



Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Date: Tuesday, 19 July 2022

Time: 2.00 pm

Venue: Council Antechamber, Level 2, Town Hall Extension

This is a **Supplementary Agenda** containing additional information about the business of the meeting that was not available when the agenda was published.

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Membership of the Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee

Councillors - Simcock (Chair), Andrews, Davies, Good, Kirkpatrick, Lanchbury, B Priest, Rowles and Wheeler

Supplementary Agenda

5. HROD Update

3 - 16

Report of the Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development

This report provides an overview on HROD activity with a focus on employee experience. It covers updates on Our Ways of Working, Service Design, the Performance Management framework and approach, recruitment and an update on casework with a focus on the organisations handling of suspensions.

Further Information

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This supplementary agenda was issued on **Tuesday, 12 July 2022** by the Governance and Scrutiny Support Unit, Manchester City Council, Level 2, Town Hall Extension , Manchester M60 2LA

Manchester City Council Report for Information

Report to: Resources and Governance Scrutiny Committee – 19 July 2022

Subject: HROD Update

Report of: Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development

Summary

This report provides an overview on HROD activity with a focus on employee experience. It covers updates on Our Ways of Working, Service Design, the Performance Management framework and approach, recruitment and an update on casework with a focus on the organisations handling of suspensions. It is intended that a further more detailed update on workforce equality will be timetabled around October, with the Committee's agreement, this will be a year on from the Workforce Equality Strategy progress report that was discussed in October 2021.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to note the report and identify any areas which it may wish to further explore at future meetings.

Wards Affected: All

Environmental Impact Assessment - the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city

The Our Ways of Working Strategy considers the impact of the way we work as a Council on the environment and our Zero Carbon agenda.
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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments
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The Council's Workforce Equality Strategy commits to creating 'a place where everyone can be themselves and thrive'. The progress outlined in this report relating to recruitment and retention, employee voice, employee relations casework management and new ways of working have all been driven by engagement with employees and Trade Unions who have identified priorities for reform.

Our Manchester Strategy outcomes	Summary of how this report aligns to the OMS
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	This report outlines activity to be more diverse and inclusive in the way we attract,

A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	recruit and retain staff, ensuring that all Manchester communities have access to good quality jobs and are supported to develop and progress. It also outlines work to improve and develop one of the City Councils core functions, ensuring that the workforce is supported to be able to deliver great services for residents.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

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Background documents (available for public inspection):

N/A

Part 1: HROD Improving the experience of our workforce

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 RAGOS requested an update from HROD on the experiences of a Manchester City Council employee with a focus on Our Ways of Working, the Performance Management Framework and an update on how suspensions are handled.
- 1.2 The HROD Service is continually reviewing its offer to the organisation to ensure that it is meeting the needs of services and staff. Over the last several months a programme of work has been developed using insights from the staff survey and engagement with groups across the organisation to review the core offer which, in addition to the work mentioned above, includes the introduction of Service Design as a methodology, and a whole system review of recruitment.
- 1.3 This report provides the committee with an overview of this work, progress to date and next steps.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 In HROD we are committed to helping staff thrive at work and lead healthy lives with the right tools, skills, and support in place. This forms part of the City Council's Corporate Plan priority to be a well-managed council
- 2.2 HROD has been on a journey for the past two years or more and has been through significant changes to become a service that focuses on the needs of the workforce, so that staff are in the best possible position to be able to deliver excellent services to residents, with the support they need at the right time.
- 2.3 HR Business Partners (HRBP) are a key role for HR&OD as they are the lead officer for directorates. HRBPs are a route into the HR&OD Service for our leaders and managers; leading on all people related matters from recruitment and talent management, training and development and capability building, pay and reward and employee relations (incl. Trade Union)
- 2.4 HRBPs work closely with Strategic Directors and Directorate Management Teams to deliver the business strategy and embed corporate and HR priorities within directorate plans.
- 2.5 Part of our journey has been to give greater and easier access for staff to HR and OD services, and staff being enabled to self-serve where possible allowing them the freedom to be able to do the things that they need to do quickly and easily.
- 2.6 Another driver for us in HROD has been to make sure that staff and managers are able to access support that they need in terms of prevention/early intervention, making sure small problems don't become big and complex.

- 2.7 These two elements will help to maximise resources to be able to provide support where things are most difficult in a way that is efficient and meets the needs of both individuals and the organisation.
- 2.8 This aligns to the principles of Our Manchester. In the reviewing of processes and systems there is a commitment to ensuring that the voice of the workforce is at the heart of everything that we need to do and takes into account the employee journey through every change and transformation that is made.

3.0 Organisational Development

- 3.1 In 2020, the Organisational Development Team worked with a cross-section of staff from across the council to develop the MCC Organisation Development Plan.
- 3.2 This plan builds on 5 years of work to transform the culture of the organisation to be in the best place to deliver the Our Manchester Strategy, which was the work we did to support the Our Manchester behaviours. The Our Manchester behaviours were at the heart of the work we did on the Organisation Development Plan.
- 3.3 The work took an employee led user-centred design approach called Service Design so that it was built on the insights and experience of staff. The plan reflects the voice of the workforce and sets out activity across 6 key priorities:
- Building a sense of purpose and belonging
 - Decision making and risk
 - Improving our approach to performance and development
 - A new approach to change
 - Diverse and inclusive (in partnership with the Workforce Equality Strategy)
 - Partnerships and relationship

4.0 Workforce Equality Strategy

- 4.1 The Workforce Equality Strategy sets out the Council's plan by 2025 to be a place where the workforce fully reflects the rich diversity and talent of the communities we serve at all levels and is a place where everyone can be themselves and thrive. The strategy has been based on learning from the past but more importantly from engaging with colleagues, understanding their experiences, and asking them what they wanted to change.
- 4.2 The strategy sets out 6 summary aims which will be achieved through a delivery plan:
- Our workforce fully reflects our communities at all levels
 - We talk openly and frequently about equality and inclusion
 - Staff have access to develop and fulfill their potential
 - Staff will feel free to bring their whole selves to work

- Policies and processes are fair and do not discriminate against any group or community
- Managers and leaders understand how to support their employees, monitor equality, and address any issues quickly

It is intended that progress on the Workforce Equality Strategy (which includes actions from the Race Review) will be timetabled for a discussion at the committee in October which will be the one year anniversary of the previous progress report.

5.0 Employee Voice

- 5.1 The voice of the workforce and the way in which staff are supported to engage continues to be a priority for the City Council. It is more important than ever that the length and breadth of the workforce have the opportunity to influence positive changes, and to be able to see their voice has been heard.
- 5.2 The annual staff survey undertaken in autumn 2021 is an example of how staff can share how they are feeling and talk about the things they would see prioritised. There has been a year-on-year increase in the diversity of staff responding, and the number of staff sharing their equality monitoring information.
- 5.3 Support to our Equality Employee Networks (Disabled Staff, LGBTQ+, Mental Health, Pregnancy & Parenting, Race Equality and Women's Equality) are now directly provided by HROD. The chairs of all the networks regularly meet with leads from HROD and have provided challenge and support for the development of the Workforce Equality Strategy and for the delivery of the action plan.
- 5.4 In the last 12 months there has been a transformational shift in the way that the workforce is engaged in the review, design, and implementation of services that HROD provide. This is in recognition that each member of staff has their own individual experience working at the council, and their collective insight should be used to help inform changes that are made.
- 5.5 This approach taken to create this shift is called Service Design and for the purpose of this report 'service' is something that we deliver, such as a process. It is not an organisational structure (such as the HROD Service) or related to workforce change activity. For example, "recruit to a role" would be one of the HROD services.
- 5.6 Using this approach puts staff (users) at the centre of the design. Building systems and processes around their experiences. This consistent methodology helps to create more positive experiences, whilst enabling more efficient processes, reducing error, and overall reducing staffing demand for administrative tasks. This in turn frees up staff time to focus on adding value where it has the biggest impact, as described in the overall approach in.

- 5.7 We recognise the role and importance of our Trade Unions colleagues. Our approach to Employee Voice incorporates regular engagement and consultation with Trade Unions on council and directorate priorities, challenges and opportunities. There are well-established arrangements across the Council to engage and consult with Trade Unions in the form of monthly corporate and directorate Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) meetings. We have been working via a forum with Trades Unions colleagues on updating and creating a number of policies which have been approved over the past several months by Personnel Committee.
- 5.8 Two areas requiring improvement that will have a significant impact on the experiences of staff, new and existing, are recruitment and performance development.

6.0 Recruitment

- 6.1 The Our Manchester Strategy sets out the Council's vision for Manchester to be in the topflight of world-class cities by 2025, the Workforce Equality Strategy sets out the ambition for the workforce to be representative of the communities we serve at all levels and we want the Council to be an employer of choice for diverse talent.
- 6.2 To deliver these ambitions and priorities, it is important to have an approach to recruitment is modern, inclusive and offers the best possible experience to all candidates. This section sets out the activity we are delivering.

6.3 Inclusive Recruitment

- 6.3.1 One of the priorities within the Workforce Equality Strategy is for the Council to attract, recruit and select in a way that is inclusive and drives diversity at all levels.
- 6.3.2 To achieve this priority, we are progressing the work on the following
- Refresh of the Recruitment & Selection policy to be delivered by October 2022. This will be more explicit about our WES aims and objectives, inclusive practice and the use of positive action.
 - Diversity in panels mandated since April 2022, supported by an 'app' which enables managers to search for diverse panel members, and diverse staff who want the experience of being on a panel to register their interest.
 - EDI strengthened in Specialist recruitment tender and increased challenge and monitoring around diverse shortlists
 - Induction has been refreshed to include a stronger emphasis on EDI and the Our Manchester 5th Behaviour

- Connecting this strategy to the Organisation Development plan and activity, identifying any gaps to inform how we do talent management and strategy.

6.4 Employer Brand

6.4.1 We are in the early stages of a brand-new project to look at the City Councils employer brand. The main aim is to be more successful in attracting and retaining candidates by selling Manchester City Council as an organisation to work for better and delivering a more consistent experience for candidates across their entire interaction.

6.4.2 To do this, we will:

- Position the Council as an employer of choice for a more diverse pool of candidates.
- Create a unified approach and central narrative for managers and services to use when promoting employment opportunities.
- Directly help community recruitment and attract local, diverse talent.
- Support services who struggle to attract, recruit, and retain staff.
- Target improvements across the employee experience, in line with the employer brand principles.
- Lead by example – we actively encourage other businesses to change their approaches, we need to demonstrate what good looks like.

6.5 Pathways into Employment

6.5.1 The Talent & Diversity Team (established in April 2021) are leading on the work to strengthen our employment pathways and make sure that we have a strong pipeline of local diverse talent coming into the Council. The team have built relationships with the recruitment/graduate teams at both Manchester Universities and are now starting to connect Council job opportunities to students in a more timely and planned manner. The organisations have a collective aim to reach out to diverse and underrepresented groups and are jointly working towards keeping more talent (particularly local people) in Manchester. A similar relationship is being developed with Manchester college. A pilot programme is currently being developed with the Work & Skills team specifically for young people that are NEET which aims to subsidise and support young people's participation in training direct.

6.5.2 The teams advice to other service areas has seen a number of recent recruitment processes include communicating about the role using videos on social media (Digital Strategy Team) , questions being issued to applicants in advance and assessment days inviting candidates in to meet the team, participate in group exercises and conversations about roles (HROD case officers).

6.5.3 Opportunities and routes into employment available are: Kickstart, Apprenticeship, Graduate, T-Level and business as usual recruitment.

The Talent & Diversity Team have engaged with community groups and using their insights, job adverts are being simplified to ensure language is clear, easy to understand and is inclusive.

6.6 Resourcing Review

- 6.6.1 The recruitment system and processes are currently being reviewed. This comprehensive review adopts the service design approach to understand from 'customers' how they experience the recruitment journey, and how this learning informs what the journey should look and feel like.
- 6.6.2 The project set out a plan to move the role of recruitment from an administration heavy process to a specialist, strategic service working with the council. This will enable MCC to flex to market changes, attract the very best candidates, champion diversity and the Our Manchester Behaviours. The main outcomes to be delivered are:
- Enhanced reputation as an employer through improved on and offline presence and personal recruitment approaches.
 - Recruitment used to its full potential, maximising value for MCC.
 - Innovative recruitment strategies to flex to the candidate market and needs of MCC.
 - Candidates feel excited and welcomed throughout the recruitment journey to start day 1 right.
 - Increased time and capacity for recruitment advisors to support Hiring Managers to get the best talent.
- 6.6.3 In addition to this piece of work a tender for a replacement recruitment system has been completed with contract award and implementation to start shortly.

7.0 Performance Development

- 7.1 This section provides an overview of the Council's current approach to performance management and an update on the review of performance management that is being undertaken to achieve the priority set within the Organisational Development Plan (2021-2023): to create an approach to performance and development that is meaningful and authentic so that talent can progress, and poor performance is addressed.
- 7.2 The current approach to performance management is a strengths-based dialogue framework called 'About You'. Key features of 'About You' are agreeing objectives and goals and how they will be monitored; and giving and receiving feedback and support in order to perform, develop and contribute to the Council's key priorities.
- 7.3 The design principles for the About You are:
- Embedding a high-performance culture.
 - Assisting the Council in attracting and retaining the best talent to meet the high ambition for the City.

- Linking personal, team and service objectives to the delivery of the Our Manchester Strategy.
 - Promoting and embedding the Our Manchester behaviours.
- 7.4 All staff should be having regular About You sessions with their manager to ensure they have access to the support they need, and performance is effectively managed and developed. However, there is currently no system in place for About You's to be recorded, monitored and/or quality assured. This is a challenge given the importance of providing assurance that good quality performance management is in place. The review of performance management will address this challenge and ensure compliance is formed through the quality and completion of regular About You.
- 7.5 Council staff on Grades 1 - 12 undergo a competency assessment at the penultimate spinal column point before being allowed to advance to the top of their grade. There is a different arrangement for senior officers (SS1+) which is outlined below.
- 7.6 Senior officers (Grade SS1+) have access to the About You performance framework however, pay progression is contingent on staff demonstrating overall annual improvements in performance, measured by delivery against the set of objectives which were set at the start of each financial year. Strategic Directors are accountable for the quality of objectives set and progression decisions within their Directorate. An annual report is provided to SMT at the end of the performance year for assurance purposes.
- 7.7 The 'senior' framework was recently reviewed to support the delivery of the Workforce Equality Strategy. Senior officers must now have a personal workforce equality objective within their About You.
- 7.8 Improving the current approach to performance management
- 7.8.1 A comprehensive review of the approach to performance management was identified in the development of the Organisation Development Plan. In line with the commitment to be more user-centred, the review is using the Service design approach, along with feedback from staff surveys and strives to embed a high-performance culture in the Council,
- 7.8.2 The priorities identified as part of the review are:
- Creating an approach to performance and Development that is meaningful and authentic so talent can progress, and poor performance is addressed.
 - For meaningful conversations to happen on a regular basis.
 - Spotting and developing talent in a fair and transparent way.
- 7.8.3 Over 30 staff are leading the review. This group has interviewed a diverse range of employees representing all areas of the Council. The insights gathered from these interviews have been used to inform a set of principles

and ideas that will be tested. The testing ensures that what has been designed is fit for purpose and meets the needs of the users.

- 7.8.4 Our new approach to performance management will emphasise the expectation of our managers and leaders to understand and continually demonstrate their commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion and how to support employees effectively. This will be supported by regular support and training for managers and leaders incl. Let's Talk About Race and Inclusive Leadership.

8.0 Our Ways of Working

- 8.1 How staff are supported to work with the right tools, skills and knowledge continues to be driven by HROD and the work described above will help in enabling this.

- 8.2 Our Ways of Working (OWOW) is a continuation of the work that started before the pandemic and is the Council's approach to improving how staff work to provide the best services for residents and experience for employees. Over the years, the OWOW programme and priorities have evolved to align and be responsive to emerging priorities, challenges, and opportunities.

- 8.3 The vision for Our Ways of Working is:

- Our Workforce: thrive in the workplace and lead healthy lives due to having all the right tools, basic skills and support in place.
- Our Offices: are hubs of activity, collaboration, and productivity, with a strong connection to the place and communities they are in.
- Our Culture: is to be an inclusive, diverse, fair and non-discriminatory organisation, where the workforce can bring their whole selves to work and have a voice.

- 8.4 The focus of OWOW has been to ensure the workforce has the right equipment, tools, and office space to do well. Significant progress has been made:

- Developed Our Ways of Working Guidance to support Managers with understanding and managing different working arrangements including the introduction of blended working.
- Rolled out training to support Managers with managing by outcomes whilst managing those working from different locations.
- Rolled out the End User Device programme which aims to provide the workforce with the equipment they need to effectively carry out their roles. The programme has now issued 2,782 of the 4,686 EUD laptops to MCC staff whilst 1,000 of the 1,575 desks in the town hall extension now have a desktop docking station installed. This has enabled the reduction of WYSE terminals from 4,500+ to 293.

- Estates have redesigned parts of the Council estate to provide more spaces to work from and collaborate around the city, creating increased opportunity to connect with neighbourhoods. Examples include Longsight District Office, Etrop Court and the Town Hall Extension.
- 8.5 The progress so far is enabling OWOW to evolve by focussing less on equipment and office spaces and focusing on embedding 'Good Work' across the Council. 'Good Work' is a concept recommended by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) based on annual research and identifies those elements which are necessary to offer high quality work and conditions, improve health and wellbeing and support the recruitment and retention of talent.
- 8.6 The elements are:
- Meeting outcomes (in other words, a connection to purpose)
 - Employee voice heard
 - Work/life balance and integration
 - Health and well being
 - Cohesion and psychological safety (teamwork)
 - Nature of work and supervision (autonomy, job design, good management)
 - Fairness and equity
- 8.7 HR&OD will lead the implementation of these elements via the Organisation Development Plan and other workforce strategies. We see them as critical to us becoming an employer of choice in a competitive labour market.
- 8.8 The work above forms part of a broader programme of work across HROD to support the organisation to be a well-managed council and ensure that the vision of Our Ways of Working becomes a reality.

Part 2: Employee Relations Case Work – Suspensions

9.0 Summary

9.1 We have provided detail below, but in summary:

- Overall conduct cases have fallen by around 33%
- We have worked to reduce suspensions to only when strictly necessary and they now account for only 10% of cases
- Over half the misconduct cases we deal with across the city council are in Children's or Adults, and around a quarter of them are safeguarding cases.
- We have been working hard with managers to reduce the time taken to investigate and it has halved.
- The over representation of black, Asian and minority ethnic staff in disciplinary cases has reduced further from the levels reported in the

2019 'Race Review' and is now more or less in line with the proportion in the workforce.

- The number of cases which are started and then end with no further action has reduced from 49% at its peak to 10% currently, again reflecting the focus and hard work of HROD and managers.

9.2 Detail

9.2.1 Overall conduct case numbers remain lower than pre pandemic levels. For the purpose of this report comparisons will be drawn from 2019/20 casework figures which will be more representative than the cases reported in 2020/21 which were significantly impacted upon by Covid restrictions, home working and service restrictions. There were 123 cases recorded in 2019/20 in comparison to 80 cases reported to date for 2021/22.

Table 1: Total Conduct Cases by Directorate 2021/22

Directorate	Gross Suspension	Gross Alternative duties	Misconduct.	Total	% of all cases
Adult Services	3	16	4	23	29%
Chief Executives			2	2	3%
Children's & Education Services	2	15	2	19	24%
Corporate Services		8	5	13	16%
Growth & Development	1	4	2	7	9%
Neighbourhoods	2	10	4	16	20%
Grand Total	8	53	19	80	

Table 2: Total Conduct Cases by Directorate 2019/20

Directorate	Gross Suspension	Gross Alternative Duties	Misconduct	Total	% of all cases
Adult Services	8	17	8	33	26.8
Chief Executives		1	1	2	1.6
Children's & Education Services	5	26	1	32	26.0
Corporate Services	5	4	7	16	13.0
Growth & Development	1	6	9	16	13.0
Neighbourhoods	4	8	12	24	19.5
Grand Total	23	62	38	123	

9.2.2 Most conduct cases supported by the Casework Team are instances of potentially gross misconduct. Work continues to avoid suspension unless

necessary, with only 8 (10%) cases leading to suspension in 2021/22. The focus on reducing suspensions is a continuation of previous work to improve the management of employee relations.

- 9.2.3 Suspension is about the management of risk and should only be applied when there are significant risks associated with retaining an employee in work that cannot be mitigated by restricting duties or allocating the employee to undertake alternative duties. In most instances it is possible to put measures in place to avoid suspension. Suspension is not a neutral act; it has a detrimental impact on the employee and can make progressing and concluding a disciplinary case more difficult. Employees often report that they feel isolated when suspended, adding to the inevitable stress and anxiety associated with disciplinary proceedings.
- 9.2.4 Adults Services and Children Services and Education continue to account for the majority of Conduct cases across the organisation with 29% and 24% respectively. This is a familiar pattern with 27% (Adults) and 26% (Children's and Education) reported in 2019/20.
- 9.2.5 In October 2019 the average reported length of investigation was reported as 147 days. This has seen a significant reduction to 69 days on average for 2021/22.

Table 3: Conduct Cases by Type 2021/22

Case Type	No. Of Cases
Behaviour - Colleagues	10
Behaviour - Damage to MCC Property	1
Behaviour - Discrimination	6
Behaviour - Residents	5
Behaviour - Violence	2
Data Breach	2
Data Breach/Unprofessional Conduct	1
Drugs / Alcohol	2
Failure to follow Mgt Instruction	1
MOA / Absent without permission	10
Negligence / Poor Work	4
Other Fraud	6
Police Charges	5
Safeguarding Prof Conduct	16
Safeguarding Abuse	4
Social Media	4
Theft from MCC	1
Grand Total	80

- 9.2.6 Cases in Adults and Children's and Education are predominantly associated with safeguarding concerns. For 2021/22 safeguarding related cases accounted for 25% of all Conduct cases, either as a result of a failure in professional standards or because of allegations of abuse. In 2019/20, 23% of all cases related to safeguarding related concerns.

Table 4: Outcomes of Conduct Case by Directorate – 2021/22

Case Conclusion	No. of Cases
1st Stage	7
2nd Stage	8
3rd Stage	8
Alt To Dismissal	3
Capability	1
Demotion/3rd stage	1
Dismissal Sum.	14
Dismissal with notice	1
Management Instruction	5
NFA	7
Resignation	12
Grand Total	67

9.2.7 Table 4 demonstrates that the number of NFA cases (those that are concluded without a formal outcome) has dropped significantly since 2019/20 when 16% of all cases resulted in NFA. This has dropped further to 10% for 2021/22. This reflects significant improvements in comparison to previously reported NFA rates for 2018/19 of 49%. A great deal of work has been conducted by the Casework Team to filter out cases that were unlikely to require formal action. The recently revised Disciplinary Policy, in response to some of the themes identified, places far greater emphasis on the application of informal resolutions where appropriate to the circumstances. The 7 NFA cases reported for 2021/22 include issues such as concluded police enquiries and false allegations which were investigated legitimately and reasonably resulted in NFA.

9.2.8 Further progress has been made addressing the disproportional use of the disciplinary procedure associated with black, Asian and minority ethnic employees. For 2021/22 there has been a reduction to 26% in comparison to the 38% reported in 2019/20.

10.0 Recommendations

10.1 The Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the report and identify any areas which it may wish to further explore at future meetings.