



Battle Town Council



MINUTES of the PERSONNEL SUB-COMMITTEE meeting held on
TUESDAY, 8th SEPTEMBER 2020 at 6.30pm by Zoom

Present: Cllrs J Gyngell (Chairman), G Favell and M Kiloh

In Attendance: Cllr V Cook, Carol Harris (Town Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence – None.

2. Disclosure of interest – None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 12th May 2020 were agreed to be signed electronically by Cllr Gyngell.

4. Clerks Report

- All staff members are back to work and following social distancing and safety measures as appropriate. This includes the new member of staff at the cemetery and the trainee. Grounds staff use separate vehicles other than the trainee who is passenger in the Mule only. The office remains closed other than by appointment although there are occasional unannounced visitors who are quickly reminded of the distancing rules. All staff members appear content with current arrangements.
 - Unfortunately, it is still not possible to hold a 'retirement' event for Gary Champion
- The Chairman asked that the Council's commendation on performances over this very difficult period be expressed to all staff members.

5. Appraisal review timetable

It was noted that the mid-year reviews had not been held due to Covid-19. The Clerk was asked to produce a table of dates for appraisals and reviews for all staff members.

6. Staff matters for recommendation to Full Council:

• **Contract of Marketing & Town Development Officer**

Members were reminded that this post was agreed for an initial six month contract. This was extended for a further three month period to the end of this month. The Clerk confirmed that there has been some useful work carried out to the website, including essential accessibility amendments and an increase in media posts has been accomplished. However, it had become apparent that more direct support for the Clerk is required and that succession planning should also be considered. **Members agreed unanimously to recommend to Full Council that the final contract for the Marketing & Town Development Officer be extended to 23rd December 2020 and that recruitment commence for a Deputy Town Clerk with specific marketing skills.**

• **Trainee grounds staff**

It was noted that the original proposal for an apprentice grounds and maintenance person as succession planning had not proved successful and the role was changed to a trainee position. The formal college training completes in December. Whilst Mr Jenner cannot be faulted for his commitment and advancement, the full time position required as a result of the retirement of Gary Champion, was filled by a more experienced person. The Clerk has discussed the situation with Mr Jenner and offered full support. **Members agreed unanimously to recommend to Full Council that the trainee grounds person complete his placement on 23rd December 2020.**

The Chairman thanked the Clerk for the time and energy expended to assist Mr Jenner in his role.

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- **Staff salaries**

The recommendation from the **National Association of Local Councils** for a **2.75% increase** had been circulated prior to the meeting. **Members agreed unanimously to recommend to Full Council a 2.75% salary increase, backdated to April 2020 for all staff members.**

7. Human Resource Professionals

As agreed, a Human Resource professional had been contacted for advice on employment contracts and appropriate policies. The response indicated that the existing contract could be amended within an hour's work. A complete re-write would require approx. five hours. The Clerk was asked to identify if there is a current model available from Sussex Association of Local Council to adopt. It was suggested that some terms could be adjusted eg level of sick pay; which is currently very generous and an addition could state successful completion of training requirements.

It is recommended that some policies are re-written and modernised; that there are some missing from the staff handbook which are now required. It was suggested that this work would take approx. seven hours.

The most cost effective way forward is to prepay a bundle of 10hrs at £71ph. The Clerk clarified that hours not used on document preparation may be used on human resource advice. **Members agreed unanimously to recommend to Finance & General Purposes that a bundle of ten hours be contracted to HR Services Partnership to provide up-to-date policies and advice as appropriate.**

8. Support for staff

Members confirmed their full support of staff members and Chairman of Council during the recent challenging time. It was noted that, as employers, any harassment or stress caused to staff or Members should be referred to Council for resolution.

9. Matters to note / future agenda items

The Clerk will undertake virtual training with the Society of Local Council Clerks between 12th and 16th October 2020; this follows the cancellation of the formal training course due to Covid-19 restrictions.

10. Date of next meeting: to be determined

The meeting closed at 7.15pm

**CLLR J GYNGELL
CHAIRMAN**