

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 7 June 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Hallam (Chair); Councillors Beardsworth, Begum, Capstick, Parekh, Patel and Aziz

1 APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14th February 2011 were confirmed.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

4 DEPUTATIONS / PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

5 GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Chair advised the Committee that he had asked for this item to be included on the agenda, as he had noticed that in the past year several meetings of this Committee had been cancelled. He considered that with so many issues currently facing Local Government that there should be more work that the Committee should be doing.

The Borough Solicitor and Monitoring Officer advised the Committee that General Purposes is a Committee of Council He explained that other functions were performed by different bodies of the Council, for example Cabinet makes Executive decisions, Licensing and Planning are dealt with by Regulatory Committees and Overview and Scrutiny provides balance and check. The terms of reference for General Purposes had recently been reviewed by the Constitution working party and they were broadened in May from a more Human Resources based remit. Therefore he considered that it was more probable that there would be more work for the Committee in the future.

Councillor Beardsworth made two suggestions for topics for the Committee to examine: -

- Health and Safety Monitoring- particularly any issues relevant to new service delivery contracts.
- Training Policy- was the balance of expenditure on training correct

The Head of HR commented that there was an officer level group monitoring on

health and safety issues and these could be brought to the Committee to consider. It would probably be appropriate for them to be considered on a six monthly basis.

With regard to the training policy she commented that there wasn't actually an NBC training policy. The basis of training was formed from several strands, the first of which was the People Plan. The People Plan was a four year plan, which was due to be renewed in 2013, the review of that Plan would form part of the Committee's work programme for next year. This Plan alongside Service Plans and individual employees' Personal development Plans determines how training is allocated. The Head of HR commented that she felt that the fact that there had not been many issues coming through for the Committee to consider was a positive thing.

There was also some discussion about reward and recognition strategy, over the last year a revised pay and grading system had been brought in. This should develop a pay progression scheme rewarding good performance. There are also several schemes encouraging a culture of thanking employees for really good performance.

Councillor Capstick queried whether there was a role for the Committee in terms of Overseeing changes made in the light of scrutiny recommendations, for example the Absence Management Review which had been undertaken last year.

There was also a discussion concerning how byelaws worked, and what the role of the Committee could be in deciding whether new byelaws were required, although it was considered more likely that the relevant services would raise any requests.

It was agreed that the Chair should have discussions with officers to put together a draft work programme for the Committee to approve at its next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 6:50 pm