



## LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

### MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE Wednesday 5 December 2018 at 5.30 pm

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor McLennan (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Agha, Farah, Colwill, Hirani, Krupa Sheth and Tatler

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

There were no apologies for absence.

2. **Declarations of interests**

There were no declarations of interests made by Members.

3. **Deputations (if any)**

There were no deputations received.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the following meetings be approved as an accurate record.

4.1 Monday 15 October 2018; and

4.2 Wednesday 31 October 2018

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

There were no matters arising.

6. **Severance Approvals**

Debra Norman (Head of Legal and HR) introduced the report, which members were advised was seeking approval to a number of specific severance payments, in accordance with the Council's Voluntary Redundancy Scheme along with a separate severance payment arising as a result of a restructure.

Members noted the background to the establishment of the Voluntary Redundancy Scheme, as set out in section 3 of the report and the process under which applications received under the scheme had been assessed. This had involved consideration of a business case in relation to each application assessed against not only financial implications but also the business needs and efficiency of the service.

In terms of the overall scheme, Members noted:

- that a total of 82 applications had been approved with an additional 12 (as detailed in Appendix 1 of the report) being recommended for approval by General Purposes Committee in view of the Council's Pay Policy Statement under the Localism Act 2011 requiring the approval of any termination payments (including the pension strain) exceeding £100k by Full Council or an appropriate Committee of the Council;
- In terms of those applications approved, 75 had been confirmed as accepted, six had been withdrawn and one applicant had left the Council for other reasons;
- The termination payments in excess of £100k being recommended for approval within Appendix 1 of the report did not all relate to the highest earners with the nature of payments in many cases reflecting length of service and age;
- The financial implications arising from the proposals, as detailed in section 4 of the report. The business case for each proposal had been based on a benchmark period of not more than two years for the cost of the redundancy to be offset by consequent savings to the Council (net any saving reinvested as part of a restructure). The overall payback period of the total termination payments was expected to be approximately 1.6 years. As a result of the scheme it had also been possible to identify approximately £0.6m of additional savings;
- The diversity implications and equality impact assessment undertaken in respect of the scheme, as detailed within section 5 and Appendix 3 of the report. Whilst the assessment had identified that the application of a two year payback period to individual redundancy applications would impact on those aged 55 years and over and this was likely to be materially justified by the policy objective of contributing to the Council's savings requirement and to the avoidance/minimising of compulsory redundancies, applying the benchmark to the scheme as a whole avoided this impact.

In addition to the severance payments being recommended in relation to the Voluntary Redundancy Scheme, Members also noted the proposal for an additional payment arising from a restructure which totalled in excess of £100k. Further detail had been provided in Appendix 2 of the report which had been identified as containing exempt information under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (Para 1 – information relating to an individual). As Members indicated they were minded to accept the proposal without the need for further discussion, the press and public were not excluded for this part of the meeting.

During the subsequent discussion, further clarification was provided for members on the way in which the business case relating to each application had been assessed to take account of the needs and impact on the service. Debra Norman confirmed that in addition to financial considerations this process had involved an assessment of the way in which services would continue to be delivered after any redundancy had been implemented. Carolyn Downs (Chief Executive) also felt it important to highlight that whilst recognising the benefits of the scheme from an employee relation and management perspective not all applications had been approved following an assessment of the business case. In addition in some cases not all the cost of a deleted post was being taken as a saving and there would be investment of part in restructured arrangements within the service.

Further details were then sought by members on the process for seeking to develop talent and leadership skills within the organisation. In response, Debra Norman highlighted the work being undertaken within the Learning & Development team around the talent management strategy and a second cohort of the Council's Leadership Programme. Members were also pleased to note extensive use of the Apprenticeship Levy in supporting the development of staff and the wider Learning & Development offer available to staff.

In terms of the Equality Impact Assessment, Members sought further detail on the higher percentage of female voluntary redundancy applications being rejected than males. In response, Althea Loderick (Strategic Director, Resources) advised that this reflected the nature of the roles the applications had been received in relation to. A number of applications rejected on the basis of needs of the service had related to social care positions where a higher percentage of the workforce was female. In terms of monitoring reasons for individuals seeking voluntary redundancy, Carolyn Downs advised members that staff in each post would be expected to complete a formal exit interview prior to leaving the council which would provide an opportunity to identify any specific issues. Althea Loderick advised that no specific trends or issues had been identified to date but monitoring would continue.

As no further issues were raised it was **RESOLVED** that:

- (1) The severance payments set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of the report be approved.
- (2) To note that none of the payments pursuant to the voluntary redundancy scheme would include any element additional to sums calculated in accordance with the Council's Managing Change Policy and the requirements of the Local Government Pension Scheme;
- (3) To note the overall outcome of the Voluntary Redundancy Scheme run during August and September 2018.

## 7. **Appointments to Sub-Committees / Outside Bodies**

**RESOLVED** to approve the following changes in appointments on General Purposes Sub Committees:

### **PENSION BOARD**

- (1) Councillor Kabir to replace Councillor Perrin as a full member of the Pension Board
- (2) Councillor R.Patel to replace Councillor Aden and Councillor Marquis to replace Councillor Choudhary as substitute members of the Pension Board.

Membership of the Pension Board was therefore confirmed as:

**DAVID EWART (C)  
CRANE**

**INDEPENDENT CHAIR  
LABOUR**

**KABIR**

**LABOUR**

**SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:**

**LABOUR:** MARQUIS, R.PATEL

**BRENT PENSION FUND SUB-COMMITTEE**

In view of the changes agreed to membership of the Pension Board, General Purposes Committee also noted that membership of the Brent Pension Fund Sub Committee would remain as follows:

**CHOUDHARY (C)**

**LABOUR**

**ADEN (VC)**

**LABOUR**

**DALY**

**LABOUR**

**LO**

**LABOUR**

**MAURICE**

**CONSERVATIVE**

**PERRIN**

**LABOUR**

**STEPHENS**

**LABOUR**

**CO-OPTED NON-VOTING:**

**FRANCESCA HAMMOND**

(UNISON)

**SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:**

**LABOUR:** CHOUDRY, KABIR, MCLEISH, NAHEERATHAN

**CONSERVATIVE:** COLWILL, KANSAGRA

**8. Exclusion of Press and Public**

Not required.

**9. Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting closed at 5.45 pm

M BUTT  
Chair