



LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE Held in the Conference Hall, Brent Civic Centre on Monday 7 March 2021 at 9.30am

PRESENT: Councillor M Butt (Chair), Councillor McLennan (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Farah, Nerva, Krupa Sheth, Tatler and Kansagra.

Also Present: Councillor Southwood.

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

Apologies were received from Councillor Colwill (with Councillor Kansagra in attendance as a substitute member).

2. **Declarations of interests**

Carolyn Downs (Chief Executive) and Debra Norman (Director of Legal, HR, Audit & Investigations) declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in relation to Agenda Item 7 (Proposal to Amend Hay Pay Scales). Given the nature of the item they remained in the meeting in order to respond to issues raised but took no part in the subsequent decision made.

3. **Deputations (if any)**

There were no deputations received.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

RESOLVED that the minutes of the previous meeting held on Monday 6 December 2021 be approved as an accurate record.

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

There were no matters arising.

6. **Stopping Up Order – Engineers Way**

John Fletcher, Team Leader, Development Control introduced the report from the Strategic Director Regeneration & Environment seeking authorisation from the committee to make a Stopping Up Order for an area of public highway that consisted of a footway on the South side of Engineers Way under Section 116 and 117 of the Highways Act 1980. The order was required to complete the new development that was situated on land south of Engineers Way that consisted of newly built retail and housing units as well as public realm areas.

Members noted there would be no change to the layout on the ground and no financial implications to Brent Council, with the council, subject to the completion of a successful application, to be relinquished from any future maintenance liability as this would be held by the developers. In addition to this the new proposal would result in a straight line highway boundary along the affected length of street, which provided an improvement on the current boundary as the width of the footway would be regularised.

Having noted the outcome of the consultation undertaken, Members welcomed the scheme and therefore **RESOLVED** to:

- (1) Note that the stopping up order under Section 116 of the Highways Act 1980 could only be authorised by the Magistrates Court.
- (2) As a result of (1) above to approve the submission of an application to the Magistrate Court.

7. **Proposal to Amend Hay Pay Scale**

Martin Williams, Head of Human Resources, introduced the report from the Head of Paid Service detailing a proposal to amend the Hay Pay scales that related to members of the Corporate Management Team (CMT). In introducing the report, members were advised that the amendments had been designed to take account of pay drift in London Local Authorities and address other identified anomalies in relation to the current structure of CMT pay. Having outlined the detailed proposals members noted the intention that, subject to approval, the amended scales would be implemented as part of a wider review of CMT operational responsibilities scheduled for later in 2022.

In terms of issues raised further detail was sought on the basis of the realignment of Hay Scales with members advised that these had been designed to take account of the scale of roles and to provide a clear delineation between those senior posts who were members of CMT and those who were not. The proposed amendments had therefore been designed to recognise the increased level of responsibility and decision making of CMT members and therefore the difference in remuneration.

Having considered the report the Committee **RESOLVED** to agree to the amendments to Hay Pay scales as set out section paragraph 3.8 of the report.

8. **Brent Workforce Equalities Data 2020-21 and Gender and Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report**

Martin Williams, Head of Human Resources introduced the report from the Director of Legal, HR, Audit & Investigations providing the Committee with information on Brent's annual workforce equalities data (published in January 2022) and pay gap data relating to gender, ethnicity and disability prior to its publication.

Members noted that the 2020/21 annual workforce equalities data had been published, as detailed within Appendix 1 of the report. In addition, the Pay Gap report on gender, which also included a breakdown by ethnicity and disability was due (as detailed within Appendix 2 of the report) to be published at the end of

March 2022. Members were provided with a summary of the main headlines within the equalities data analysis, as detailed within section 3.6 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 for the period ending March 2021 broken down between gender, ethnicity and disability, as detailed within section 3.7 of the report and compared to 2020 and 2019, as detailed within section 3.8 of the report. Details were also provided on the proportion of females, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) and disabled employees in each pay quartile during 2021, as detailed in section 3.9 of the report.

Alongside the priority actions identified within the published Workforce Equalities report, the Pay Gap report had also identified a number of priority actions designed to address the pay gap issues during 2021-22, which had been set out within Appendix 2 of the report. These included:

- To extend monitoring to include both internal promotions and external appointments;
- Ongoing monitoring of new joiners' starting salary for grades PO5 and above;
- Expand the range of programmes to support and encourage careers advancement;
- Monitor and report on the completion of unconscious bias training on an ongoing basis to reinforce the importance of inclusivity.

Committee members recognised the positive progress made and acknowledged the good practice in Brent including the strategies in place to take the vision forward reducing further work place inequalities. In noting and commending the progress made, members also recognised the need for continued action in order to ensure that the issues highlighted in terms of pay and workforce equality remained an area of focus.

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

- (1) To note the findings from Brent's Workforce Equalities Report April 2020 to March 2021.
- (2) To note the findings from the Gender Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap Report – March 2022.
- (3) To agree the proposed action plans contained in the report

9. **Apprenticeship Scheme – Update and Pay**

Martin Williams, Head of Human Resources introduced the report from the Director of Legal, HR, Audit & Investigation providing an update on the Apprenticeship Strategy and associated Action Plan for 2022 onwards. The report also detailed an outline proposal for apprenticeship salaries for L2 & L3 apprentices to be aligned with the London Living Wage (LLW).

In considering the report members noted the key areas of activity designed to increase the take up of apprenticeships within the Council and support residents into work in Brent whilst also utilising the Apprenticeship Levy in order to support career progression. Members were advised that since the introduction of the levy, many more types (or standards) of apprenticeships had become available. This had enabled the council to better align apprenticeships with key skill shortage areas and as a result, there had been a shift from large numbers of apprenticeships in business administration and customer service at levels 2 and 3 to a greater spread across a wide range of different apprenticeships from levels 2 to 7 as detailed in section 3.2 of the report.

In addressing the success of Brent's Apprenticeship Scheme, members recognised the key role played by the Council's Apprenticeship Manager in progressing the programme.

Members commended the success of the programme particularly in terms of Brent being able to offer career apprenticeships with support also expressed for the proposed alignment of salaries at Level 2 & Level 3 with the LLW which it felt also demonstrated Brent's commitment to "levelling up" across the borough.

Having welcomed the progress made in relation to Brent Apprenticeship Programme it was **RESOLVED**

- (1) To note the current position in relation to apprenticeships and utilisation of the levy including the greater alignment of apprenticeships with key skill shortage areas and take up of apprenticeships to support career progression.
- (2) To note the position in respect of the council's statutory target that 2.3% of new starters in every year be starters in apprenticeship posts.
- (3) To note the agreement to introduce centralised funding for a number of higher level apprenticeships and ring fence some entry level roles for internships for residents who needed support to get into work or apprenticeship.
- (4) To agree for apprenticeship salaries for L2 and L3 apprentices to be aligned with the LLW.

10. **Approval to waive Actuarial Strain Costs**

Martin Williams, Head of Human Resources introduced the report from the Head of Paid Service seeking approval to waive the actuarial strain costs that related to the release of a pension on compassionate grounds.

In noting the background to the proposal, the Committee were advised that as the pension strain costs amounted to over £100,000, approval was required from the General Purposes Committee to approve the proposed payment.

In considering the recommendations the Committee noted the details provided within the exempt appendix accompanying the report and **RESOLVED** to approve the waiving of actuarial strain costs as set out in the report.

11. **Appointments to Sub – Committees/Outsides Bodies**

Councillor Butt introduced the item seeking approval to a change in membership on the Pension Fund Sub Committee as one of the Sub Committees appointed by General Purposes Committee.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to approve the following change in membership on the Brent Pension Fund Sub Committee

- (1) Councillor Mitchell-Murray to be replaced by a vacancy as a full member of the Brent Pension Fund Sub Committee.

The membership of the Brent Pension Fund Sub Committee would therefore be as follows

BRENT PENSION FUND SUB-COMMITTEE	
CHOUDHARY (C)	LABOUR
ADEN (VC)	LABOUR
DALY	LABOUR
DONNELLY - JACKSON	LABOUR
KANSAGRA	CONSERVATIVE
VACANCY	LABOUR
PERRIN	LABOUR

CO-OPTED NON VOTING:

ELIZABETH BANKOLE (UNISON)

SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS:

LABOUR: CHOUDRY, MCLEISH, NAHEERATHAN & VACANCY

CONSERVATIVE: COLWILL, MAURICE

In response to a query from Councillor Kansagra, the Director of Legal, HR, Audit & Investigations confirmation that it would not be possible for General Purposes Committee to agree any change in membership on the Licensing Committee as these were appointments reserved to Full Council.

12. Exclusion of Press and Public

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

13. Any Other Urgent Business

None.

The meeting closed at 9:49 am

COUNCILLOR MUHAMMED BUTT
Chair