

ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 8 July 2020

Draft Minutes of the meeting of the Establishment Committee held virtually on
Wednesday, 8 July 2020 at 11.00 am

Present

Members:

Deputy Edward Lord (Chair)
Deputy Kevin Everett (Deputy Chairman)
Randall Anderson
Deputy Keith Bottomley
Alderman Sir Charles Bowman
Tracey Graham
The Revd Stephen Haines
Sheriff Christopher Hayward
Deputy Jamie Ingham Clark
Sylvia Moys
Deputy Joyce Nash
Barbara Newman
Deputy Elizabeth Rogula
Ruby Sayed
Deputy Philip Woodhouse

Officers:

John Barradell	- Town Clerk and Chief Executive
Angela Roach	- Assistant Town Clerk
John Cater	- Committee Clerk
Bob Roberts	- Director of Communications
Chrissie Morgan	- Director of Human Resources
Janet Fortune	- Town Clerk's Department
Tracey Jansen	- Department for Human Resources
Amanda Lee-Ajala	- Department for Human Resources
Neeta Shah	- Department for Human Resources
Tim Fletcher	- Town Clerk's Department
Emma Cunnington	- Town Clerk's Department
Paul Chadha	- Comptroller and City Solicitor's Dept
Charles Griffiths	- City of London School
Grace Rawnsley	- Chamberlain's Department
Marion Afoakwa	- Department for Human Resources
Chloe Rew	- Town Clerk's Department
Bukola Soyombo	- Chamberlain's Department
Antoinette Duhaney	- Town Clerk's Department

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. **MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS UNDER THE CODE OF CONDUCT IN RESPECT OF ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

There were no declarations of interest.

3. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the public minutes of the meeting held on 28th May be approved as an accurate record.

4. **TACKLING RACISM TASKFORCE**

The Committee received a Report of the Town Clerk concerning the Tackling Racism Taskforce.

The Chair welcomed Caroline Addy and Andrien Meyers to the meeting; Ms Addy and Mr Meyers were appointed co-Chairs of the Taskforce earlier in July, and provided the Establishment Committee with an update on both the initial setting up of the Taskforce and a summary of the discussion and output from its first meeting.

As a starting point, the Chairs emphasised to the Committee that the Taskforce was practically focused; as well as capturing the proposals and formulating policies specific to the City, it would gather best practice from other local authorities, and consult with appropriate external specialists.

It was critical that the momentum of recent months was not allowed to dissipate and, as such, the Taskforce would look to deliver an interim report in September, with a finalised version ready by December.

The Taskforce have identified seven areas/workstreams that will inform its output over the coming months, namely;

- Governance
- Education
- Staff- career progress
- Business
- Police
- Livery
- Health and wellbeing

The Taskforce wants to avoid “developing endless policies” or “replicating work which had already been carried out”; the overarching aim was to, at pace, develop policies that would bring about effective organisational change, in essence, racism is a structure, not an event, and it was the Taskforce’s role to advocate for and support the Corporation in trying to dismantle this structure.

Mr Meyers provided a summary of a recent meeting in which the Co-Chairs addressed the BAME Staff Network, this was attended by 120 members of staff. Initially setting out the purpose of the taskforce, they then went into “listening mode”; six broad themes emerged:

1.The need for a safe space to voice concerns with regard for any form of racism - The sense they got was that members of staff did not know about the Corporation's whistleblowing policy.

2.The need to review the Corporation's recruitment and retention policies, as well as the appraisal process. There needed to be a greater effort around transparency and driving up numbers. In addition, some suggestions were made on closing the pay gap and on blind applications, as well as providing greater support for staff to progress.

3. Training and mentoring – unanimous support for mandatory training on unconscious bias, as well as need for specific training. Members and Chief Officers could play a part in helping staff with the progression ladder.

4. The need to provide greater support for Health and Wellbeing of our staff

5. Providing a greater focus on work experience initiatives

6. The need to boost support programmes such as Future Leaders Programme

Members expressed their congratulations to Ms Addy and Mr Meyers on their becoming co-chairs.

In response to a query on governance, the Chair of the Establishment Committee confirmed that depending on the recommendations in the final Report, aspects of implementation can be settled at P&R (and Establishment), other aspects may need to go on to the Court of Common Council; the aim, however, was to bring a Report back at pace.

A Member commended the early work of the Taskforce and encouraged the Committee to be steadfast in its political support for the work of the Taskforce and its eventual implementation.

It was confirmed that voting rights will be extended to officers as well as Members.

In response to a query about how frequently the BAME staff network had met previously, the Director of Human Resources confirmed that the Diversity and Inclusion Board was set up in 2016 – the BAME network was established via the Board, it didn't have a great attendance record up until recently. Following the BLM movement gaining prominence, the meetings have been opened to everyone and has seen 150-200 participants in recent months.

The Chair of the Establishment Committee added that they also attended the recent meeting and simply listened. There were some powerful voices and it was deeply regrettable that some of the Corporation's staff reported that they had not been treated in the way that we hoped they would be treated. It was imperative to identify these issues through the work of the taskforce and set about making long term changes to ensure there was no repeat.

A Member welcomed the news that invitations would be extended to experts in this area to address the Taskforce; he cited the Deputy Mayor of London as one specific example of someone who could bring a valuable contribution.

Both Co-Chairs welcomed any referrals from Members and confirmed that the existing list of experts could be added to.

A Member asked about the previous work undertaken in this area and why recommendations may not have “landed” in the past – was it due to a lack of political support and/or resources? Did we have enough of both to ensure this time round the recommendations would be fully inculcated?

In response, the Co-Chairs confirmed that in-depth resourcing conversations had taken place. Suffice-it-to-say, further resources are required and discussions were ongoing with everyone hopeful of a resolution by the end of July.

In response to a query about the Taskforce co-ordinating with the other staff networks and the Corporation’s volunteers (often found in the Open Spaces), the Co-Chair’s confirmed that work was ongoing to reach out to volunteers. Separately, discussions have been held with the Police to talk more about these issues and a focussed session with CoLP is scheduled at the next meeting of the Taskforce.

A Member asked the Co-Chairs about how they base lined the current position and how “were we going to measure success”. In response, the co-Chairs confirmed that work was currently being carried out on data gathering and the mission throughout has been to focus on outcomes; whilst there are some quick wins, e.g. blind CVs, others which might take some more time (e.g. 360 mentoring)

They added that, in terms of words and commitments to staff, there can be a disparity between the values we espouse and what the reality is. A cultural shift is required with Members at the vanguard. As part of that shift, it was critical to get beyond the usual caveats about “but this is what we have always done”. In addition, the Taskforce needed to revisit previous recommendations on these issues, as every time these were not implemented, or were significantly watered down, you “lose a bit more trust”.

It was also important to stress that this was about inclusivity – whilst the impetus has been driven by the Black Lives Matter protests; “if we get this right, it will benefit all groups”.

The Director of Human Resources added that given the networks were set up in 2016, we had to question why the BAME network wasn’t as well represented as others. Whilst this is now changing and new policies have been/are being implemented (e.g. Blind CVs and branding), on the whole the record of success is still mixed. HR are keen to work with the Taskforce to drill down on these issues.

An officer added that the make-up of the BAME staff network was a combination of people of all backgrounds. The ethos of the network is that everyone is welcome, and it was really encouraging to see that several colleagues from different backgrounds thanking the organisers for opening up the meetings. The recent meeting was very well received and over 250 staff members were in attendance. the officer added that “probably for the first time, staff feel that this new impetus will bring about positive changes for all those with protected characteristics”; ultimately, the taskforce has been a “good thing for bringing staff hope”.

The co-Chair welcomed these comments, whilst the Corporation had specific challenges, we should recognise that this is a wider societal issue and discussions on racism was so important to making progress.

The Chief Commoner regarded this as a hugely important initiative, and asked if the target of 15% BAME candidates for the next City elections realistic?

The co-Chairs responded that 15% is the aspiration. The Corporation was doing lots to examine ways in which this could be achieved and talking to various groups to help in this endeavour. Ultimately, it was down to business and residents as to how that voting goes, but, “we were doing our part” in terms of encouraging individuals to stand – a big part of that process is showing the Corporation has good policies and a positive internal culture.

The Chair of the Establishment Committee concluded by emphasising that as someone who has been passionately talking about diversity and inclusion for a very long time, it is a great pleasure to see the work the Taskforce is doing and they had every confidence this will lead to significant change in the organisation going forward.

RESOLVED – that the Committee noted the Report.

5. QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE

Questions were raised as follows:

Prior to the meeting a Member of the Court had emailed the Chair asking for an update on where we had got to with introducing “Ban the Box”.

The Director of Human Resources responded that a roll-out of Ban the Box was in progress (with certain caveats around those requiring a CRB check) and it should be ready for final sign off in the coming weeks.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

The following item of urgent business was raised –

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair formally thanked the departing Joyce Nash and Barbara Newman for their sterling contributions to the Committee for the past 33 and 23 years respectively. Their efforts had been invaluable, and Members would look to build upon their work in the years ahead.

7. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
RESOLVED – That under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act.
8. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**
The Committee considered the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 28th May.
9. **JOB RETENTION SCHEME**
The Committee considered a Report of the Director of Human Resources concerning the Job Retention Scheme.
10. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**
There were no questions.
11. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**
There were no items of urgent business.
12. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**
RESOLVED - that the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 28th May be approved as an accurate record.
13. **STAFF STRUCTURING - CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL**
The Committee considered a Report of the Bursar of the City of London School.
14. **TARGET OPERATING MODEL UPDATE**
The Committee received a verbal Report of the Town Clerk concerning the Target Operating Model (TOM)
15. **QUESTION RAISED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE AUDIT & RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**
The Committee received a question from the Chairman of the Audit & Risk Management Committee
16. **TOWN CLERK'S UPDATE**
The Town Clerk did not add anything to his earlier comments at ITEM 14.

The meeting ended at 13.25 pm

Chairman

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