifying the key priorities for HR over the next three years.
- 3.7 The groups consulted included:
- The Leader and Deputy Leader
  - CMT
  - Employee engagement via Focus Groups
  - HR DMT
  - HR Improvement Group (HRIG)
  - Trade Unions
- 3.8 The themes identified through the engagement were:
- Stronger performance management, with staff particularly focusing on the need for better application of the appraisal system and 121 sessions;
  - Improved learning and development offering;
  - Strong leadership and direction from managers; and
  - Improved sickness and attendance management.
- 3.9 Focus groups took place in February 2014 aimed at identifying the perceived strengths and areas for development for HR from an employee perspective by engaging with a sample of staff. The sessions were separated into management and non-management groups to allow for open exchange.
- 3.10 Trade unions have welcomed 'the strategy for 2014-2017 and have offered their broad support to achieve its aims.'
- 3.11 The new HR Strategy 2014 – 2017 proposes five strategic aims to enable the delivery of a modern and responsive HR service:
1. Achieving organisational effectiveness and strong performance management
  2. Recruiting, retaining and rewarding a diverse, highly skilled, flexible and motivated workforce
  3. Valuing diversity and reducing inequalities
  4. Developing high performing managers and talented staff
  5. Building the professionalism and skills of the workforce to support One Council projects and deliver high quality services

- 3.12 The HR strategy and action plan provides the framework and overarching priorities to enable the council to deliver on agreed objectives. Under the umbrella of the HR strategy a Workforce Strategy and action plan and a Diversity Strategy and action plan will be developed.
- 3.13 These will be the instruments that will facilitate the delivery of council and HR priorities. They will ensure all activities and objectives relating to employment, workforce development, employee retention, developing staff and diversity are linked to supporting achievement of the Human Resources' challenging targets over the forthcoming years.
- 3.14 CMT supported by HRIG will have the overarching responsibility for ensuring the strategy is implemented and middle managers are fully engaged. HRIG will also be responsible for monitoring the roll out of the strategy on a quarterly basis. Progress against the strategy and action plan will be reported on an annual basis to CMT for consideration and approval.
- 3.15 It is recognised that the council will review its strategic objectives following the elections in May 2014 and that it is envisaged that a revised borough plan will be rolled out by the end of 2014/early 2015. It is the intention to review this draft strategy in the context of any new borough plan and on an annual basis. It is anticipated that once the lifespan of the new borough plan is determined that the HR strategy will have the same lifespan.
- 3.16 The strategy will also be reviewed in light of the staff survey in 2014. The results of the survey will be incorporated into future recommendations/actions associated with the HR strategy.
- 3.17 It is the intention to produce an action plan to support the roll out of the HR strategy on an annual basis.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 Any costs associated with the delivery of the HR strategy will be accommodated from existing budgets.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The new HR Strategy meets the council's employment obligations and follows good HR practice.

#### **6.0 Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 The HR Strategy 2014 – 2017 and accompanying plan include an action to create a new Equality Strategy in 2014. The Equality Strategy will set out how the council will work towards meeting an Excellent rating in the Equality Framework for Local Government.
- 6.2 The new strategy will benefit all employees and there is no evidence to suggest that any equality group(s) will experience adverse impact. The Equality Team are conducting an Equality Analysis on the HR Strategy and action plan and supporting Workforce Strategy, which will be completed by April 2014.

## **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

7.1 The body of the report concerns itself with matters relating to staffing.

### **Background Papers**

None

### **Contact Officer**

Cara Davani  
HR Director

**Brent Council  
Human Resources**

**Human Resources Strategy  
2014 - 2017**

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## **Vision**

In 2010, Brent Council set its vision to become a thriving, vibrant place, where diverse communities live in an environment that is safe, sustainable and well maintained. This vision to reduce poverty, redress inequality and prevent exclusion was at the heart of Brent's One Council, One Borough and One Community programmes, which involved:

- Creating a sustainable built environment that drives economic regeneration and reduces poverty, inequality and exclusion;
- Providing excellent public services which enable people to achieve their full potential, promote community cohesion, and improve our quality of life; and
- Improving services for residents by working with our partners to deliver local priorities more effectively and achieve greater value for money from public resources.

## **Strategic Plan**

This vision to improve the quality of life for local people will continue to be at the heart of Brent Council's future Borough Plan 2014 – 2017 and will be embedded into its strategic plan; with three main priorities will provide the framework for the way in which Brent conducts its business.

These three priorities are:

- making it a fairer borough
- fighting for more jobs and growth in the local economy
- strengthening Brent's community.

Brent recognises that these ambitious priorities can only be achieved through its employees working together with its partner services, residents, local business, voluntary and community sector, which is why this 2014 – 2017 Human Resources Strategy, is aimed at providing a high performing and motivated workforce that provides excellent services.

Brent's Workforce Strategy and Action Plan will underpin and be delivered alongside the Human Resources Strategy 2014 – 2017. The Workforce Strategy and its accompanying Action Plan will ensure that all employees have the right skills to fulfil their roles and that that Brent meets its future workforce needs.

This Human Resources Strategy 2014 – 2017 will assist the council to:

- Achieve Investors in People Gold Status in 2014/15
- Develop high performing teams through a strong performance management culture
- Increase apprenticeship and training opportunities for local people.

## **Review of People Strategy 2010 - 2014**

To identify the priorities for the new Human Resources Strategy it was essential to measure the council's previous performance in implementing its People Strategy, which determined work priorities for 2010 – 2014.

Supported by 37 actions and 36 additional outcome related tasks, the People Strategy 2010 – 2014 focused on the following priority areas:

- Developing strong leadership via a new Brent management tool;
- Streamlining and reconfiguring the organisation on One Council principles;
- Supporting effective change management that delivers timely results;
- Building an agile and efficient workforce that adapts easily to change;
- Closing skills and resource gaps by developing and re-skilling staff;
- Attracting, retaining and developing highly motivated, diverse and talented people.

### **How did Brent perform?**

The following summarises the performance against the People Strategy 2010 -2014 objectives:

#### **Priority 1: Developing strong leadership via a new Brent management tool**

- A full staff survey was conducted in 2010. This revealed that the 'perceptions of line management' were relatively positive especially when rating their manager on a more personal basis.
- Mini surveys were conducted across the council in 2012 on Management Effectiveness, Staff Engagement, Performance Management, Vision, Change and Working Practices and Workforce Development with 88% of respondents stating that they are happy to go the extra mile.
- Wave 1 and wave 2 downsizing of the council and increasing management spans of control to an average of 5 -6
- 97% of annual staff appraisals were achieved in 2013/2014;
- Established key performance indicators for people, performance and budget management;
- Revamp of the People Dashboard information to improve accuracy rates;
- Restructure of the HR function to meet the needs of the council;
- A new capability procedure was implemented along with other key HR policies including disciplinary and grievance.

#### **Priority 2: Streamline and reconfigure the organisation on One Council principles**

- An Employee Benefits review successfully brought together and consolidated terms and conditions of employment into a new more user-friendly core contract of employment for all staff on NJC terms and conditions;
- Harmonisation of the working week to 36 hours;
- Employment terms and conditions were harmonised across the council;

- Preparations for a new Oracle HR/Payroll system were made to deliver enhanced staff and management self service, data management and reporting;
- As a minimum all non-school, permanent staff now receive the London Living Wage, currently £8.55 an hour;
- New Senior Manager structure has been implemented;

**Priority 3: Support effective change management that delivers timely results**

- Project management training available to managers/managers;
- Specific training held on change initiatives to support departments and teams including Welfare Reform workshops;
- Reviewed Brent’s Change Management policy to be more flexible and adaptable;
- New emphasis on e-learning to allow for greater flexibility and up-skilling of the workforce;
- Supporting staff through change including new outplacement features;
- Change Management training and Executive coaching held for managers.
- Implemented a number of restructurings within the organisation, including a restructure of the Brent Integrated Business Support (BIBs) resulting in streamlining and service efficiencies.

**Priority 4: Build an agile and efficient workforce that adapts easily to change**

- Supported ‘Ready, Steady Go’ activities in preparation for the move to the Civic Centre with an 93% employee attendance rate achieved;
- Reduced the number of interims and consultants working for the council;
- Flexible working and Smarter Ways of Working workshops delivered across the council;
- Harmonisation and consolidation of London Weighting;
- Reviewed corporate recruitment to create a more streamlined and business focussed-recruitment service;
- Introduced enhanced flexible working policy and opportunities to deliver a more agile workforce;
- Improved quality of recruitment material and application packs to present the council as an employer of choice;
- Effective management and support to service changes involving TUPE (redundancy package to provide employees with greater protection during TUPE);
- Achieved Investor’s In People silver level accreditation;
- New framework for engagement with trade unions successfully implemented resulting in closer working and consultation.

**Priority 5: Close skills and resource gaps by developing and re-skilling staff**

- Restructure of the Corporate Learning and Development function successfully completed;
- New mentoring scheme introduced including access to external mentors;
- 92.66% of training participants reported that they were satisfied or very satisfied that the course would benefit them as individuals.

**Priority 6: Attract, retain and develop highly motivated, diverse and talented people**

- Launched a new apprentice programme to recruit 100 apprentices in the next three years with 21 apprentices already commenced on the programme in various departments across the council;
- At 85%, Brent has one of the highest retention rates of graduates who have completed the Scheme in the country;
- In 2013, Brent successfully integrated all the council's business support activities, which resulted in standardisation of processes, financial efficiencies and a more streamlined and responsive service;
- Employee demographic data refreshed with 77% response rate across the eight of the nine diversity characteristics.

The review of past performance revealed additional key achievements that have positively affected services and which have been aimed at continuing performance improvement.

Human Resources created an HR Improvement Group comprising of senior stakeholders from across the council. The group provides a unique opportunity to consult on key people management issues and to engage departments in HR best practice and associated key decisions.

Oracle Shared service project was a key strategic programme of work commenced under the People Strategy 2010 – 2014 that has laid the foundations for possible shared services for six London boroughs. The project created the opportunity and ability to deliver significant efficiencies and service improvements in finance, procurement, payroll and HR.

The participation and influence in the design process by Brent's HR and Payroll work stream has ensured that Brent is well placed to manage the migration from its existing legacy systems to the new oracle system.

A programme of review has seen key HR policies and procedures revised to reflect a modern, robust and performance driven organisation, which is aligned to the Borough's One Council vision to build a modern efficient organisation that is responsive to customer needs.

Trade unions have been fully engaged in the policy review process that has seen the revision and re-launch of the council's policies including Flexible Working, Probation, Disciplinary, Grievance, Capability, Attendance, Managing Change, Appraisal, Managing Change, Time Off, Whistleblowing, and the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) policy.

As part of the continuing efficiency drive, Reed was selected as the new Master Vendor supplier of agency workers, consultants and senior interims. This appointment will help to drive down spend on all non-permanent arrangements.

## **Aims of the new Human Resources Strategy 2014 - 2017**

The future for Brent like other London Boroughs and public sector providers will be one of challenges and change. Reductions in Government funding means that Brent must identify new ways of working to ensure that it can provide high quality services with less.

It is recognised that to achieve its ambitious vision of making Brent a fairer borough, growing the local economy and strengthening Brent's community it must rely on its greatest asset – its workforce.

It is therefore the aim of the new Human Resources Strategy to proactively strengthen its position to meet the challenges that lie ahead through implementation of the following five strategic aims:

1. Achieving organisational effectiveness and strong performance management to ensure an excellent service is provided to customers and residents;
2. Recruiting, retaining and rewarding a diverse, highly skilled, flexible and motivated workforce;
3. Valuing diversity, reducing inequalities and responding to the diverse needs of the community;
4. Developing high performing managers and talented staff;
5. Building the professionalism and skills of the workforce to support One Council projects and deliver high quality services.

The new strategy and action plan is structured around these five aims, which will contribute to achieving the objectives of the future Borough Plan.

The HR strategy and action plan provides the framework and overarching priorities to enable the council and services to deliver on agreed objectives. Under the umbrella of the HR strategy a Workforce Strategy and action plan and a Diversity Strategy and action plan will be developed. These will be the instruments that will facilitate the delivery of council and HR priorities. They will ensure all activities and objectives relating to employment, workforce development, employee retention, developing staff and diversity are linked to supporting achievement of the Human Resources' challenging targets over the forthcoming years.

Equally important in the context of the Workforce strategy will be encouraging innovation amongst staff. The contribution that staff can make improving sustainable service delivery will be fundamental to the achievement of the council's vision for the future. With this in mind, the Workforce strategy will support employees to contribute as well as adapting to new ways of working.

It is acknowledged that the shape of the workforce will continue to change in the years to come. Maintaining a heightened awareness of the external environment and its impact on how the council delivers its services and the implications for its workforce, will continue to be increasingly important including how the council works with contractors. Developing a leaner and more proficient organisation will be a key priority over the next two to three years.

## **Responsibility for the Human Resources Strategy 2014 – 2017**

Although the HR Strategy has a heavy emphasis on the work programme of Human Resources, it is a strategy that is to be owned and delivered by the whole council.

To assist in council-wide ownership of this strategy will be implemented, as follows:

### **General Purposes Committee (GP Committee)**

This committee carries out a number of functions on which the Executive cannot take decisions, including public rights of way, setting the Council Tax base and approving the council's statement of accounts, staffing matters and health and safety functions. A number of sub-committees have been established to carry out some of these functions. The committee will approve the HR Strategy 2014 - 2017 and will receive regular progress and monitoring updates on the Human Resources Strategy action plan.

### **HR Director**

This postholder is responsible for ensuring effective performance and accountability in respect of the human resources service, and that it operates within clearly defined functions and engages key stakeholders at governance and officer levels.

### **HR Managers (including the Head of Learning and Development and Head of Equality)**

These post holders report to the HR Director and in addition to all members of the Human Resources team, they are responsible for overseeing the on-going development, delivery and review of the strategy to ensure the HR service directly contributes to the achievement of the council's strategic plan.

### **HR Improvement Group (HRIG)**

This group comprises of senior stakeholders from across the council and provides an opportunity to scrutinise the operational effectiveness of the Human Resources. The HRIG will play a key role along side the Corporate Management Team (CMT) in implementing the strategy; ensuring middle managers are fully engaged. The group will also be responsible for monitoring the role out of the strategy on a quarterly basis. Progress against the strategy and action plan will be reported on an annual basis to CMT for consideration and approval.

### **Corporate Management Team (CMT)**

The CMT is comprised of the Chief Executive and eight directors, who lead the council's departments. They are responsible for ensuring that services are delivered in accordance with strategies and policies agreed by council and in the best interests of the community. They also play a fundamental role in determining the strategic direction of the council and ensuring its strategic objectives are delivered. In this context, CMT supported by HRIG will have the overarching responsibility for ensuring the strategy is implemented and middle managers are fully engaged.

### **Council-wide managers**

All Brent managers are required to fulfil the responsibilities outlined in human resources policies and procedures. They must also provide leadership that motivates, empowers and develops others to achieve shared goals as part of their core management responsibilities. In addition, managers must take responsibility for challenging poor performance. This will be made explicit in role profiles and measured through the annual appraisal process.

### **Trade Unions**

There are two recognised trade union groups operating within Brent council, Unison and GMB. They are available to provide support to their members on employee relations matters including health and safety. The council also engages with other unions who represent our school staff including National Union of Teachers, National Union of Schoolmasters and Women Teachers, Association of Teachers & Lecturers, National Association of Head Teachers, Association of School & College Leaders.

### **Brent employees**

All employees are responsible for ensuring they behave in accordance with the council's mission and values. The council is committed to working in partnership with employees through the Employees' Joint Consultative Committee in order to improve consultation, communication and engagement.

It is important that Brent employees are proud of the council and its services and are encouraged to act as ambassadors in raising the profile of the council as a vibrant and interesting place to live and work.

## **Implementation of the Human Resources Strategy**

Prior to implementation of this strategy consultation took place with key stakeholders including trade union representatives; HR Improvement Group; key members; employees; and CMT.

The Human Resources Strategy action plan outlines the key activities against each of the objectives that the Strategy sets out to achieve.

The action plan will be reviewed in 2015 when the new Borough Plan is implemented to ensure that the tasks and activities of the HR Strategy contribute to the borough's revised strategic plan and on an annual basis for the life of the strategy.

The strategy will also be reviewed in light of the staff survey in 2014. The results of the survey will be incorporated into future recommendations/actions associated with the HR strategy.

To ensure the new Human Resources Strategy is embedded across all areas of the council and at all staff levels this strategy will be published on the intranet and made available to all staff across the council.

## **Review of the Human Resources Strategy 2014 - 2017**

The Human Resources Strategy 2014 – 2017 has a lifespan of three years. Progress against achievement of its strategic objectives will be reviewed on an annual basis. This will include amending any aspects of the strategy to reflect changing priorities. Feedback from employees, trade unions and managers, along with quality checks will be conducted to ensure that all opinions are reflected wherever possible.



## HR Strategy Action Plan 2014 - 2017

Objective	Activity	Milestones	Owner
<b>Priority 1: Organisational effectiveness and strong performance management to ensure an excellent service is provided to customers and residents</b>			
Ensure Brent council has a new HR Strategy in place that is supported by an action plan	Produce a Human Resources Strategy with an annual Action Plan	Draft Strategy and Action Plan produced by February 2014  Consult Trade Unions, HR Improvement Group (HRIG) and staff groups February/March 2014  CMT approval by March 2014  GP Committee approval by April 2014	HR Director  HR DMT  HR Director  HR Director
	Publicise 2010 – 2014 People Strategy achievements and the new 2014 – 2017 HR Strategy and action plan	Publicise 2010 – 2014 People Strategy achievements and new HR Strategy 2014 - 2017 to workforce during April 2014	HR Director
Monitor the performance of the Human Resources Strategy against action plan	Report performance indicators and identify areas for improvement	Communicate annual progress updates to CMT, GP Committee, Trade Unions and HRIG commencing in April 2015  Monthly HR dashboards to DMTs  Ensure MI data is collated, analysed and reported on a monthly basis to HR DMT commencing in June 2014	HR DMT  Head of Transactional Services  HR DMT
Deliver the new Oracle HR/Payroll system to enhance staff and management self service, data management and reporting	Implement full Oracle HR/Payroll system including self service	Project Board to regularly review progress monthly commencing August 2014  Explore feasibility of shared service arrangements with other boroughs by September 2014	Head of Transactional Services  Head of Transactional Services
Ensure managers encourage increased levels of attendance at work through reducing levels of sickness absence	Review and monitor implementation of Attendance Policy	Review effectiveness of Occupational Health Service contract (see Priority 5 below) by September 2014	Head of Transactional Services

## HR Strategy Action Plan 2014 - 2017

Objective	Activity	Milestones	Owner
		<p>Provide monthly management information to monitor application of formal procedures in accordance with triggers to DMTs by April 2014</p> <p>New sickness and attendance management reporting framework created to underpin Oracle system by September 2014</p> <p>Proactive case management to ensure consistent application of procedures – on going activity</p> <p>Review benchmarking data on sickness absence and reporting levels and propose annual targets to CMT by December 2014</p> <p>Six-monthly report on sickness absence performance to CMT commencing October 2014</p>	<p>HR DMT</p> <p>Head of Transactional Services &amp; HR Managers</p> <p>HR Managers</p> <p>Head of Transactional Services &amp; HR Director</p> <p>HR Director</p>
<p>Support managers to achieve high performing teams and respond to instances of poor performance, attendance and behaviour; strengthening the management of employee relations and casework</p>	<p>Provide training and briefings to managers on sickness, disciplinary and performance management procedures</p>	<p>Evaluate and review training provision and include in Learning and Development training schedule by April 2014</p> <p>Introduce standard framework for conducting investigations by September 2014</p> <p>Robust case management reviews on a monthly basis commencing in April 2014</p>	<p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>HR Director</p> <p>HR Managers, HR Director &amp; Legal Services</p>
	<p>Up-skill managers to allow for creation of devolved HR service and reduce time spent to conclude cases</p>	<p>Robust management of performance and conduct related issues commencing April 2014 going forward.</p> <p>Managers Essential training programme to commence in April 2014</p>	<p>HR Managers</p> <p>Head of Learning and Development</p>

## HR Strategy Action Plan 2014 - 2017

Objective	Activity	Milestones	Owner
		Reduce overall time spent concluding formal cases by December 2014	HR Managers
Close actual and potential skills and resource gaps	<p>Manage the engagement of agency workers, interims and consultants in accordance with the council's criteria for their use.</p> <p>Knowledge / skills transfer plan to be included in interim and consultancy contracts</p>	<p>Annual agency and interim spend to reduce significantly month on month by March 2015</p> <p>Agency workers to be limited to 3-month assignments and interim contracts monitored monthly to ensure under 6 months duration with regular reports to CMT commencing April 2014</p> <p>Targeted Star Chambers to drive reductions in reliance on agency workers and interims</p> <p>Develop proposals to address areas where posts are hard to fill for CMT consideration by April 2014</p> <p>Monthly reporting on agency spend to DMTs and HRIG</p>	<p>Head of Transactional Services &amp; HR Director</p> <p>Head of Transactional Services</p> <p>HR Director &amp; Chief Finance Officer</p> <p>HR Director</p> <p>Head of Transactional Services</p>
<b>Priority 2: Recruit, retain and reward a diverse, highly skilled, flexible and motivated workforce</b>			
Maintain an appraisal scheme to ensure performance is measured against achievement of strategic targets and supports employee development	Implement the council's appraisal arrangements	<p>Managers briefings on appraisal provided on an on going basis from March 2014</p> <p>Six monthly review of appraisal sample to check quality levels (up/down linking of objectives) and report findings to HRIG commencing June 2014</p> <p>Retraining of managers on Oracle appraisal reporting process delivered by September 2014</p>	<p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>Head of Learning and Development</p>

## HR Strategy Action Plan 2014 - 2017

Objective	Activity	Milestones	Owner
		Monthly reporting to HRIG on percentage of appraisals completed from April 2014	Head of Learning and Development
Promote employee engagement	Conduct a council-wide staff survey to improve staff engagement and levels of satisfaction across the workforce	<p>Staff survey conducted in June 2014</p> <p>Develop action plan in response to issues from the survey by September 2014</p> <p>Publicise Staff Survey results to workforce during September 2014</p> <p>Conduct pulse-check staff surveys by January 2015</p> <p>Monitor survey action plan with six-monthly reports to CMT commencing in October 2014</p>	<p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>Head of Learning and Development</p>
Ensure the council can compete in a competitive labour market to recruit and retain talented staff	Implement a Workforce Strategy and Action Plan for 2014 - 2017	<p>Workforce Strategy and action plan drafted by April 2014</p> <p>Consult with staff, Trade Unions and HRIG by April 2014</p> <p>Publicise and roll out Workforce Strategy and action plan May 2014</p> <p>Annual review of action plan March 2015</p>	<p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>Head of Learning and Development</p>
Continue to support and facilitate the development and implementation of flexible working initiatives across the council	Review the roll out of flexible working arrangements across the council	<p>Review staff survey feedback July 2014</p> <p>Work with Directors to ensure each service has a flexible workforce by March 2015</p>	<p>Head of Learning and Development</p> <p>HR Director</p>
Ensure the recruitment of a permanent complement of high calibre managers and staff	Design effective recruitment campaigns and strategies	<p>Implementation of new Recruitment and Selection policy and procedure by May 2014</p> <p>Monthly recruitment statistics produced and report submitted to HR DMT and HRIG</p>	<p>Recruitment Manager</p> <p>Head of Transactional Services</p>

## HR Strategy Action Plan 2014 - 2017

Objective	Activity	Milestones	Owner
	Effective on-boarding of new starters	commencing in April 2014  Review recruitment processes to speed up efficiency and effectiveness of recruitment activity by June 2014  Review induction arrangements and implement new activities by September 2014  Review all standard forms to ensure they are relevant and fit for purpose by June 2014	Recruitment Manager  Head of Learning and Development  Recruitment Manager
Tackle recruitment issues related to hard-to-fill positions	Monitor vacancy levels	Monthly recruitment statistics produced and reported to HR DMT and HRIG in May 2014	Head of Transactional Services
<b>Priority 3: Value diversity, reduce inequalities and respond to the diverse needs of the community</b>			
Ensure the council's workforce reflects the community in which it operates	Implement a Diversity Strategy and Action Plan for 2014 - 2017	Draft strategy and action plan by March 2014  Consult with Diversity Reference Group, staff, Trade Unions and HRIG by April 2014  Diversity strategy and action plan approved by CMT and Executive April 2014  Implement Diversity Strategy and Action Plan from May 2014  Report on progress against workforce diversity targets and identify initiatives required to achieve improvements to Diversity Reference Group bi-monthly commencing July 2014  Review achievement of Year 1 action plan and report to Diversity Reference Group by November 2014  Prepare Year 2 action plan by March 2015	Head of Equality  Head of Equality  Head of Equality  Head of Equality  Head of Equality  Head of Equality

## HR Strategy Action Plan 2014 - 2017

Objective	Activity	Milestones	Owner
		Year 2 Action Plan approval at CMT and Executive April 2015 following consultation	Head of Equality
Ensure all council employees receive equal pay for work of equal value	Measure pay gaps on a regular basis	Provide annual Equal Pay reports to Diversity Reference Group with data on the pay gap between council employees looking across the different equality characteristics) commencing June 2014	Head of Equality
Encourage young people to see Brent council as an employer of choice and open up routes to harness fresh talent	Research and develop an Apprenticeship Scheme primarily targeted at new entrants to local government and supporting local initiatives to address unemployment in the borough; offering high quality learning and development to a wide cross section of the community	Recruit 100 apprentices over 3 years commencing in January 2014  Monitor retention rates of apprentices through the council's normal recruitment processes by 2017  90% of each annual intake of apprentices complete programme by January 2015 and thereafter	Head of Learning and Development  Head of Learning and Development  Head of Learning and Development
Ensure diversity is integral to all employment processes and practices	Refresh Equality Analysis process across the council	New Equality Analysis process in place by June 2014  Training and communications plan devised and rolled out by October 2014	Head of Equality  Head of Equality
Achieve 'Excellent' level in the Equality Framework for Local Government	Implement a comprehensive action plan to achieve 'Excellent' level	Progress measured towards achievement of the Framework reported on a quarterly basis to the Diversity Reference Group commencing June 2014  'Excellent' Level of the Equality Framework for Local Government achieved by June 2015	Head of Equality  Head of Equality
Promote diversity of the workforce and the community	Explore developing effective staff equality networks	Proposal paper on staff networks presented to Diversity Reference Group by June 2014  Staff networks to commence by September 2014	Head of Equality  Head of Equality
Build partnership with other corporate services (e.g.	Consider ways in which to expand the role of the Equality Team and	Refresh equality elements of the procurement process by May 2014	Head of Equality

## HR Strategy Action Plan 2014 - 2017

Objective	Activity	Milestones	Owner
procurement, community engagement, etc.)	measure value added	Work in partnership with the community engagement, research and intelligence teams to prepare reports on service user diversity and initiatives required to achieve improvements - reports submitted quarterly to the Diversity Reference Group commencing December 2014	Head of Equality
<b>Priority 4: Develop high performing managers and talented staff</b>			
Develop a culture of high performance throughout the council that supports the achievement of Strategic Plan targets	Complete the review of HR policies and procedures	Complete new suite of policies rolled out by end of March 2015	HR Director
		Policies subject to annual review September 2015 onwards	HR Director
Obtain Investors in People Gold status accreditation	Taking forward the outcomes of the Investors in People assessment  Identify gaps between Silver and Gold Status	Roll out recommendations from the Interim liP Review May 2014	Head of Learning and Development
		Apply for liP Gold status by December 2014	Head of Learning and Development
		Achievement of liP Gold status by April 2015	Head of Learning and Development
Promote the council as an employer of choice	Develop further employment and development opportunities within the council and the wider community	Develop an in-house graduate scheme by September 2014	Head of Learning and Development
		Implement reviewed coaching and mentoring programme by September 2014	Head of Learning and Development
		Develop structured approach to work experience, internships and volunteering	Head of Learning and Development
Develop learning and development initiatives to strengthen leadership and management capacity and high performing staff	Launch planning and evaluation framework  Develop annual corporate learning and development offer	Roll out during April 2014	Head of Learning and Development
		Roll out during April 2014 and annually from September 2015 and thereafter	Head of Learning and Development

## HR Strategy Action Plan 2014 - 2017

Objective	Activity	Milestones	Owner
<b>Priority 5: Build the professionalism and skills of the workforce to support One Council projects and deliver high quality services</b>			
Ensure equality and diversity is central to providing excellent customer service	Develop front line staff skills in diversity	Training programme developed for consideration and presented to Diversity Reference Group by September 2014	Head of Learning and Development and Head of Equality
		Programme rolled out quarterly across the Council by September 2015	Head of Learning and Development and Head of Equality
Deliver improved HR contract management, including the contracts for the provision of agency workers, occupational health, and employee benefits	Review the effectiveness of the council's Occupational Health contract	Review of Occupational Health service completed with recommendations for new service provision rolled out by September 2014	Head of Transactional Services
Support One Council projects and organisational change in particular organisational development and the council re-structure programme  Manage change effectively and positively	Provision of HR support to organisational change projects and service redesign  Provide proactive support and guidance on the implementation of restructurings including identifying training needs in response to change	Providing on-going HR support to organisational change programmes (on-going activity)	HR Managers with Head of Learning and Development
		Review BACES contract considering outsourcing implications for staff by July 2014	HR Managers
		Complete Recycling and Waste TUPE transfer of staff to Veolia - by April 2014	HR Managers
		Embed new Recycling and Waste client team and working arrangements by end April 2014	HR Managers
		Establish new Sports and Parks client arrangements by September 2014	HR Managers
		Complete restructure Sports and Parks team ahead of grounds maintenance transfer to Veolia by January 2015	HR Managers
		Establish the new Parking and Lighting Service by January 2015	HR Managers



## HR Strategy Action Plan 2014 - 2017

Objective	Activity	Milestones	Owner
		Complete Brent Transport Service restructure by January 2015	HR Managers
		HR support and advice given on Universal Credit Project and Public Realm TUPE	HR Managers
Provide modern, efficient and effective Human Resources services	Seek and deliver income generation opportunities from Brent's HR services	Develop consistent service standards across the council for Brent Integrated Business Support (BIBs)	Head of Integrated Business Support
		External income streams identified by September 2014	Head of Integrated Business Support and Head of Transactional Services
		Effective change management and streamlining producing service efficiencies	Head of Integrated Business Support
		New revenue streams identified and SLA's in place by October 2014	Head of Transactional Services
		Buy back from Brent schools reviewed and proposals developed by July 2014	HR Managers, and Head of Transactional Services
		BHP SLA agreement in place to provide diversity services by April 2014	Head of Equality
		Explore further opportunities for provision of corporate services with BHP by March 2015	Head of Transactional Services and Head of Integrated Business Support
Increase efficiencies and income generation	Explore and instigate opportunities for shared services, for example HR service opportunities within Harrow schools, and provision of services through the Oracle shared platform	Options report produced that identifies and explores opportunities by June 2014	HR Director with Head of Transactional Services

## HR Strategy Action Plan 2014 - 2017

Objective	Activity	Milestones	Owner
Effective workforce and resource planning will be in place in all service areas	Service managers will be proficient in planning and scheduling staffing needs	Managers Essential training programme to commence in April 2014 (see Priority 1 above)	Head of Learning and Development



## General Purposes Committee 3 April 2014

### Report from the HR Director

Wards affected:  
ALL

## Politically Restricted Posts

### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The local government Housing Act 1989 and the Local Democracy, Economic Development Construction Act 2009 make provision for certain posts in local authorities to be politically restricted. The purpose of the legislation is to ensure political neutrality; and to prevent advice and decisions from being improperly influenced by separate loyalties.
- 1.2 This report sets out the requirements of the legislation and identifies those posts which are covered by the definition for 'politically restricted' posts. A list of the currently restricted posts within the council is attached at Appendix 1. The legislation provides for individuals whose posts have been identified as politically restricted to request an exemption. The report also covers arrangements for considering exemption requests.
- 1.3 The HR Director is responsible for the maintenance of the list of political restricted posts and providing advice to the council.
- 1.4 This report is presented to the General Purposes Committee for information.

### 2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 The General Purposes Committee is asked to note the list of "politically restricted" posts specified in Appendix 1 of this report.

### 3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Local Government Housing Act 1989 and the Local Democracy, Economic Development Construction Act 2009 requires some posts in local authorities to be politically restricted. Individuals recruited to these posts are prevented from engaging in

any active political role either in or outside the workplace. This not only debars postholders from holding or standing for elected office but also prevents them from:

- (a) participating in political activities, publicly expressing support for a political party or undertaking other activities such as canvassing on behalf of a person who seeks to be a candidate; and
- (b) speaking to the public at large or publishing any written or artistic work that could give the impression that they are advocating support for a political party.

3.2 These restrictions aim to prevent politics coming into play where an employee is in a politically influential position. This could be where an employee implements the authority's policies, gives advice to, or speaks on behalf of, the authority.

3.3 Teachers, Head teachers and lecturers are all exempt from political restrictions under Section 2 (10) of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and will not be regarded as holding politically restricted posts, whatever their role.

3.4 Posts are either restricted because they are a specified post within the Act or they meet certain criteria which is also specified. Provision is also made for individuals to request an exemption in certain circumstances.

3.5 Specified posts are automatically subject to restrictions on public political activity and as such, there is no right to request exemption. These posts are:

- Head of Paid Service (Section 4 LGHA)
- Statutory chief officers
- Non-statutory chief officers
- Deputy chief officers
- Monitoring Officer (Section 5 LGHA)
- Chief Finance Officer (Section 5 151 LGA)
- Officers exercising delegated powers, i.e. persons whose posts are for the time being specified by the council in a list maintained in accordance with Section 100G(2) of the Local Government Act 1972.

Other posts are politically restricted because they meet one or both of the following duties-related criteria;

- Giving advice on a regular basis to the authority itself, to any committee or sub-committee of the authority or to any joint committee on which the authority are represented; or where the authority are operating executive arrangements, to the executive of the authority; or any committee of that executive; or to any member of that executive who is also a member of the authority; and / or
- Speaking on behalf of the authority on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters.

Individuals occupying these posts may request an exemption where their post has been politically restricted.

3.6 Currently there are 120 posts which fall within the political restriction criteria. A full list of the politically restricted posts is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

3.7 The list of politically restricted posts is maintained by the HR Director. The list will be reviewed annually in April and a report will be presented to the Corporate Management Team. The next review date will be scheduled to include those posts restricted as at 1st April 2015.

3.8 The list of politically restricted posts will be maintained on the job evaluation system. New starters are advised through a clause in the council's core contract if their post is politically restricted. Employees will be notified of any amendments to the political status of their post as required.

#### **4.0 Exemptions Process**

4.1 Section 3 of the Local Government Housing Act 1989 provides for exemptions to be granted by the Head of Paid Service. Under the old political restriction regime exemptions were considered by the Standards Committee which ceased to be a statutory body and the legal responsibility for granting exemptions transferred to the Head of Paid Service. Individuals are required to make their request for an exemption in writing setting out the reasons why the post they hold should be exempted. The approval of an exemption will be by exception and will require the presentation of significant justification in support of the request. The HR Director will provide advice to the Head of Paid Service.

#### **5.0 Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no financial implications that impact on budgets.

#### **6.0 Legal Implications**

6.1 The arrangements for managing politically restricted posts are set out in Local Government and Housing Act 1989 and the Local Democracy, Economic Development Construction Act 2009. The arrangements set out in this report comply with legislation.

#### **7.0 Diversity Implications**

7.1 There are no diversity implications arising from the legislation. Political restriction is a legal requirement and relates to the duties and responsibilities of a post.

#### **8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

8.1 There are no staffing implications other than those set out in the body of the report.

#### **Background Papers**

Local Government and Housing Act 1989.

Local Democracy, Economic Development Construction Act 2009

The council's list of established posts

#### **Contact Officer**

Cara Davani

HR Director

**Extract from of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 section 2 as amended by section 3 of the Local Democracy, Economic Development Construction at 2009**

**Definition: Politically restricted posts.**

(1)The following persons are to be regarded for the purposes of this Part as holding politically restricted posts under a local authority—

- (a)the person designated as the head of the authority's paid service;
- (b)the statutory chief officers;
- (c)a non-statutory chief officer;
- (d)a deputy chief officer;
- (e)the monitoring officer;
- (f)any person holding a post to which he was appointed in pursuance of section 9 below; and
- (g)any person not falling within paragraphs (a) to (f) above whose post is for the time being specified by the authority in a list maintained in accordance with subsection (2) below and any directions under section 3 below or with section 100G(2) of the **M1**Local Government Act 1972 or section 50G(2) of the **M2**Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (list of officers to whom powers are delegated).

(3)The duties of a post under a local authority fall within this subsection if they consist in or involve one or both of the following, that is to say—

- (a) giving advice on a regular basis to the authority themselves, to any committee or sub-committee of the authority or to any joint committee on which the authority are represented **[F1** or, where the authority are operating executive arrangements, to the executive of the authority, to any committee of that executive, or to any member of that executive who is also a member of the authority **]F1**;
- (b) speaking on behalf of the authority on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters.

(9) A person whose duties are solely secretarial or clerical or are otherwise in the nature of support services shall not be regarded as a non-statutory chief officer or a deputy chief officer for the purposes of this Part.

## List of Politically Restricted Posts

000000351	Chief Executive
0000007943	Chief Finance Officer
0000008076	Strategic Director Adult Social Care
0000008077	Strategic Director Children & Young People
0000007790	Director of Public Health
0000000594	Strategic Director Environment & Neighbourhoods
0000000559	Strategic Director Regeneration & Growth
0000000557	Operational Director Finance
0000006582	Operational Director Finance
0000006770	Operational Director ICT
0000000591	Operational Director Early Help & Education
0000000221	Operational Director Social Care
0000000041	Operational Director Environment & Protection
0000006638	Operational Director Neighbourhood Services
0000000901	Operational Director Brent Customer Services
0000000040	Operational Director Housing & Employment
0000000897	Operational Director Property & Projects
0000003613	Operational Director Planning & Regeneration
0000007942	Assistant Chief Executive
0000000558	HR Director
0000006511	Director of Legal and Procurement

### Adults and Social Care Department

0000007094	Head of Direct Services
0000000915	Head of Reablement & Safeguarding
0000006702	Head of Service Commissioning & Quality
0000004107	Head of Support Planning and Review

### Children and Young People

0000000908	Head of Care Planning & Children in Care
0000006661	Head of Placements
0000007978	Head of Safeguarding
0000006508	Head of Early Years & Family Support
0000000851	Head of Youth Support Services
0000000849	Head of Pupil and Parent Services
0000000909	Head of Localities & Children with Disabilities
0000000902	Head of School Improvement
0000000893	Head of Alternative Education

### Environment and Neighbourhood

0000000904	Head of Passenger Transport
0000000605	Head of Consumer & Business Protection
0000008016	Deputy Head of Community Safety
0000000850	Head of Community Safety
0000001809	Head of Registration and Nationality

000000595	Head of Safer Streets
000000882	Head of Libraries Arts and Heritage
000000865	Head of Recycling & Waste
000000916	Head of Service Sports and Parks
000003729	Head of Transportation

### **Finance**

000000842	Head of Audit and Investigation
000008020	Head of Finance
000000867	Investments & Pensions Manager
000008019	Head of Finance
000000150	Head of Applications
000000871	Head of Financial Management
000000009	Head of Infrastructure
000001186	Head of IT Service Delivery
000000286	Head of IT Service Transition

### **Legal & Procurement**

000004377	Senior Lawyer
000003691	Democratic Services Manager
000000650	Electoral Services Manager
000001342	Principal Democratic Services Officer
000004290	Senior Democratic Services Officer
000003689	Contracts Lawyer
000004623	Planning/Property Lawyer
000001033	Senior Contracts Lawyer
000004328	Senior Contracts Lawyer
000000415	Senior Contracts Lawyer
000004321	Housing and Litigation Lawyer
000000956	Housing Lawyer
000000031	Principal Housing & Litigation Lawyer
000001422	Prosecutions Lawyer
000006360	Senior Commercial Litigation Lawyer
000001600	Senior Housing Lawyer
000004376	Senior Prosecutions Lawyer
000007210	Social Services Lawyer
000001582	Principal EEPF Lawyer
000001637	Property Lawyer
000000651	Senior Education Lawyer
000000641	Senior Education Lawyer
000006760	Senior Employment Lawyer
000001621	Senior Planning Lawyer
000003690	Senior Property Lawyer
000007019	Child Protection Lawyer
000007966	Community Care Lawyer
000007965	Community Care Lawyer
000007935	Lawyer



0000001365	Principal Social Services Lawyer
0000004621	Senior Child Care Lawyer
0000000355	Senior Child Protection Lawyer
0000001650	Senior Community Care Lawyer
0000001608	Social Services Lawyer
0000004382	Social Services Lawyer
0000004622	Social Services Lawyer
0000008081	Head of Executive and Member Services

### **Regeneration & Growth**

0000000843	Head of Customer Service and Benefits
0000000848	Head of Customer Service and Revenues
0000000845	Interim Head of Care and Support
0000007570	Head of Employment and Enterprise
0000000890	Head of Housing Needs
0000008057	Head of Private Housing
0000000840	Head of Area Planning
0000004124	Deputy Planning Enforcement Manager
0000001213	Head of Building Control
0000001343	Head of Design
0000000892	Head of New Initiatives
0000006649	Head of Planning & Transport Strategy
0000007446	Head of Conference and Events Sales
0000000918	Head of Technical Services
0000006806	Head of Assets and Valuation
0000006791	Head of Strategic Property
0000007773	Capital Programme Manager
0000001774	Programme Manager Estate Regeneration
0000007772	Head of Facilities

### **Assistant Chief Executives Department**

0000008062	Head of Business Intelligence
0000008061	Head of Media & External Relations
0000008060	Head of Partnerships & Participation
0000008107	Media Officer
0000008108	Media Officer
0000008153	Media Officer
0000006830	Corporate Communications Officer
0000006485	Corporate Communications Manager
0000008106	Media Manager
0000000220	Head of Corporate Policy & Scrutiny
0000007797	Head of Substance Misuse
0000007791	Consultant- Adults and Intelligence
0000007792	Consultant – Children and Health Protection

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## General Purposes Committee 3 April 2014

### Report from the HR Director

Wards affected:  
ALL

## Recruitment and Selection

### 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Whilst reviewing all of our HR policies and procedures, the opportunity has been taken to update the current recruitment and selection policy, in line with legal changes and best practice. This report provides details of the proposed new recruitment and selection policy which will replace the current policy and the supporting operational arrangements.

### 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 The General Purposes Committee is asked to:
- a. Agree the new Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures.
  - b. Authorise the Human Resources Director, in consultation with the Leader and then consultation with the relevant trade unions, to make such other changes as may be necessary from time to time to the Recruitment and Selection policy and associated procedures to ensure they remain relevant and 'fit for purpose'.

### 3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The council regularly reviews its HR policy framework to align its policies and procedures to the organisational objectives, incorporate legislative changes and to reflect current modern HR practice.
- 3.2 The proposed policy provides greater clarity around best recruitment practice including simplifying the various processes at the different stages to make it more efficient to use. The key changes are:

- Specific recruitment and selection arrangements have been introduced for the recruitment to heads of service posts. Recruitment to these posts must be undertaken in consultation with the HR Director.
- There can be occasions where a large number of applications are received of which a significant proportion meet the person specification criteria. To assist recruitment panels, provision has been made in the policy to either add an additional stage into the process e.g. testing long listed candidates in order to obtain a shortlist or to raise the bar by using additional criteria to determine the candidates whose background and experience demonstrate a closer match to the job requirements in order to produce a manageable shortlist.
- Previously panels were required to convene in order to agree a shortlist. In practice this was not always achievable. It is not essential for panels to meet to agree a longlist or shortlist candidates. However, all panel members must participate in these stages. Wherever possible panels will meet to agree the shortlists providing arranging the meeting does not delay the process. In the event the convening of the panel is difficult the agreed list can be determined through telephone conference calls and by exception email correspondence where a telephone conversation is not possible within the timescales due to other work commitments.
- The make up of panels has been clarified. Panels should be representative in terms of race and sex and comprise an uneven number to facilitate the decision making process. Normally panels are made up of three members although in the case of senior appointments it can be five or more. The chair will have the casting vote.
- The role of the chair has also been clarified. The chair is responsible for record keeping. There should be one set of panel notes. It is for the chair and the panel members to decide how this is best organised.
- In the new policy recruitment panels are required to complete one selection form which all panel members must sign. The purpose of the form will be to show the scoring of the questions against model answers. Previously the questions have been linked to the selection criteria on the scoring form and the criteria have been scored. This overly complicates the process as the questions will have been designed around the criteria. In future the answers to the questions will be scored. This follows best recruitment practice and represents the panel decision. It is important that panels reach a consensus view on which candidates are appointable and to rank them in order.
- On occasions a selection will have been conducted and the same vacancy or a broadly comparable vacancy arises soon after. Provision has been included in the policy that where the same vacancy or broadly comparable vacancy arises within a six month period the panel can go back to the other appointable candidates without a further recruitment process being instigated.
- It is recognised that giving feedback to candidates is resource intensive. In future the policy will specify that verbal feedback will be given to candidates invited for interview. Feedback will not be given to other applicants and never in writing. The exception to this is internal candidates who will be provided with feedback at shortlisting stage where they request it in a one to one supervision with their manager. It is recognised this will assist the individual in their personal development. The line manager will be responsible for organising the feedback.

- There are occasions when the council uses an executive search company as part of the recruitment process. Executive search is usually used for senior appointments and where a post may be difficult to fill. An addendum has been incorporated setting out the procedure to be followed when appointing and using an executive search company. The process sets out best practice when tendering to appoint a recruitment executive search company and the expectations of the service that will be provided dependent on the brief. There is also specific guidance where posts are subject to a Staff Appointments Sub Committee.

3.5 The above clarifications and changes to the recruitment and selection policy are fully compliant with the relevant legislation and best recruitment practice.

3.6 The revised policy will be effective from 1 May 2014.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

4.1 There are no financial implications that impact on budgets from the review of the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures.

#### **5.0 Legal Implications**

5.1 The policy and supporting procedures are consistent with the relevant employment and equality legislation and has been reviewed by legal services.

#### **6.0 Diversity Implications**

6.1 The policy is applicable to all staff and provides a consistent approach to recruiting staff ensuring compliance with legal requirements. The policy will be continually monitored to ensure it is implemented fairly and consistently and in the best interest of the local community. It will also be kept under review to ensure it is delivering the council's aspirations for a workforce that reflects the local community. The requirements for reasonable adjustments to be made for disabled applicants are embedded in our practice and are currently being refreshed.

#### **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications**

7.1 There are no other implications in addition to those otherwise set out in the report. Consultation has taken place with the HR Improvement Group and CMT who have endorsed the approach. The trade unions have been consulted on this policy and their feedback has been considered when reviewing the policy.

#### **Background Papers**

Existing Recruitment Policy and Procedure

#### **Contact Officers**

Cara Davani  
HR Director

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# Draft Recruitment and Selection Policy

May 2014



## **Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedure Draft 3 March 2014**

### **Introduction**

The council is committed to delivering excellent services by being an employer of choice and having a workforce that represents the local community. Brent is committed to attracting and retaining a high performing workforce.

### **Our approach**

By attracting, developing and retaining a diverse group of high performing staff, we need to select the best person for the job, using fair and impartial methods; create career development opportunities to retain the best staff; ensure equality is at the heart of everything we do; and ensure that our recruitment methods are flexible enough to respond effectively to the challenges of a rapidly changing organisation.

The use of on-line recruitment and other modern and efficient methods will be optimised to provide suitable access to council jobs.

### **Policy statement**

#### **Policy summary**

The council will use a range of methods to ensure that recruitment is flexible, effective and efficient, defining the skills and behaviours that are required to do a good job. All appointments will be made on merit; people will only be selected on criteria related to their ability to meet the requirements of the job description and person specifications.

All relevant current legislation will be adhered to. This policy and procedure will be regularly reviewed and updated. This policy is non-contractual.

### **Definitions and general information**

#### **Employees**

This policy and procedure applies to all Brent employees.

Where an internal applicant is subject to a live disciplinary warning this will be taken in consideration by the selection panel.

#### **Recruiting managers**

Recruiting managers, as well as the council, have a legal duty to treat all individuals fairly and consistently and not to unlawfully discriminate and to ensure that all recruitment activity fully complies with equal opportunities and data protection legislation.

Recruiting managers must keep records of each stage of the recruitment. This includes notes and decisions made during shortlisting and at interview. One version which presents the panel position is acceptable. Recruitment records must be retained for 6 months and candidates may seek to review recruitment records relating to them.



Recruiting managers must be familiar with the council's recruitment procedures before undertaking recruitment on behalf of the council. It is the expectation that all managers should be trained in recruitment and selection. In Brent recruitment and selection will be part of the Managers Essentials programme. As a minimum at least one panel member must be trained. Where new managers joining Brent are able to demonstrate that they have recruitment and selection experience a short briefing on Brent's recruitment and selection policy will be arranged.

## **Safe Recruitment**

Brent is committed to employing the right people to serve the community and meet the requirements of the law. Certain post holders – especially those coming into contact with children and vulnerable adults – must undergo Disclosure and Barring Service check and other verification. New staff will not be able to commence employment without the relevant checks being in place. All staff will be required to undertake right to work checks on appointment. See DBS policy <http://intranet.brent.gov.uk/myemployment.nsf/pages/LBB-692> References from an external candidate's current line manager must be obtained in all circumstances.

## **Valuing Diversity**

Brent is committed to reflecting the diversity of our local community in the workforce. The council recognises that people from a range of demographic backgrounds have different skills, experiences and potential that will help it to achieve its goals. Recruiting from diverse communities will help improve council services and overall performance by filling skills gaps; introducing new ideas and knowledge; and enhancing Brent's reputation and credibility with diverse communities. The council aims to recruit people who share the same values.

## **Fairness and equality**

The council works to ensure all recruitment and selection practices are consistent and reflect the spirit of fair employment and equality legislation. Recruitment and selection procedures and outcomes are monitored and inform regular performance and equality reviews including adverse impact. Candidates who are unsuccessful at interview stage can request feedback on their performance. Internal candidates who are unsuccessful at shortlisting stage can arrange feedback through their line manager. At all stages of the recruitment and selection process reasonable adjustment for disabled people will be considered.

## **Involving service users and carers in recruitment**

Involving service users in recruitment can be a positive aid to attracting and recruiting quality candidates. This is particularly true for senior posts and front line posts. Service users participation in staff selection can help in appointing candidates who can communicate effectively and sensitively with service users; understand services from the service users' perspective; and provide services that include service users as active partners in the provision of care. When relevant, steps must be taken to involve service users in the selection process wherever possible. The recruitment team can provide further information as required.

## **Applying the recruitment policy and procedure**

### **Stage 1: Preparation**

When a vacancy arises the recruiting manager must in the first instance consider whether there is a requirement to replace the post or whether the work can be undertaken in an adequate way through reconfigurations within the team in order to reduce spend.

Where it is considered appropriate to fill a vacant post the recruiting manager must ensure the job description and person specification is up to date, concise and easy to understand. Applicants use this information to help them decide whether to apply and to help them prepare their application.

The job description and person specification must be based on one of the job family templates and the only additional information should be role specific requirements.

When revising the job description and person specification the following should be taken into account:

- There is no need to list all routine duties, only the main tasks of the job
- Job descriptions should be short, written in plain English and jargon free
- If the post is new, the post will need to be evaluated by a trained evaluator in HR.

Only posts on the council's staffing establishment can be filled. Where a request is made to fill a post over and above the staffing establishment a business case must be made and approved by the relevant Operational Director and HR Director.

It may be possible to cover temporarily vacant roles, for example maternity cover, by a secondment or acting up arrangement. (See the council's pay policy). Where a fixed term contract is appropriate and the recruiting manager should investigate whether the employee is already on an existing fixed term contract

## **Stage 2: Attracting candidates**

It is important to use the right media to attract the best quality candidates and advice can be obtained by the recruitment team. Options include internal advertising; Brent's website; social media sites, JobCentrePlus; Brent's Job Shop; and a diverse range of online job sites.

Brent will use its discretion to decide whether to use internal-only advertising to recruit in conjunction with the HR manager.

Posts at Heads of Service level or above must be advertised externally.

## **Stage 3: Asking for applications**

Applications will generally be made via the council's online recruitment system. Paper copies of forms will be accepted in very limited cases (e.g. as a reasonable adjustment for a person with a disability) and can be scanned into the system. A third party, Job Centre Plus or Re-employ advisors can complete applications for people with a literacy or learning disability.

## **Stage 4: Initial Longlist/Shortlisting**

Longlisting/shortlisting can be undertaken as soon as applications are received and as soon after the closing date as possible. Longlisting/shortlisting will be undertaken based on how closely the candidate meets the requirements of the person specification: Where testing is required at longlist stage the outcome of the test will be used to determine who progresses to shortlist stage.

- The interview panel must be involved at the shortlisting stage and one shortlist form completed on behalf of the shortlist panel by the panel chair. Interview panels should be uneven in number and consist of at least three panel members. Panels should be representative in terms of race and sex. Disabled applicants that meet the essential criteria in the person specification will automatically be longlisted/shortlisted. At interview stage disabled people will not be treated more favourably. The panel will always seek to recruit the best person for the role. Wherever possible a panel will meet to agree the shortlist providing arranging the meeting does not delay the process. In the event convening the panel is difficult the agreed list can be determined through telephone conference calls

and by exception email correspondence where a telephone conversation is not possible within the timescales due to other work commitments.

There will be occasions where there are a large number of applicants and excessive numbers of candidates who meet the person specification. In these instances it is advised to either add an additional stage into the recruitment process e.g. test longlisted candidates in order to obtain a shortlist or to raise the bar by determining (as a panel) additional criteria to assist in determining a manageable shortlist. In the case of the latter a file note should be kept of how the shortlisting was undertaken. Where additional criteria (desirable) is used to provide a manageable shortlist disabled applicants who meet the essential criteria will be included on the shortlist.

### **Stage 5: Selection**

Interviews continue to be the main method of selection, but may be supplemented by other selection methods. The aim of all selection methods is to assess whether, and to what extent, a potential candidate meets the requirements for the post.

Selection methods can take place before or following shortlisting, but usually before the final interview. They may also be used when there is a tie between equally experienced or able candidates to help recruiters identify particular strengths or weaknesses as further evidence of their decision. Selection methods can include in tray tests, case studies, scenarios and presentations. It should be noted that some members of the recruitment team can assist in designing tests in-house and have been trained to do so. For posts at Heads of Service level and above there are specific requirements in respect of the selection methods and advice should be sought from the council's HR Director.

A standard set of interview questions must be agreed between panel members before the interview. Interview questions must always include an equalities question and for staff with line management responsibilities a performance management question as well. The same set of core questions should be asked of all interviewees for the same vacancy. However supplementary questions may be asked to clarify an answer. Interview questions will assess the candidates suitability for the post and scoring will be based on the quality of responses to the questions. Expected responses should be agreed by panel members in advance.

The chair of the panel will complete one form on behalf of the panel which all panel members will need to sign in agreement. This will be retained for six months along with one set of notes from the panel. All other records will be destroyed.

### **Stage 6: Notification and Verification**

If more than one candidate is appointable, the panel must decide which candidate best meets the criteria. Other appointable candidates should be placed in rank order in case the candidate declines the job offer. In the rare cases where candidates' results cannot be separated, the panel may need to consider re-interviewing these two candidates. If the same or a broadly comparable vacancy arises within a six month period the panel can go back to the other appointable candidates without a further recruitment process being instigated.

It is important to decide whether candidates are appointable or not.

Candidates should normally be telephoned within a working day of the interview and advised about their success or otherwise. It is best practice to advise candidates at interview about when they will be informed of the outcome. The decision will always be confirmed in writing. The successful candidate will receive a provisional offer subject to satisfactory references, medical clearance and other satisfactory employment verification. The recruitment manager must satisfy themselves that a satisfactory reference has been provided by the candidate's current line manager in all instances.

## **Stage 7: Giving feedback to candidates**

The chair of the interview panel is responsible for arranging feedback on candidates' performance during the selection process, highlighting strengths and areas for development. It is the council's position that feedback will not be provided at longlist/shortlist stage. Feedback will only be given verbally following interview and never put in writing.

In the case of internal applicants it is considered that feedback at shortlisting or selection stage should be provided where an individual raises it with their line manager in a one to one meeting. It is recognised that this is good practice and will assist the individual in their development. It will be the line managers responsibility to obtain feedback information from the recruiting manager and discuss it with them.

Where the selection process has used scenario based exercises and in-trays the learning from these should be incorporated into the individual's performance appraisal and one to one supervision meetings. This will allow both the council and the individual to benefit from the learning and their personal development.

## **Stage 8: Starting work at Brent**

The recruitment and selection cycle is only completed once the appointed member of staff is effectively inducted into the required role. Brent's corporate induction procedure will be implemented for all newly appointed personnel. Local induction systems will also be in place to ensure staff are properly orientated in their new role. Essential training will be undertaken by new staff as required and must be undertaken in order to complete a new member of staff's probation period.

## **Senior appointments**

External recruitment consultants may be commissioned to support the recruitment process for senior appointments (Heads of Service and above). Costs will be charged to the relevant department. Appendix 1 outlines the roles and responsibilities throughout a senior recruitment process.

The HR Director will decide which specialist recruitment consultancies should be approached to tender to provide recruitment support for all senior appointments and will lead on arrangements relating to any Staff Appointment Sub-Committees for Director level posts and above.

## **References**

Two references must be obtained for all new appointments (internal and external) and one reference must be the current line manager (or former line manager if the individual is currently unemployed) for internal candidates the reference must PO6 or above.

References must be obtained in advance of final panel interview for all posts at Heads of Service level or above.

For appointments at Head of Service level the process and panel arrangements outlined in Appendix 1 should be used in all instances regardless of whether a recruitment provider is engaged or not.

## **Redeployees**

For existing staff who are part of the redeployment process, please refer to the council's Managing Change Policy and Procedure. Managers must familiarise themselves with the council's redeployment arrangements to understand the procedure to follow where staff at risk of redundancy apply for vacancies being advertised.

## Appendix 1

### Engagement of an Executive Search company

#### Tender Stage

The HR Director, with support from the recruitment team, will carry out the tender process, providing job details and a point of contact. The provider will be briefed on the council's commitment to reflect the diversity of the local community in its workforce. On receipt of submissions the HR Director will analyse proposals and identify the recommended provider. The preferred provider will be approved by the council's Chief Executive in the case of Operational and Strategic Director appointments. For Heads of Service appointments the preferred provider will be agreed with the relevant Operational Director and HR Director. The HR Director will then engage the successful provider.

#### Briefing Stage

A briefing will take place with the Chief Executive and HR Director or for Heads of Service posts with the Operational Director and HR Director (or designated deputy) and the successful provider. The purpose of this briefing will be to:

- Agree the advertising strategy
- Agree timetable
- Agree scope of search
- Agree assessments to be used

When appointing an Operational or Strategic Director the council's HR Director will liaise with the Members office to identify panel members and make arrangements for all key panel meetings (room bookings, refreshments) and will write to panel members with information about the key stages of the recruitment process. The Chief Executive and HR Director will act as advisers to the panel and in the case of Operational Director posts the relevant Strategic Director will also be in attendance along with the executive recruitment company lead.

For Heads of Service posts, the HR Director will agree the panel arrangements in advance of the briefing with the Chief Executive. The panel will usually consist of the following:

- The recruiting Operational Director (and/or Strategic Director)
- Chief Executive (or CMT member from another part of the business)
- HR Director (or designated deputy)

The panel must be representative in terms of sex and race and uneven in number. The Executive Search company lead may act as an adviser to the panel. It may also be appropriate to have another specialist adviser present.

#### Advert and Microsite stage

The recruitment provider will:

- Produce advert copy and mock ups (for creative adverts)
- Provide media schedule for external advert costs
- Produce a microsite (or candidate information pack)
- Get approval from the HR Director and recruiting manager (Operational Director or above)

The HR Director will liaise with the consultants and provide information for the microsite or candidate information pack.

### Application stage

The recruitment provider will:

- Receive and log all applications
- Sift applications against criteria in person specification
- Provide a grade and sift summary on each application
- Send all applications and sift summary to the HR Director who will in turn distribute applications and sift summaries to panel members ahead of the longlist meeting

It should be noted that longlisting and shortlisting for posts subject to a senior appointments sub committee process the panel will need to be engaged by correspondence following a meeting with the recruitment provider, Chief Executive, HR Director and relevant Strategic Director (if appropriate) on the proposed longlist.

The recruitment provider will present applications at the longlist meeting and agree the longlist with the panel. HR will organise the longlist meeting.

### Preliminary Interview and testing stage

Preliminary interviews and scenario based assessments will be conducted by the recruitment provider who will produce a report on each candidate which will be sent to the HR Director to distribute in advance of the shortlist meeting.

### Shortlist meeting

The recruitment provider will present reports at the shortlist meeting and agree a (provisional) shortlist with panel (generally no more than 3 candidates).

The HR Director will liaise with the Chair of the Senior Appointments Sub Committee by correspondence on the proposed shortlist and will write to all members of the Senior Appointments Sub Committee. (If the Chair did not concur with the proposed shortlist, a meeting of the Senior Appointments Sub Committee would be convened.

### Final Panel stage

The recruitment provider will make arrangements for candidates to attend the final panel and be in attendance at the final panel. The provider will take up telephone references before the final panel and provide suggested questions where required.

The HR Director will ensure packs are distributed to panel members and ensure room arrangements have been made.

### Post Appointment stage

The Chief Executive or recruiting director (in case of Heads of Service) will inform the successful candidate and refer them to the HR Director to determine their package arrangements.

The recruitment provider will inform unsuccessful candidates and provide feedback.

In the case of Operational or Strategic Director appointments the HR Director will write to the Executive Members giving 7 days to object to the appointment. HR will be responsible for all employment checks and contractual documentation in the usual way.

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