



Minutes of the Personnel Committee held on 8th February 2021; a virtual Zoom meeting.

1. **PRESENT** – Cllrs. G. Rowlands (Chairman), M. Elgin, A. Roberts and M. Kermode (Personnel Adviser and Clerk for the Committee); together with the Town Clerk.
2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** – None
3. **MINUTES** – The minutes of the meeting held on 7th October 2020 had previously been considered and approved by the Town Council.
4. **TERMS of REFERENCE** – A draft terms of reference for the Committee had been circulated. The Committee discussed it and agreed a small number of alterations. It was **agreed to recommend** that the Council adopts the terms of reference shown in Appendix 1 below.
5. **I.T. and NETWORKING** – The Town Clerk gave an update on the I.T. system, with particular reference to a number of problems in how the Council's emails were being stored and retrieved. A number of potential solutions were discussed which the Town Clerk will look at and will report on their success at the next meeting.
6. **OFFICE EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES** – The Town Clerk gave an update on a number of issues, including the arrangements for a new multi-purpose printer/photocopier/scanner. The issue of the various office consumables needed by the Town Clerk's team was discussed and it was **agreed** that the Town Clerk would purchase and supply the required items, as when they are needed.
7. **ANNUAL LEAVE ARRANGEMENTS** – The Town Clerk reported that the Assistant Clerk/Minute Clerk had again found it difficult to take all of his annual leave. He now had 18 hours of untaken leave, which equated to £220 if paid in lieu. It was **agreed to recommend** that 9 hours of leave be paid in lieu and that the remaining 9 hours be carried forward.
8. **PART 2 BUSINESS** – It was proposed, duly seconded and unanimously agreed that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business because of the confidential nature of the matters being transacted.

9. STAFFING MATTERS

9.1 – Communications Protocol – Members discussed the arrangements for communications between councillors and the Council's employees. Cllr. A Roberts said that there needed to be a protocol that reflected the Town Clerk's position as the Head of the Paid Service and provided a clear and unambiguous communications route for her team. It was proposed that in future, communications by councillors will be directly to the Town Clerk and she will pass these on to her staff as and when necessary and will provide appropriate responses/feedback to the councillors. The only exceptions will be for those councillors that have been given a Lead Member position with a project/issue; they will be able to make contact directly with the Project Officer on matters relating to their Lead Member role. On any occasions when the Town Clerk is absent for reasons such as annual leave or illness then the Mayor will act as the main hub for communications. It was **agreed to recommend** that this communications protocol be adopted by the Town Council.

Note – Cllr. A. Roberts left the meeting at this point.

9.2 – Vexatious Complaints and Undue Interference – The Town Clerk provided a history of internal communications over several months. They seemed to be designed to cause undue interference with the working of the Council and/or contained a range of complaints that could be seen being vexatious. These communications had generated unnecessary stress and had the potential to detrimentally affect her performance, the performance of other employees and of councillors. The Committee discussed this information and the ways that it can impact negatively on people. Concern was expressed for the safety and welfare of the Council's employees, for other councillors and for the overall credibility and performance of the Town Council. It was clear that if this situation continued then it was likely to result in a formal grievance situation or consideration of a potential breach of the Code of Conduct. It was **agreed** to review this issue in an ongoing way and if it continues, to make suitable recommendations for remedial action.

Appendix A – Personnel Committee – Terms of Reference

Purpose of the Committee

To consider and review staffing issues including, recruitment, progressions, salaries, pensions, employment contracts, grievances and disciplinary matters. The Committee will make recommendations on these matters to the Town Council.

Membership

Membership will be 4 members of the Town Council, selected at the Council's AGM and will normally comprise:

- Town Mayor and Chairman of the Council
- Deputy Town Mayor
- Immediate Past Mayor
- Advisor and Clerk to the Committee

Quorum and Voting

- a. The quorum of the Committee shall be 3 Councillors.
- b. The Chairman of the Committee shall have a second or casting vote in the event of a tied situation.

Detailed remit includes:

- a. Provide an initial route for discussion of staff matters.
- b. Provide information, advice and guidance to the Council on staffing issues.
- c. Develop and propose staff structures, policies and procedures.
- d. Facilitate the initial recruitment of personnel in conjunction with the Town Clerk.
- e. Review and advise on the terms and conditions of employment as required.
- f. Review and to advise on staff development and training needs.
- g. Monitor and review staff absences
- h. Consider any grievance or disciplinary matters relating to the Council's employees and to report on these to the Town Council.