

## **GENERAL PURPOSES AND LICENSING COMMITTEE**

Minutes of the meeting held at 7.00 pm on 27 November 2018

### **Present:**

Councillor Pauline Tunnicliffe (Chairman)  
Councillors Gareth Allatt, Vanessa Allen, Robert Evans,  
Kira Gabbert, Russell Mellor, Alexa Michael, Keith Onslow,  
Tony Owen, Neil Reddin FCCA, Kieran Terry,  
Stephen Wells and Angela Wilkins

### **55 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Marina Ahmad, Nicholas Bennett, Mary Cooke, Melanie Stevens and Michael Turner. Councillors Angela Wilkins, Kieran Terry, Kira Gabbert and Keith Onslow substituted for Councillors Ahmad, Bennett, Cooke and Turner respectively. Councillor Julian Benington had been due to substitute for Councillor Melanie Stevens, but he had sent apologies.

### **56 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **57 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2018 AND THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 5TH NOVEMBER 2018**

Councillor Angela Wilkins referred to minute 41 (Feedback on the 2018 Local Elections and Voter ID Pilot Scheme) and asked whether the detailed feedback sent by the Council to the Cabinet Office could now be made available to Members.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the ordinary meeting held on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and the special meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018 be confirmed.

### **58 QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ATTENDING THE MEETING**

No questions had been received.

### **59 UPDATES FROM SUB-COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN**

In accordance with previous discussions, the Chairman invited Sub-Committee Chairmen to brief the Committee on the work of their Sub-Committees.

**(A) Pensions Investment Sub-Committee**

Councillor Keith Onslow described the work of the Pensions Investment Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee's role was to monitor the Council's Pension Fund on behalf of the Council's employees, pensioners and deferred pensioners. The Local Pension Board had a different role, but its members were invited to attend all Pensions Investment Sub-Committee meetings. Councillor Onslow described the seven members of the Sub-Committee as active and fully engaged with the Sub-Committee's work; while many local authority pension funds were in deficit, Bromley had successfully achieved a fully-funded scheme.

The Sub-Committee reviewed asset allocation every three years - there was now an 80:20 split between equities and fixed income.

Councils were now encouraged to pool their pension funds into a small number of collective investment vehicles (CIVs), with the aim of improving investment performance and reducing the fees paid to fund managers. However, he was concerned that the London CIV was not performing effectively, and until it did Bromley would not be investing. He was liaising closely with colleagues in other boroughs to improve the performance of the CIV.

**(B) Local Joint Consultative Committee**

Councillor Russell Mellor explained that the Local Joint Consultative Committee (LJCC) was a forum for discussion between Councillors and staff. It had no decision-making powers, but useful discussions could be held on matters of concern to the staff. The staff side included the staff-side secretary, trade union representatives and departmental representatives (Dep Reps). Discussions were currently taking place about the quorum for LJCC meetings, as there had sometimes been problems with low attendance on the staff side.

Since the Council had come out of the national pay bargaining arrangements, it had consistently offered its officers higher pay increases than the national settlement, as well as offering additional merit awards.

**(C) Audit Sub-Committee**

Councillor Neil Reddin described the work of the Audit Sub-committee as overseeing audit, risk management and counter-fraud work. The Internal Audit Team was a small, dedicated team that, with some additional resources bought in from outside the Council, performed a vital role. All members of the team usually attended the Audit Sub-Committee's meetings. With expert assistance from Zurich municipal, the Council's risk management had been brought up to speed, and now PDS committees were scrutinising risks in their portfolios. Counter-fraud work, in partnership with the Royal Borough of Greenwich, was focussed on benefits and Council tax fraud, but there had

also been initiatives on Freedom Pass fraud and Blue Badge fraud. Successful prosecutions were always publicised.

Issues were referred to PDS Committees where appropriate to follow up concerns raised in internal audit reports. Members considered that it was important that PDS Committees followed up these issues.

The Chairman thanked the three Sub-Committee chairmen for their presentations.

## **60 TEACHER PAY POLICY - CENTRALLY BASED STAFF**

At its special meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2018, the Committee had received a report on pay policy for centrally based teaching staff. This covered 50 posts (39.02 fte's.) The Committee had deferred its decision to obtain further information on the services affected and the financial implications of each of the three options that had been presented for the implementation of the 2018 Teacher's Pay and Conditions document.

The Committee considered a further report with additional information. There were still three options, A, B and C, and most authorities had chosen option B. This allowed for slightly higher increases on the main pay range and for unqualified teachers, with lower increases for senior staff. It was confirmed that all staff received an annual review - most staff progressed to the top of their pay scales, but not automatically. The maximum cost of implementing option B would be £44k.

### **RESOLVED that**

**(1) The report be noted and Option B be implemented (apply the minimum and maximum statutory uplifts to the whole of the respective scales and allowances and allow managers to determine any additional pay and progression increase based on performance.)**

**(2) Officers be authorised to uplift the Pay Scales within the current Pay Policy accordingly and implement the new policy with effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018; there are no other required changes to the Policy this year.**

## **61 ANNUAL COMPLAINTS REPORT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN LETTER 2017/18**

The Committee received the Council's Annual Complaints Report for 2017/18 and a summary of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman's (LG&SCO) annual review letter for 2017/18. During the year, 510 complaints had been received, a slight (3%) reduction from the previous year. The Council had recently moved to a one stage complaints process from a three stage process; the 2017/18 summary showed that there had been no adverse impacts in terms of more complaints being referred to the LG&SCO. 58% of complaints received a full reply within the 20 working day target. This was

slightly better than the previous year but still needed improvement, and additional training for managers was planned.

During 2017/18, 165 complaints had been referred to the LG&SCO, a slight increase on the 2016/17 figure of 158. Of these, 54 had been the subject of detailed investigation, and 30 (56%) had been upheld. This was a decrease on the previous year, when 60% of cases had been upheld, and was below the averages for the country and for London. It was difficult to measure performance against other local authorities in respect of stage one formal complaints, as no comparative data was published.

A Member stated that it would be useful to flag up where a complaint involved a contractor; another Member suggested introducing some indication of whether each complaint was relatively minor in nature or was a serious failure. A Member argued that statistics over a longer time period were needed (five years or more) to be able to analyse trends. Officers acknowledged this and explained that this comparable data would be built up year on year. It was noted that complaints on planning matters were not covered in the report below LG&SCO level - Members proposed that this should be addressed. No formal complaints had been received regarding the pilot voter ID scheme. Complaints against Councillors were dealt with under a separate process monitored by the Standards Committee.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.**

**62 GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SERVICE PENSION SCHEMES**  
Report FSD18096

The Committee received a summary of the Pension Regulator's Code of Practice on governance and administration of public service pension schemes. This covered four core areas - governing the scheme, managing risks, administration and resolving issues. Officers tabled a completed self-assessment for the Council's pension arrangements - the RAG rating contained no reds. Plans were being put in place to ensure full compliance, primarily focussing on those areas not already rated green.

**RESOLVED that**

**(1) It is noted that the Pensions Regulator has released a code of practice "Governance and administration of public service pension schemes" as a guide to good governance.**

**(2) The requirements on the Local Pension Board and the Scheme Manager as shown in the code of practice RAG checklist be noted.**

**63 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME (AMENDMENT)  
REGULATIONS 2018**  
Report FSD18095

The Committee received a report providing them with details of required amendments to the Council's published discretionary policies arising from the Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations 2018 and of a new requirement for exit credits to be paid to an employer leaving the scheme.

**RESOLVED that**

**(1) The changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and how they impact on employer discretions relating to early payment of retirement benefits be noted (section 3.2 of the report).**

**(2) The consultation from MHCLG regarding the intention of Regulations to pay early retirement benefits from age 55 rather than at age 55 be noted (paragraph 3.2.3.6 of the report).**

**(3) The updated discretionary policies arising from these changes be agreed as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report.**

**(4) The change in regulation that requires payment of exit credits to employers that exit the fund be noted (section 3.3 of the report).**

**64 LOCAL PENSION BOARD - ANNUAL REPORT**  
Report FSD18081

The Local Pension Board Terms of Reference required that an Annual Report was produced and provided to the Pensions Manager each year. In a report to the Pensions Investment Sub Committee, General Purposes and Licensing Committee and Council in February 2015, it was also confirmed that the Local Pension Board's Annual Report, would be provided to Council via the Pensions Investment Sub-Committee and this Committee.

**RESOLVED that the contents of the Local Pension Board Annual Report October 2018 be noted and referred to full Council.**

**65 APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES - BECKENHAM  
PAROCHIAL CHARITIES**  
Report CSD18169

The terms of office of three of the Council's six representatives on the Beckenham Parochial Charities were due to expire on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019. The views of the charity had been sought on whether it wished these representatives to continue to serve, and the Charity had requested that Cllr Russell Mellor and Mr Robin Mitchell should be re-appointed. The third representative, Mrs Maureen Jessiman, had indicated that she wished to step down, and the charity had proposed Mrs Peggy Duffin, a long-standing co-opted trustee, to fill the vacancy.

Councillor Angela Wilkins suggested that as the charity's work also covered the Penge area, a Penge and Cator ward councillor should be invited to attend.

**RESOLVED that**

**(1) Councillor Russell Mellor, Mr Robert Mitchell and Mrs Peggy Duffin be appointed to the Beckenham Parochial Charities for the four year term starting on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2019.**

**(2) The Committee's thanks to Mrs Maureen Jessiman for her work in support of the Beckenham Parochial Charities be recorded.**

(Councillors Vanessa Allen and Angela Wilkins requested that their abstentions be recorded.)

**66            WORK PROGRAMME**  
Report CSD18160

The Committee considered its work programme for 2018/19.

**67            LOCAL JOINT CONSULTATIVE PANEL: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18TH JULY 2018**

The draft minutes of the meeting of the Local Joint Consultative Committee meeting held on 18th July 2018 were received.

**68            PENSIONS INVESTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE: MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13TH SEPTEMBER 2018, EXCLUDING EXEMPT INFORMATION**

The draft minutes of the meeting of the Pensions Investment Sub-Committee meeting held on 13th September 2018, excluding exempt information, were received.

**69            LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006 AND THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000**

**RESOLVED that the Press and public be excluded during consideration of the items of business referred to below as it is likely in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the Press and public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information.**

**The following summary  
refers to matters  
involving exempt information**

**70 PENSIONS INVESTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE: EXEMPT  
MINUTES - 13TH SEPTEMBER 2018**

The draft exempt minutes of the meeting of the Pensions Investment Sub-Committee meeting held on 13th September 2018 were received.

The Meeting ended at 9.14 pm

Chairman