

## Decisions of the General Functions Committee

4 November 2013

Members Present:-

Councillor Joan Scannell (Chairman)  
Councillor Wendy Prentice (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor Claire Farrier  
Councillor Barry Rawlings  
Councillor Jack Cohen (In place of Susette Palmer)

Councillor Richard Cornelius (In place of Daniel Thomas)  
Councillor David Longstaff (In place of Robert Rams)

Apologies for Absence

Councillor Susette Palmer  
Councillor Robert Rams

Councillor Daniel Thomas

### 1. MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 14 October 2013 be agreed as a correct record.

### 2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Daniel Thomas, who was chairing the Cabinet Resources Committee and Councillor Robert Rams who is a member of the Committee. Further apologies were also received from Councillor Susette Palmer.

### 3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Councillor :	Agenda Item(s) :	Interest :
Jack Cohen		Personal and pecuniary interest as Councillor Cohen is a National Union representative which includes remuneration from a Unison branch outside Barnet Council.
Barry Rawlings		Personal and non pecuniary interest as Councillor Rawlings is a Unison Member.
Claire Farrier		Personal and non pecuniary interest as Councillor Farrier is a Unison Member.

#### **4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (IF ANY)**

Details of the questions asked of and the answers give by the Chairman, circulated at the meeting, made available to the public questioner in advance of the meeting and published on line. Verbal responses were given to supplementary questions asked at the meeting.

#### **5. MEMBERS ITEM (IF ANY)**

There were none.

#### **6. PEOPLE IMPLICATIONS OF THE BUDGET HEADLINES FOR 2014/15**

The Head of finance introduced the report.

The Committee sought clarification on what was stated in Terms of the Contract with regards redundancies and redeployment for CSG staff.

An amendment was moved and seconded, that the report be deferred until the relevant information and clarification could be provided to the Committee. Upon being put to the vote the motion for deferral was declared lost.

RESOLVED -

1. That, subject to Cabinet agreeing the detailed budget headlines at its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> November, the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) revenue savings for the year 2014/15 which are set out in Appendix 1 are approved together with any associated re-structures to expedite those savings.
2. That the FTE savings and related restructures are implemented into the Council's establishment structure under delegated powers.
3. That, subject to the completion of statutory consultation with staff and Trade Unions and compliance with the Council's 'Managing Organisational Change' policy, that the Chief Operating Officer be instructed to arrange with the respective Directors for redundancy letters to be issued to those employees who have been made redundant as a result of the 2014/15 budget process.

#### **7. MEETING ROOM BOOKING POLICY**

The Interim Head of Facilities introduced the report.

The Committee sought clarification as to whether paragraph 3.1.6 (set out below) of the policy was correct:

*3.1.6 Members of Parliament can hire rooms for their Surgeries and there is some provision for Candidates to use/hire rooms during elections.*

The Assurance Director circulated an advisory note to Committee clarifying this point.

“The relevant legislation regarding the use of schools and public rooms for election meetings by candidates at a Local Election Candidates is Representation of the People Act (RPA) 1983 (Part 2, Section 96) <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1983/2/section/96> and the same is relevant for Parliamentary Elections however the relevant section is 95.

The Electoral Commissioning guidance that interprets this legislation states:

- 1.18 You may want to engage with the public at public meetings, promoting your views and responding to questions from the audience.
- 1.19 The Electoral Registration Officer keeps a list of all suitable meeting rooms in their area and their availability, and will make this available for candidates and agents to inspect from the day the notice of election is published until the day before polling day. Contact details can be found on [www.aboutmyvote.co.uk](http://www.aboutmyvote.co.uk).
- 1.20 You should contact the owner of the premises to make a booking, giving reasonable notice to reduce the risk of the request being refused.
- 1.21 There is no hire charge for using these rooms, but you must pay for any expenses incurred, such as heating, lighting and cleaning and for any damage to the premises.

Candidates’ right to use rooms does not include hours during which a school is used for educational purposes. Equally, any prior letting of a meeting room must take precedence.”

As such the wording as it currently stands is appropriate as the Council has provision for candidates to use rooms during the election period, there are caveats if the room is used for educational purposes or used for another purpose but the Council are required to make them available.

RESOLVED - That subject to the above clarification, the Committee approve the implementation of the Meeting Room Booking Policy attached at Appendix 1 of the report with immediate effect.

## **8. ANY ITEM(S) THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES IS URGENT**

There were none.

The meeting finished at 8.30 pm