

Decisions of the General Functions Committee

29 June 2016

Members Present:-

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

Councillor Richard Cornelius Councillor Barry Rawlings
Councillor Alison Moore Councillor Daniel Thomas
Councillor Ammar Naqvi

1. MINUTES

The General Functions Committee **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings held on 21 March 2016 and 9 June 2016 be agreed as correct records.

2. ABSENCE OF MEMBERS

None

3. DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS

None

4. REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER (IF ANY)

None

5. PUBLIC QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

None

6. MEMBERS ITEM (IF ANY)

None

7. BARNET COUNCIL'S ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing (Commissioning Group) presented the report which provided information on Barnet Council's health and safety performance for the period 2016/17 based on data recorded in the accident / incident reporting system, together with independent audit results, corporate training records and ill health data. The committee was asked to consider and confirm the proposed priorities for the 2016/17 period.

The committee asked questions of the officer including how the data measured against results shared by comparator local authorities (accident / incident rates) or public sector organisations (reporting of injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences (RIDDOR)). The committee understood that there had been a reduction in the number of RIDDOR incidents.

The committee reviewed stress-related illnesses affecting employees and discussed potential links to organisational change together with the sources of support made available by Barnet Council.

It was noted that a concerted effort had been made to increase the engagement with health and safety training by council employees. Training modules had been incorporated into the Management Academy curriculum and staff induction.

In response to questions about the health and safety standards expected of contractors, the officer confirmed that the council expected them to comply with the same high standards and checked their policies and practices for evidence of this.

The committee thanked the officer for including comparative benchmarking data in the annual report.

The General Functions Committee RESOLVED to note the report and approve the priorities for the period 2016/17 as outlined in section 3 of the Annual Health and Safety Report (Appendix 1 to the committee report).

8. REPLACEMENT OF PROJECTORS AT HENDON TOWN HALL

The Director of Resources presented a report which sought permission to replace the projectors at Hendon Town Hall.

The committee understood that the recommendation to replace six projectors with new laser type projectors, which could operate without lamps and had long life spans, would benefit from a shared cost with Middlesex University. The arrangement would also include training for council custodians with support from university audio visual staff (between 7am and 10pm weekdays) and access to spare projectors in stock and ready to be swapped should the need arise.

The Director confirmed that the new laser projectors would comprise the following specifications:

- 4x Panasonic PT-RZ370
- 2x Panasonic PT-CW331RE.

The committee was reassured that the projectors would be compatible with existing IT facilities and should these be upgraded, were 'future-proofed' with HDMI capability. It

was noted, that subject to the committee's agreement, the order would take three weeks to be processed with installation scheduled in August.

The committee requested the Director of Resources to secure written confirmation of compatibility and that installation of the new projectors would be completed by the end of August.

The General Functions Committee RESOLVED:

1. **That the Director of Resources secure written confirmation that the new projectors:**
 - **are compatible with existing IT facilities at Hendon Town Hall and prospective future upgrades**
 - **will be installed and operational at Hendon Town Hall by the end of August 2016.**
2. **That subject to (1) above the replacement of projectors in Hendon Town Hall (comprising four Panasonic PT-RZ370 models and two Panasonic PT-CW331RE models) be approved.**

9. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR ELECTIONS AND ELECTORAL REGISTRATION REVIEW

The committee received a report from the Interim Chief Executive and Returning Officer, Mr John Hooton. The report sought approval of the draft terms of reference for a review of the elections and electoral registration function.

Committee members asked questions regarding the review which were responded to by Mr Hooton and Mr Evans, the Interim Chief Operating Officer.

In response to a request from members, Mr Hooton undertook to provide a copy of the Electoral Commission's performance standards framework following the meeting.

The committee amended the description of "alternative delivery models" in the draft terms of reference to clarify that "different ways of running elections and electoral services" would be investigated. Reference to "wording process of individual elector registration" was recommended to be included in the review of the effectiveness of elections and the electoral registration function.

A typographical error in the last bullet point of the draft terms of reference was amended to clarify that the May 2016 poll was being referred to.

Mr Hooton confirmed that the draft terms of reference had been circulated to Group Leaders, Councillor Cohen, and the Electoral Commission for comment.

Following discussion about the composition of the project board cited in section 4.1 of the report, the committee was advised that London Councils and the Electoral Commission had assisted to identify an independent investigator to lead the review.

The committee endorsed the submission of a report to the General Functions Committee meeting due to be held on 9 November 2016.

The General Functions Committee RESOLVED:

1. That the draft terms of reference set out in Appendix 1 to the committee report be amended and approved to read as follows:

“To review Barnet Council's electoral and registration functions, to identify actions to be taken to improve these and to agree an action plan to ensure actions are implemented. Specifically to consider:

- clarification of the role and responsibilities of the Returning Officer
- clarification of the role and responsibilities of the Council in relation to electoral registration, elections and referenda
- planning for elections and electoral registration activity in the context of the Electoral Commission's performance standards framework
- the structure; reporting lines and resourcing of the electoral services team including:
 - benchmarking the resourcing of the team with other London borough election/registration teams
 - investigating different ways of running elections and electoral services
- the effectiveness of the elections and electoral registration function, including:
 - the arrangements for the production and distribution of poll cards; applications for and distribution of postal votes; applications for proxy votes and proactive work to ensure an accurate and complete register of electors; the wording process for individual electoral registration
 - practical arrangements for elections including the staffing and operation of the election call centre
 - arrangements for the review of polling districts and the location of polling stations
 - previous election reviews and lessons learnt, including the independent review undertaken following the May 2016 poll and evaluation following the EU Referendum

Timeline

Report to General Functions Committee 9th November Implementation of recommendations from the review in time for the 2018 local elections.”

10. COMMISSIONING RESTRUCTURE AND ASSOCIATED SENIOR MANAGEMENT POSITION

The Interim Chief Executive presented a report detailing proposed changes to the senior management structure in respect of the commissioning group and delivery units.

A typographical error in the report (recommendation 1) was corrected to clarify that the proposed line management arrangements were set out in section 2.7 of the report.

The General Functions Committee RESOLVED to agree:

- 1. The deletion of one post from Barnet Council's establishment, the re-grading of two posts and the change in line management arrangements for Commissioning Directors and Delivery Unit Directors as set out in section 2.7 of the committee report.**

2. To implement a restructure in accordance with the ‘Proposed Structure’ chart at Appendix A of the committee report, with the list of posts on the establishment at this level being as set out in that chart. The restructure will be implemented as from 1st April 2016.

11. APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODES

The committee received a report in the name of the Head of Governance. The report asked the committee to appoint a representative to a vacancy on the Nicholl and Daniel Homes Charity.

The General Functions Committee RESOLVED to appoint Mr Fabio Seccatorie in respect of the vacancy on the Nicholl and Daniel Homes Charity.

12. NOMINATIONS TO SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

The committee received a report in the name of the Head of Governance. The report asked the committee to nominate representatives to local authority governor vacancies on the school governing bodies listed in Appendix A to the report.

Nominations were circulated in respect of 10 schools. The nominations were uncontested.

The General Functions Committee RESOLVED that:

1. The following representatives be nominated to vacancies on school governing bodies:

School Governing Body	Representative
All Saints CE School (N20)	Ms Charlotte Lea-Robbins
Church Hill School	Mrs Bobbie Cotterill
Moss Hall Nursery	Councillor Brian Salinger
St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School	Mr Ernest Ambe
St Vincent’s Catholic School	Councillor John Hart

2. Nominations to the following school governing bodies be deferred:

School Governing Body
Copthall School
Dollis Junior School
Livingstone School
St Paul’s CE School
St Theresa’s Catholic School

13. WORK PROGRAMME

The committee reviewed the 2016-17 work programme.

The General Functions Committee RESOLVED to agree the 2016-17 work programme.

14. ANY ITEM(S) THAT THE CHAIRMAN DECIDES TO BE URGENT

There were no urgent items of business.

Councillor Wendy Prentice, seconded by Councillor Richard Cornelius, however, congratulated the Chairman, Councillor Joan Scannell, in recognition of being awarded the British Empire Medal for services to local government and the community.

The meeting finished at 7.45 pm