

CORPORATE SERVICES COMMITTEE
Wednesday, 7 December 2022

Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Services Committee held at Guildhall on
Wednesday, 7 December 2022 at 1.45 pm

Present

Members:

Deputy Alastair Moss (Chair)
Florence Keelson-Anfu (Deputy Chair)
Deputy Randall Anderson
Deputy Keith Bottomley
Steve Goodman
Deputy Edward Lord
Catherine McGuinness
Ruby Sayed
Mandeep Thandi
Deputy Philip Woodhouse

Officers:

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| Bob Roberts | - Deputy Town Clerk |
| Greg Moore | - Assistant Town Clerk |
| Michael Cogher | - Comptroller and City Solicitor |
| Emma Moore | - Chief Operating Officer |
| Sonia Virdee | - Financial Services Director |
| Pauline Shakespeare | - Interim Assistant Director of HR Business Partnering |
| Mark Williams | - Interim Assistant Director of Talent & OD |
| Laura Marks | - Assistant Director of Operations |
| Jacquie Cover | - HR Business Manager |
| Anna Clarke | - Chief of Staff for the Chief Operating Officer |
| Andrew Buckingham | - Communications |
| John Cater | - Committee Clerk |

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Alderman Sir Charles Bowman, Deputy Henry Colthurst, Deputy Christopher Hayward, Gregory Lawrence, Timothy McNally, and James Tumbridge.

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 and non-public summary of the meeting held on 19th October be approved as an accurate record.

4. **DRAFT HR BUSINESS PLAN 2023/24 AND PROPOSED PEOPLE STRATEGY FRAMEWORK**

The Committee received a Report of the Chief People Officer & Executive Director of Human Resources concerning the HR Departmental Business Plan for 2023/24 and the proposed People Strategy Framework.

In response to a query, officers clarified that whilst the Business Plan had a narrow focus on the HR Department, the proposed People Strategy Framework was a cultural change strategy which applied to the organisation as a whole; it would be continued to be informed by feedback from all stakeholders, including staff through channels such as the Staff Survey, and Members via forums such as the Corporate Services Committee. It was emphasised that the Strategy was a journey and whilst the HR Department would be front and centre in delivering it, it was critical that everyone at all levels across the organisation and the institutions were actively involved.

Several Members welcomed this as a step in the right direction, with two adding that it was apparent that many staff members and other key stakeholders had lost an element of trust in the organisation. It was vital that this trust was rebuilt, and this could only be done by acting upon the feedback and concerns raised. Members pointed out that, historically, the results of previous staff surveys had disappointingly, on too many occasions, not translated into meaningful action, and it was critical that this was avoided this time around.

In response to a query, officers assured Members that the process for allegations or complaints of bullying was confidential; however, if feedback was being received which indicated that this wasn't the case this would need to be addressed as a priority. Whilst cases of bullying certainly weren't commonplace in the organisation, it needed to be stamped out when it did occur.

In response to a query around next steps, officers confirmed that a Report would be coming back to the Committee in the new year on initial actions and progress taken on the findings of the Staff Survey, a wider update to all staff members would also be communicated at this time; the Report will also present some early thinking about how the senior leadership regularises communication with staff going forward. It was stressed that some actions were hyper local and narrowly applied to specific departments, however, some cut across the organisation and were being turned around at pace, most notably, for example, the City's working posture arrangements (a large proportion of the workforce would see their minimum attendance in the workplace reduced to two-days-a-week from January 2023) and the re-introduction of the Guild staff cafeteria at Guildhall from March 2023.

In response to a query about whether, given the specific skillset required, the HR Department currently had the capability to deliver the Strategy, the Chief Operating Officer began by re-emphasising her thanks for the Committee's

support in securing additional transformation funding earlier in the autumn. Two key milestones in 2023 would be the delivery of the Strategy by Q2 and the Reward Review towards the end of the year. These would not be quick projects but if successful would deliver a step change in the working environment at the organisation. Whilst acknowledging that these pieces of work could not be rushed, Members stressed that keeping the momentum up was vital and were keen that the Policy & Resources Committee and the Corporate Services Committee were kept regularly updated and that the progress being made was regularly communicated with staff members over the coming months.

In terms of resourcing, the COO, acknowledging that the Department would have a twin focus in 2023 on getting the basics back up to standard and delivering the strategic pieces, asked to come back to the Committee with further thoughts around the requirements for additional resourcing.

Separately, further discussions would take place in 2023 in the Corporate Services Committee and in other forums about defining what being an “Employer of Choice” meant and the types of targets that would need to be embedded in the organisation in order to measure progress over the coming years.

Finally, a Member asked that officer should try to assign actual dates alongside the KPIs on page 17 of the pack (the HR Business Plan) as opposed to listing these as TBC (as was currently the case).

RESOLVED – that the Committee noted the Report.

5. **REVENUE OUTTURN 2021-22**

The Committee received a joint Report of the Town Clerk, the Chief Operating Officer, the Chamberlain, and the Comptroller & City Solicitor concerning the revenue outturn for the services overseen by the Committee in 2021-22 with the final budget for the year.

The Chair asked that, given its responsibilities in this area, going forward, the Committee was provided with more regular financial reporting updates.

RESOLVED – that the Committee noted the Report.

6. **CONTRACTUAL NOTICE PERIOD INCREASE - FOR EMPLOYEES ON GRADES H TO J**

The Committee considered a Report of the Chief People Officer & Executive Director of Human Resources concerning a change to the current notice periods in City of London Terms & Conditions of Employment for employees at Grades H to J.

RESOLVED – that the Committee:

- Approved an increase to the contractual notice period from 2 months to 3 months for all City of London Corporation posts graded Grades H to J which will apply to all new job offers made with effect from 8th December 2022; and

- That in relation to employees currently employed on grades H to J, the committee noted that changes to their contractual notice periods will form part of the consultation on the wider Pay and Grading reforms which will take place in 2023.

7. **QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

There were no questions.

8. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT**

There were no urgent items.

9. **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.

10. **NON-PUBLIC MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the non-public minutes of the meeting held on 19th October be approved as an accurate record.

11. **MARKETS CO-LOCATION PROGRAMME: FUTURE RESOURCING & FUNDING**

The Committee considered a Report of the Chief Operating Officer concerning the Markets Co-Location Programme.

This item was taken in the confidential section of the meeting.

12. **TOWN CLERK AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE INDUCTION ARRANGEMENTS**

The Committee received a Report of the Chief People Officer and Executive Director of Human Resources concerning the new Town Clerk and Chief Executive's induction arrangements.

13. **NON-PUBLIC QUESTIONS ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE**

A question was raised in relation to the discussion during Item 4.

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT AND WHICH THE COMMITTEE AGREES SHOULD BE CONSIDERED WHILST THE PUBLIC ARE EXCLUDED**

Two items of urgent business were raised.

15. **CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

RESOLVED – That the confidential minutes of the meeting held on 19th October be approved as an accurate record.

The meeting ended at 3.10 pm

Chair

John Cater
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