

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

Chief Executive

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Jennette Arnold OBE AM

Chair
Business Management and Administration Committee
London Assembly
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
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Ref: arnold040111

Date: 4 January 2011

Dear Jennette

Re: Consultation on the creation and deletion of posts

Thank you for your letter of 7 December 2010. I will address the issues you raise separately.

Executive Office

1. Whether four staff members need two line managers;

In my proposed structure I was seeking to ensure the provision of effective supervision for each team member, in order to ensure the service operates to optimum efficiency, in view of the span of work covered by the team overall. This management structure would be consistent with the structures for the Labour and Conservative Member Support teams where the Head of Office and Deputy each directly manage a group of staff but the Head of Office has overall management responsibility. However, having reflected on the Committee's comments, I have decided to make some changes to the proposed structure, which are shown on the attached structure chart. The main change is to the post of Deputy Head of Office. This post will no longer have a line management role and will be renamed Senior Executive Support Officer. The attached revised job description has been evaluated and the grade for the new post will be grade 7.

2. The justification for a Deputy Manager (Deputy Head of Office);

As confirmed above, there will no longer be a Deputy Head of Office post. However, the Senior Executive Support Officer will assist the Head of Office in the overall management of the functions managed by the Chief Executive's Office. Given the high-profile nature and wide span of the work, it is essential that there is some senior level expertise in the team in addition to the Head of Office.

3. Whether the proposal represents an average line management span for this organisation;

Line management spans do vary across the organisation. However, having reflected further on the proposed structure, I have concluded that it will be more appropriate to revise the proposals to create a flatter structure.

4. Whether the proposals would be viewed as fair pay for the job description from outside the organisation;

Evaluation of the revised Senior Executive Officer job description has resulted in the lowering of the grade to 7. As stated, this post will operate at a more senior level of expertise than the Executive Support Officers and also incorporates a project management role. All the jobs in the new structure have been rigorously evaluated using the Hay job evaluation system, in line with the practice for all GLA jobs.

5. How the disruption of permanent reorganisation could be avoided – concern was raised about continual reorganisation since Organising for Delivery was first implemented;

I think the claim that there has been “continual reorganisation since Organising for Delivery” cannot be sustained. The overall framework is still intact and most staff have been unaffected by subsequent organisational proposals. Data reported to BMAC on 30 November 2010 showed that 30 posts have been the subject of change (deleted), under 10% of the establishment and well within the ‘marginal change’ BMAC itself acknowledged in May 2009 would be required. There have been areas of growth and one of the areas that was most significantly affected: Community Safety, was specifically mentioned in my report to BMAC of 21 July 2010 as needing more development, as was shared services. One area: London Elects, is subject to growth and decline according to the electoral cycle and another: the London 2012 team, is a unique one-off event with emergent demands that cannot be precisely predicted. An other significant area: support to the Chief Executive and other Directors, has yielded £113,000 of savings, which it would have been irresponsible to delay once it was obvious they could be delivered without detriment to productivity.

I think in any case it is wrong to fetishise minimal change as a strategic aim in an environment that is undergoing unprecedented turmoil, driven by the Comprehensive Spending Review, the Police and Social Responsibility Bill, the Health Bill and by the Localism Bill, one of which could have been built into the OfD planning framework when proposals were published in May 2009. Indeed we can now anticipate the need to progress further decisions in the next 12 months to deal with inter alia:

- a) The effects of the folding in of the LDA into the GLA
- b) Future reductions in government formula grant in 2012-15.
- c) Post-Olympic staffing consequences.

6. With a historically low level turnover, the GLA should now be rigorous over the grading of individual posts to avoid any unnecessary drift upwards in grades.

The GLA’s turnover rate is lower now than it has been in the past, reflecting the labour market and the stability of the organisation. I agree that rigour in terms of the grading of posts is essential, which is why all GLA jobs are subject to a consistent and fair job evaluation scheme. Grading levels are set according to this scheme, reflecting the relative

worth of jobs in the organisation, rather than being directly linked to market forces, as discussed in the job evaluation paper presented to BMAC on 30 November 2010. Whilst this restructure includes the creation of new posts, it should be noted the restructure involves an overall reduction in posts and salary costs, resulting in significant savings.

Secretariat

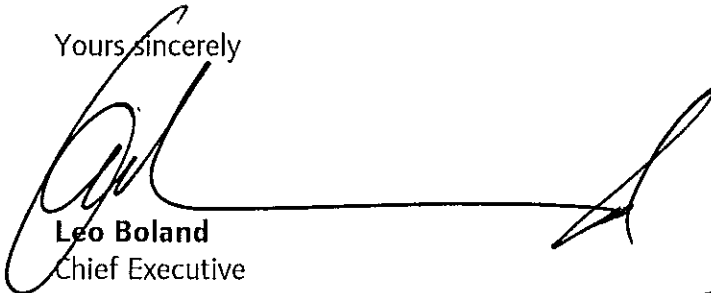
I have noted your support for the proposal for the Secretariat posts.

The Mayor's Office

I have noted your support, in principle, for the creation of the post in the Mayor's Office.

The structure chart for the Mayor's Office (Appendix 1b) contains all the permanent posts in the Unit. Although I was not aware at the time, there is also one STAF (fixed term until March 2010) not reflected on this structure which is a PA post for the Mayoral Advisor, Budget and Performance. This is only a short term post, whilst the Mayor's Office determines whether this is needed on a substantive basis.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'L' and 'B' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish at the end.

Leo Boland
Chief Executive

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Job Description

Job title: Senior Executive Support Officer

Grade: 7

Directorate: Chief Executive

Job Purpose

Assist the Head of Office in delivering a full range of high-level secretarial and administrative support services to the Chief Executive, Directors and Assistant Directors (the Principals) within the Executive Office, which are responsive to their needs and which contribute to making their role effective.

Contribute to the achievement of the Strategic Plan by supporting a range of internally and externally focused projects.

Principal Accountabilities

1. Assist the Head of Office in providing a high level gateway to and from the Principals supported by the Executive Office, ensuring the effective and efficient operation of the office.
2. Establish effective relationships with staff at all levels within the GLA, functional bodies and external stakeholders as necessary. Develop a range of contacts on their behalf; build effective working relationships with these contacts and represent their views.
3. Analyse, monitor, summarise and advise on correspondence, social media and briefings as necessary, on wide range of topics.
4. Work closely with the Director of Digital Projects to support the delivery of key digital engagement projects, liaising with officers and key players and where necessary, acting as a trouble-shooter in resolving issues.
5. Support the Director of Digital Projects in developing organisational capabilities and initiatives including the identification of opportunities for organisational improvement.
6. Attend meetings and accompany the Principals, as necessary, ensuring they are briefed and provide on the spot advice as required.
7. Assist the Head of Office to manage budgets including the processing and signing off of invoices and purchase orders and drafting budget forecasts. Advise where necessary on financial and budgetary matters.

- Communicates openly and inclusively with internal and external stakeholders
- Clearly articulates the key points of an argument, both in verbal and written communication
- Persuades others, using evidence based knowledge, modifying approach to deliver message effectively
- Challenges the views of others in an open and constructive way
- Presents a credible and positive image both internally and externally

Planning and Organising

... is thinking ahead, managing time, priorities and risk, and developing structured and efficient approaches to deliver work on time and to a high standard.

Level 2 indicators of effective performance

- Prioritises work in line with key team or project deliverables
- Makes contingency plans to account for changing work priorities, deadlines and milestones
- Identifies and consults with sponsors or stakeholders in planning work
- Pays close attention to detail, ensuring team's work is delivered to a high standard
- Negotiates realistic timescales for work delivery, ensuring team deliverables can be met

Problem Solving

... is analysing and interpreting situations from a variety of viewpoints and finding creative, workable and timely solutions.

Level 2 indicators of effective performance

- Processes and distils a variety of information to understand a problem fully
- Proposes options for solutions to presented problems
- Builds on the ideas of others to encourage creative problem solving
- Thinks laterally about own work, considering different ways to approach problems
- Seeks the opinions and experiences of others to understand different approaches to problem solving

Organisational Awareness

... is understanding and being sensitive to organisational dynamics, culture and politics across and beyond the GLA and shaping our approach accordingly.

Level 2 indicators of effective performance

- Challenges unethical behaviour
- Uses understanding of the GLA's complex partnership arrangements to deliver effectively
- Recognises how political changes and sensitivities impact on own and team's work
- Is aware of the changing needs of Londoners, anticipating resulting changes for work agendas