



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 11 March 2024 at 9.30 am

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor M Patel (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Donnelly-Jackson, Georgiou, Grahl, Knight and Krupa Sheth and Tatler.

Also present: Councillors Farah and Nerva.

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

Following her return from maternity leave, Councillor Muhammed Butt (as Chair) formally welcomed Councillor Mili Patel back in her role as Vice-Chair on the Committee.

The opportunity was also taken to thank Councillor Tatler for her support in covering the role of Vice-Chair during Councillor Mili Patel's period of maternity leave.

No apologies for absence were received.

2. **Declarations of interests**

There were no declarations of interest made during the meeting.

3. **Deputations (if any)**

No deputations were received.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 21 February 2024 be approved as a correct record.

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

There were no matters arising.

6. **Appointment of Director of Housing Services**

Peter Gadsdon (Corporate Director Resident Services) introduced a report from the Head of Paid Service providing details (in accordance with Standing Order 76 (i) and (ii) – Interim appointments to senior management posts) of the recent interim appointment of Spencer Randolph as Acting Director Housing Services along with the proposed timetable for permanent recruitment to the position.

Members noted that the arrangement had been agreed following departure of the Council's Director of Housing and subsequent creation of the Director Housing Services position as part of the senior officer realignment. The new position had been designed to include Private Housing Services and Housing Management of the Council's housing stock and provide enhanced focus on improving landlord services to tenants and leaseholders along with those residents in the private rented sector with the interim arrangement providing stability pending a permanent appointment being made.

Having considered the report, it was **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To note the appointment by the Chief Executive of Spencer Randolph as Acting Director of Housing Services.
- (2) To note the timetable set out in section 3 of the report for the appointment to the Director Housing Services post on a permanent basis.
- (3) To delegate to the Chief Executive any amendment to the proposed appointment process and timetable, for operational reasons, in consultation with Chair of the General Purposes Committee.

7. **Brent's Workforce Equalities Report 2022-23 and Gender Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report - March 2024**

Musrat Zaman (Director Human Resources & Organisational Development) introduced a report from the Corporate Director of Governance providing the Committee with an overview of Brent's annual workforce equalities data and pay gap data relating to gender, ethnicity and disability. Members noted that the 2022-23 annual workforce equalities data had been published in January 2024, as detailed within Appendix 1 of the report. In addition, the Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap report provided a further breakdown of data (as detailed within Appendix 2 of the report) that was due to be published at the end of March 2024. Members were provided with a summary of the main headlines within the workforce equalities data analysis, as detailed within section 5.1 of the report. These included a breakdown of the age, gender, disability and ethnicity profile of the workforce based on working age population.

Members also noted the pay gap analysis over the past 3 years up to the period ending March 2023 broken down between gender, ethnicity and disability, as detailed within section 5.2 of the report. It was noted that for the first time this had included a split between sub-categories of data for Black, Asian, Mixed/Other employees and employees for whom ethnicity was unknown. Details were also provided on the proportion of females, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and disabled employees in each pay quartile during 2023, as detailed in section 5.3 of the report and as a percentage of the Council's workforce, as detailed in section 5.13 of the report. Alongside the priority actions identified within the published Workforce Equalities report, the Pay Gap report had also identified several priority actions designed to address the pay gap issues during 2024-25, which had been set out within Appendix 2 of the report. The identified priorities included the following:

- To continue monitoring both internal promotions and external appointments.

- Quarterly and ongoing monitoring of new joiners' starting salary for grades PO5 and above.
- To gather and analyse recruitment data by gender and disability, in addition to ethnicity.
- To adapt the London Council Race Equality Statement and Framework to create a bespoke Anti-Racism Action Plan for Brent in promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) best practice in the workforce by April 2024.
- To review the EDI related learning and development in light of the EDI Strategy (April 2024) and stakeholder feedback to support the Council's inclusion agenda including (for example) a review of recruitment and selection training for managers.

In addition to the priority areas identified, members were also advised of the establishment of an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Board which had been established as a means of co-ordinating and reviewing progress on all EDI related activity and actions across the organisation.

Members recognised the positive progress made and acknowledged the good practice in Brent in terms of the transparency arising from inclusion of details relating to ethnicity and disability within publication of the gender pay gap report. The establishment of the EDI Board was also welcomed as part of the wider work being undertaken to champion and steer the organisation's priorities on all matters relating to equity, diversity, and inclusion with members keen to receive a further 6-month update on the Board's work in reviewing delivery of the priority actions identified within both the Workforce Equalities and Pay Gap reports. In addition, members supported the work being undertaken to increase knowledge and engagement in relation to data disclosure by employees in relation to both ethnicity and disability with the importance also highlighted in relation to the work being undertaken to monitor the internal career progression of staff through the organisation and support being provided for the Staff Equality Networks.

In commending the progress being made, it was **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Note and endorse the findings from the Brent Workforce Equalities Report April 2022 – March 2023.
- (2) Note and endorse the findings from the Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report prior to its publication in March 2024.
- (3) To endorse the action plans contained in both the Brent Workforce Equalities & Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Reports.

(2) Appointments to Sub-Committees / Outside Bodies

There were no appointments to be considered in relation to any of the General Purposes Sub Committees.

9. Exclusion of Press and Public

There were no items that required the exclusion of the press or public from the meeting.

10. **Any other urgent business**

None.

The meeting closed at 9.43 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair