

MINUTES OF JNC APPOINTMENTS, SALARIES AND STRUCTURES PANEL

Tuesday, 7 April 2020
(2:13 - 2:50 pm)

Present: Cllr Darren Rodwell (Chair), Cllr Saima Ashraf, Cllr Jane Jones and Cllr Dominic Twomey

Apologies: Cllr Sanchia Alasia

10. Declaration of Members' Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

11. Private Business

It was resolved to exclude the public and press from the remainder of the meeting by reason of the nature of the business to be discussed which included information exempt from publication by virtue of paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended).

12. Interim Senior Leadership Management Arrangements

The Chief Executive presented a report on the proposed interim senior leadership arrangements for the period of his secondment to Birmingham City Council (BCC) which was due to commence in mid-May 2020.

The Chief Executive explained that Barking and Dagenham (B&D) had received an approach, led by the Local Government Association (LGA), to provide support at Chief Executive-level to BCC. BCC had been unsuccessful with a recent recruitment drive for a permanent Chief Executive and, as the largest local authority in Europe, was facing considerable challenges at the present time. B&D's excellent reputation across the local government sector and its well-respected management team had been key factors in the approach and terms for a secondment of 9-12 months had been agreed by all parties.

In respect of the interim arrangements at B&D while the Chief Executive was on secondment, consideration had been given to seeking an external appointment to the post. However, as B&D had a very clear plan for the next 24 months it was felt that the existing senior management team was best placed to deliver that plan and had the capability and flexibility to cope with events such as the Council's response to the global COVID-19 crisis. With that in mind, the Chief Executive had drawn up a series of proposals for the Council's permanent Strategic Directors to act up into higher roles and/or take on additional responsibilities to ensure that the Council continued to meet its statutory obligations and delivered excellent services to the local community.

Arising from the discussions, the Chief Executive clarified a number of points which included:

- (a) The honoraria payments to the officers acting up into higher roles reflected

- the current salary level for those posts;
- (b) The net effect of the proposals was a saving on senior management costs of circa £81,500 (plus on-costs) in a full year;
 - (c) The LGA would also make available up to £200,000 in 2020 and 2021 towards additional managerial capacity that may be required to support B&D's management team;
 - (d) The intention was to submit a further report to the JNC Panel later in the year on additional proposals relating to the senior management structure below Strategic Director level, aimed at providing further resilience and stability while also reflecting changes to market conditions for several posts;
 - (e) The Council's response to the COVID-19 crisis would be the subject of further discussions and reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Panel **resolved** to:

- (i) Note the secondment of the Chief Executive to Birmingham City Council for a period of up to 12 months with effect from mid-May 2020; and
- (ii) Agree the interim senior leadership arrangements during the period of the Chief Executive's secondment as follows:
 - (a) That Claire Symonds, Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Operating Officer, becomes the Acting Chief Executive and the statutory Head of Paid Service, and receives an honorarium equivalent to the difference between her current salary and that of the current Chief Executive (£22,750 in a full year);
 - (b) That Fiona Taylor, Director of Law and Governance, becomes the Acting Deputy Chief Executive and the statutory Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer, as well as acting as GOLD Command for the Council's COVID 19 response, assuming management responsibility for the Corporate Assurance Team and acting as sponsor of the Core Transformation Programme, and receives an honorarium equivalent to the difference between her current salary and that of the current Deputy Chief Executive (£25,008 in a full year);
 - (c) That Philip Gregory, Finance Director, becomes the Chief Financial Officer (Section 151 Officer) and receives an honorarium equivalent to 10% of his current salary (£10,700 in a full year);
 - (d) That Graeme Cooke, Director of Inclusive Growth, assumes the role of strategic lead for the development of the Council's performance framework and the line management of the Director of My Place, and receives an honorarium equivalent to 10% of his current salary (£11,523 in a full year); and
 - (e) That Elaine Allegretti, Director of People and Resilience, takes on additional responsibilities to be determined by the Head of Paid Service and receives an honorarium equivalent to up to 10% of her current salary (maximum of £11,523 in a full year), also to be determined by the Head of Paid Service.