



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE Tuesday 21 November 2017 at 5.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Butt (Chair), McLennan (Vice-Chair), Farah, Hirani, Tatler and Warren

1. **Apologies for absence and clarification of alternate members**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M.Patel and Southwood.

2. **Declarations of interests**

There were no declarations received from Members.

3. **Deputations (if any)**

There were no deputations received at the meeting.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 November 2017 be approved as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. **Matters arising (if any)**

Min 6: Future Provision of the Pension Administration Service (General Purposes Committee – 8 November 2017)

The Committee noted that the information relating to financial clawback under the contract with Capita for the Pension Administration Service had been provided for members, as requested at their last meeting.

6. **Revised Attendance Policy and Procedure**

Sandra Simmonds (Interim HR Manager) introduced a report detailing a number of recommended amendments to the Council's Attendance Management Policy and Procedure.

The Committee noted that the Policy had been subject to an extensive review and consultation process involving a wide range of stakeholders (including Trade Unions and operational managers). As a result, a number of changes to the policy had been identified, which were designed to provide a more streamlined and transparent process whilst providing more discretion for managers to be able to

take account of individual circumstances when managing absence. The key revisions to the policy were identified as follows:

- removal of the distinction between the management of long term and short term absence, although trigger levels remained in order to prompt management action;
- the policy no longer set targets for automatic escalation following each stage. Attendance was expected to be monitored based upon the sickness triggers and if there was a cause for concern in line with service need;
- the revised policy also clarified the treatment of annual leave carry-over in terms of sickness absence and provided further guidance on the treatment of employees under the Equality Act 2010;

In terms of issues raised on the revised Policy, Members sought further details on the extended advice relating to medical redeployment; the appeals process and policy in respect of flexible working arrangements. In response, Sandra Simmonds felt it was important to recognise that the Policy was designed to support employee attendance in the workplace with the help of reasonable adjustments or, where necessary, the consideration of alternative employment opportunities, hence more detailed advice and guidance being provided around issues such as medical redeployment etc. In relation to the dismissal appeals process, confirmation was provided that the appointment of an Appeal Hearing Officer would vary depending on each case but the individual would be a senior manager graded at Head of Service or above. In relation to the flexible working policy, clarification was also provided that if a member of staff was deemed as not fit to work they would be expected to report that as an absence.

RESOLVED that the revisions to the Attendance Management Policy and Procedure be approved for immediate implementation.

7. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that under Section 100A (4) of the Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item 8 on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1 (information relating to any individual) and 3 (information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the authority holding that information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended).

8. Severance Arrangements

Althea Loderick (Strategic Director Resources) introduced a report seeking approval to the contractual redundancy and early retirement costs for the Director of Human Resources and Occupational Development.

The Committee noted that the proposed severance arrangements had arisen as a result of a restructuring of the Senior Management Team within Resources, approved by Cabinet on 23 October 2017. Under the Localism Act 2011 there was a requirement for severance packages above a set financial threshold (taking account of any capital costs payable to the pension scheme) to be formally

approved by Council or a Committee appointed for that purpose. The severance arrangements detailed within the report were therefore being presented to General Purposes Committee for approval.

In response to queries raised by Members, further details were provided on the calculation of the capital costs payable to the pension scheme as part of the overall arrangements detailed within the report. In addition, clarification was provided on the timing of the senior management team restructure within Resources, which members were advised had been designed to deliver further capacity on key corporate priorities whilst generating additional efficiencies. Clarification was also provided in relation to future consultancy activity.

RESOLVED that the Committee approve the contractual redundancy, severance and capital costs of early release of pension as detailed within the report, relating to the termination of employment of the Director of Human Resources and Occupational Development on the grounds of redundancy.

9. **Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting closed at 5:45pm

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair