

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFF
PANEL HELD IN ARDEN HALL,
CASTLE BROMWICH, ON WEDNESDAY
7TH OCTOBER 2014 AT 6.00 PM**

Those present:

- Chairman:** Cllr J Riordan
- Councillors:** Cllr Mrs. Allen Cllr J Horne-MacDonald
- Officers:** Mrs. C Tibbles, Clerk to the Council/RFO
- Public:** None

1. Apologies for absence.

The apologies from Cllr E Knibb were noted for the reason given. The Chairman welcomed and thanked a reserve member for attending the meeting.

2. Declarations of pecuniary or conflict of interests.

None declared.

3. Dispensations.

None requested.

4. Minutes of the previous Meeting.

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman, **SECONDED BY** Cllr Mrs. Allen, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 2nd July, 2014, having been circulated, be signed as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

5. Questions from the Public.

Under Standing Order 70, the Chairman prepared to adjourn standing orders to invite questions from members of the public but there were none in attendance.

6. Legislation Update.

Members noted recent communications on shared parental leave, fraud, obesity and HMRC Real Time Information. The increase of hourly pay from 1st October to £6.50 for relevant staff had been implemented to ensure compliance with National Minimum Wage. There was no agreement yet on a settlement from the national pay negotiations from 1st April but when agreed, it would be advisable to review the effect on all staff and assess differentials in pay/responsibilities. The Clerk explained the manual backpay calculation process for the benefit of new members. When new pay scales were agreed and received they would be circulated to members. As penalties were being introduced for failing to comply with RTI, the Clerk undertook to enquire what the position was if technology failed and you could not send your securely encrypted data.

7. Staff Policies.

Members considered timing of a review of the Discipline and Grievance Policy, the Staff Handbook and establishment of an Appointments/Recruitment Policy. The Clerk outlined reasons for this as recent procedures seemed not to have been fully understood or properly concluded. It was **AGREED** the Clerk seek advice from WALC, NALC, ACAS and SLCC on electronic updates for current documents and finding a new policy to outline the recruitment process and legislative responsibilities.

8. Training of Councillors.

Following careful assessment of needs, **ON THE PROPOSITION** of Cllr Mrs. Allen, **SECONDED** by the Chairman, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Finance and General Purposes Committee consider inviting WALC to put on a training for

ACTION

Staff Panel
tba

Clerk
12/14

Clerk
12/14

Clerk
11/14

councillors on employment responsibilities (based on the Good Councillor Guide). This could be open to all parish and town councillors and perhaps free or at minimal cost if Castle Bromwich provided a venue. Then members could work towards assessing revisions of documentation, seeking information from Solihull MBC on their procedures if appropriate and available.

9. Staff Issues.

ON THE PROPOSITION of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Horne-MacDonald, **IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it was advisable in the public interest, as if members of the public were present during the consideration of such business, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under paras 1 and 11 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act, that the public be temporarily excluded and be instructed to withdraw. The Clerk confirmed that after the last meeting she had checked existing budgetary provision was adequate for the hours/vacancies being advertised. As only one new appointment had taken place, the remaining budget would naturally still be sufficient as 3 months had since passed and not been utilised, although additional hours by other staff were being worked. Members noted that an update on current vacancies and outcome of interviews had not been provided to the Leisure Services Committee the previous week and the Clerk was asked to seek information from the Hall Manager on which priority vacancies would be re-advertised and how many cleaners and bar staff were required to be at operating capacity, including clarification on contracted hours (number required and number filled) for wardens. Members felt if there were problems with recruitment then either advertising, the flexibility required by the council or the rates of pay on offer may need to be reviewed. Following consideration, members accepted the Clerk's request for clarification of apparent rulings and decisions that had been relayed to her and also noted that paperwork on recent events appeared not to have been concluded by members. **IT WAS AGREED** that the Chairman of the Panel invite the Chairman of the Council to meet informally with the Clerk to clarify these matters and ensure correct closure of proceedings.

10. Future Staff Planning.

In addition to the earlier discussion, members had agreed to review the effectiveness of outsourcing a vacancy to professional services. It was noted that there was a minor financial difference in cost to the council and that **ON THE PROPOSITION** of the Chairman, **SECONDED** by Cllr Horne-MacDonald, **IT WAS RESOLVED** that the recommendation to continue be put to the Finance and General Purposes Committee at their next meeting (as the budget for Professional Fees would overspend in comparison to their salary budget which would underspend).

11. Pension Scheme.

Members noted the LGPS document circulated and the pensionable pay aspects that would have to be budgeted for. Certain aspects remained an unknown factor, although the future budget would show Employer's Pension contributions as a separate line (currently shown in the annual accounts). Members wished to review the recently adopted Discretions Policy at the next meeting. It was noted that the auto enrolment date for all employees was 1st July 2016 and had been set by HMRC. The Clerk was asked to investigate if the Council was obliged to continue with the LGPS offered to all staff since 2001 or if a non-LGPS scheme could be offered to new employees.

ACTION

Staff Panel
tba

Clerk
21/10

JR
asap

FGP
12/11

Clerk
asap