

MINUTES of the meeting of the General Services Committee held on 7 March 2013 at 7.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors John Kent (Chair), Val Morris-Cook (Vice Chair), Phil Anderson, Mark Coxshall Diana Hale, Barry Palmer and Andy Smith.

In attendance: Graham Farrant, Chief Executive
Barbara Brownlee – Director of Housing
David Bull – Director of Planning and Transportation
David Lawson – Deputy Head of Legal Services (until 7.21pm)
Jackie Hinchliffe - Head of HR, OD & Customer Strategy
Victoria Freeman – Senior Democratic Services Officer

22. MINUTES

The Minutes of the General Services Committee, held on 28 January 2013, were approved as a correct record.

23. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

The Chair informed the Committee that he had not agreed to the consideration of any items of urgent business.

24. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest.

25. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED:

That, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business, on the grounds that they could involve the possible disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) 2 (Information that is likely to reveal the identity of an individual) and 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) of Schedule 12A of that Act.

26. BUSINESS CASE FOR COMPROMISE AGREEMENT

The Chief Executive introduced the report during which he requested that Members note the report as the compromise agreement with a former employee of the Housing Department had been entered into.

Members were advised that in accordance with Chapter 6, Part 1 of the Constitution, where in the opinion of the Monitoring Officer and the relevant Director a compromise agreement is so urgent that it can not reasonably await the next General Services Committee, the decision can be made and a report be taken to the next General Services Committee as soon as reasonably practical after the decision to compromise by the Director.

It was explained to Members that the former employee had a deadline of 3 months from the time of dismissal to lodge an appeal to an employment tribunal and as this period was coming to an end, the decision to enter a compromise agreement had become an urgent one.

There was discussion by Members surrounding the business case and when the decision to enter into the agreement had been made. Officers explained the process that had been followed which had led to the compromise agreement and the reasoning why Members were requested to note that an agreement had been entered into.

The Chief Executive suggested that a further report be submitted to the Committee that explained the reasoning why the compromise agreement had been entered into and that Members be requested to note the future report.

It was noted that Members would not have supported the recommendation contained in the report, however it was proposed by the Chair, with the agreement of all Members:

“That the Committee note that a compromise agreement for a former Thurrock Council employee had been entered into; and that a report explaining the reasoning behind the officers decision be brought back to General Services Committee to note, before the end of April 2013”.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Committee note that a compromise agreement had been entered into.**
- ii) That a report explaining the reasoning behind the officers decision be brought back to General Services Committee to note, before the end of April 2013.**

27. BUSINESS CASE FOR COMPROMISE AGREEMENT

The Director of Planning and Transportation introduced a report, which sought agreement to accept a voluntary redundancy application from a member of staff employed within their Directorate.

Members were informed that applications for voluntary redundancies had been invited across the Planning and Transportation Directorate prior to a restructuring exercise, which was required to meet financial savings targets over the next four years and to being a new and more efficient way of working.

The business case for the voluntary redundancy application was attached to the report for Members' consideration.

During discussion, Members were concerned that by bringing this item to the Committee, a precedent had been set and requested that future cases for voluntary redundancies for individuals whose employment terms and conditions were outside of Thurrock Council's be brought to the Committee for decision.

It was proposed by the Chair, with the agreement of all Members:

"That the recommendation contained within the report be approved and that any further redundancies outside of the Thurrock's terms and conditions be brought to the General Services Committee for decision".

RESOLVED:

- i) That the Committee authorise the Director of Planning and Transportation to accept the voluntary redundancy application as set out in the report and therefore allow the Director of Planning and Transportation to proceed with issuing redundancy notice.**
- ii) That any further redundancies outside of the Thurrock's terms and conditions be brought to the General Services Committee for decision.**

The meeting finished at 7.44 p.m.

Approved as a true and correct record

CHAIRMAN

DATE

**Any queries regarding these Minutes, please contact
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