



Minutes of the Meeting of the Confidential Town Council Staffing Committee held at 16:00 on Tuesday 17 January 2023 in the Town Council Offices

Present: Cllr P Purvis (Chair)
Cllr P Holland
Cllr B Honeyman
Cllr S Jefferies

In attendance: Catherine Horsley (Town Clerk & RFO) – minute taker
Rachel Virrill (Deputy Clerk)

SS 22/25 To Receive and Accept apologies for absence (LGA 1972 s85 (1))

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Cllr D Sowry-House due to family commitments.

SS 22/26 To Record any declarations of interest Members to declare any interests, including Disclosable Pecuniary Interests they may have in agenda items that accord with the requirements of the Town Council's Code of Conduct and to consider any prior requests from members for Dispensations that accord with Localism Act 2011 s33(b-e) (NB this does not preclude any later declarations)

There were no declarations of interest.

SS 22/27 To Approve minutes of meeting held on 20 October 2022 LGA 1972, sch 12, para 41

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 October 2022 were **APPROVED**.

SS 22/28 To Consider Items in Respect of Staffing Matters

- **Update on Appointment of Administration Assistant** – The Clerk confirmed the appointment of the Administration Assistant who joined on 2 January 2023 at SCP 9 (£23,194 pa) pro rata 20 hours per week, working Monday to Thursday 9am – 2pm.

The update was **NOTED**.

- **Update on Grounds Team** – The Clerk updated members on staff sickness and other various issues which were ongoing.

The Deputy Clerk provided an update on the teams workload and the list of tasks outstanding, noting some dated back to July 2022.

The limitations and capabilities within the team were discussed. It was noted one full time Assistant Groundsman was on long term sick leave who was currently signed off until 31 January 2023 and was awaiting an

Occupational Health Assessment. A further update to be provided at the next meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council the following:

- List of outstanding tasks to be prioritised by the Deputy Clerk and given a timescale/completion date for the Grounds team to complete the tasks under the supervision of the Head Groundsman.
 - The Head Groundsman to allocate tasks equally to all members of the team.
 - The Deputy Clerk to meet with the Head Groundsman on a weekly basis to discuss and monitor progress.
 - Should the tasks not be completed within the given timescale/completion date, the policies and procedures detailed in the employee handbook should be followed with guidance and support provided by the Councils HR Advisers.
- **Groundsman request for extended annual leave** – The Clerk advised she had received a request from a member of the team who would like to take three weeks annual leave during September 2023. The employee handbook states any requests for leave over two weeks would require Councils approval.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council to approve request for extended leave in September 2023.

- **Head Groundsman request for reduced hours** – The Clerk advised she had received a second letter from the Head Groundsman requesting to reduce his working hours from 37 hours to 15 hours, over Wednesday's and Thursday's. It was noted the Head Groundsman had met state retirement age.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council to decline the request for reduced hours on the following basis:

- Due to the current workload and list of outstanding tasks, members were unable to support the request for a reduction of working hours.
- As a result of one full time team member on long term sick leave, members were unable to support the request due to a reduction in working hours and full-time team members.

SS 22/29 To Note Salaries comparison and Consider Salaries during 2023/24 Financial Year

The Clerk presented the report, noting the NJC had agreed the National Pay Award equivalent to £1925 or 4.1% to each SCP, effective from 1 April 2022 and one day (pro-rata for part timers) additional leave entitlement effective from 1 April 2023, with backdated pay paid in November 2022 salaries.

The Clerk reminded members of the budget decisions for the 2023/24 financial year relating to staff costs allowing for a 6.5% National Pay Award, albeit the final award had yet to be negotiated by the NJC and one SCP increase effective from 1 July 2023, should Council wish to review staff salaries.

Members discussed the need to continually review staff salaries to be competitive in line with national and local salaries to ensure staff retention.

The Clerk noted the six-month probation period for herself and the Deputy Clerk following internal promotion ended on 31 January 2023. The Clerk to liaise with the Chairman of the Council to conduct her appraisal.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council for Cllr Purvis as Chair of the Staffing Committee to liaise with the Chair of the Council relating to salary review and report back at the next meeting.

SS 21/30 Matters for forthcoming agendas No decisions can be taken¹

The following agenda items were noted:

- 2023/24 Salary Reviews
- Grounds Team Update

SS 22/31 To Agree a date and time for the next meeting - the date and time of the next meeting to be set as and when required.

SS 21/32 Meeting closed at 16:45.

Signed as a correct record of the meeting..... Date.....

¹ Councils cannot lawfully decide items of business which are not specified in the summons/agenda (LGA1972 sch 12, paras 10(2)(b) and Longfield Parish Council v Wright (1918) 88 LJ Ch 119)