



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Held as an online virtual meeting on Monday 6 July 2020 at 5.30 pm

PRESENT (in remote attendance): 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 received.

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 previous meetings held on Thursday 27 February 2020 and Monday 9 March 2020, be approved as an accurate record.

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

There were no matters arising.

6. **Recruitment & Retention Payments for Children & Young People's Social Workers**

Nigel Chapman (Operational Director Integration & Improved Outcomes) introduced the report from the Strategic Director of Children and Young People providing the Committee with an update on the impact on the decision taken in October 2018 to introduce recruitment and retention initiatives for key social work roles within the Children and Young People (CYP) department. In addition, the report included details on the overall approach towards social work staff retention at all levels within the department along with updated benchmarking information regarding specific hard to recruit social work roles.

In noting the updated benchmarking details, set out within section 3.3 of the report, members recognised the importance of Brent remaining competitive in the market place for good quality staff and the importance of the upcoming offer of key-worker housing as part of the Council's recruitment package. Whilst the key worker criteria was still in the process of being finalised, it was felt this would considerably strengthen the Council's position in terms of counterbalancing some of the higher

reward and benefits packages on offer for senior social work roles in other neighbouring outer London boroughs. In considering the updated benchmarking information, clarification was also provided in relation to the difference between the various salary ranges identified, which members were advised reflected the different evaluation schemes and pension arrangements in operation across different authorities.

Members noted the positive progress that had been made in terms of the recruitment and retention of staff, since the introduction of the current initiatives, as detailed in section 4 of the report. At the same time, they remained keen to ensure that the salary range and incentives on offer remained under regular review in order to meet the necessary legal requirements and ensure they also remained competitive, whilst providing stability within the department and minimising the reliance on agency staff.

Having welcomed the progress being made, it was **RESOLVED**:

- (1) To approve the continuation of recruitment and retention initiatives within CYP (including market supplements to all social workers) until the end of the 2020/21 financial year. It was noted that the current initiatives were as follows;
 - To provide a one-off £5,000 payment to newly recruited permanent Social Work Managers, Social Work Practice Consultants and Senior Social Workers in the hard to recruit teams namely, Localities, LAC and Permanency Services, on satisfactory completion of a probationary period.
 - To provide a retention payment of £3600. to Social Work Managers and Social Work Practice Consultant posts, payable after 36 months in the role and on a recurring 36 month cycle, subject to annual review of market conditions.
 - To allow the department the discretion to provide relocation package support to key posts, up to a maximum of £5,000 in individual cases.
 - To continue the existing market supplement of £1200 per annum to all Social Workers (PO1-PO3).
- (2) That authority was delegated to the Strategic Director, CYP, in consultation and regular review with the Director of Legal, HR, Audit and Investigations, to determine how recruitment and retention payments were offered across the department, with a continued focus on hard to recruit to posts.

7. Appointments to Sub-Committees

None.

8. Exclusion of Press and Public

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

9. Any other urgent business

None.

The meeting closed at 6.00 pm

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair