

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Personnel Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
17:00 on 6 November 2019

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Tracey Eastwood, Amanda Frost (Chair), Alan Green, Graham Parker and Alice Taylor

In attendance: Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

1. Welcome

The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report were explained and the meeting was welcomed.

2. Receipt and consideration of acceptance of apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Hardie, Lang, Patience and Pearce. All Councillors voted in favour to accept the apologies. Cllrs Eastwood and Parker advised they would need to leave the meeting early.

3. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

It was noted that the Clerk and Committee Clerk would leave the room where necessary for the discussion of any confidential or sensitive matters relating to staff.

4. Accuracy of the Minutes

26 September 2018 – Accepted as accurate. Proposed by Cllr Parker; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.

5. Public Forum

There were no members of the public in attendance.

6. Committee arrangements, including the following

- 6.1. Membership of the Personnel Committee – The current membership was confirmed as Cllrs Neil Coleby, Tracey Eastwood, Amanda Frost, Alan Green, Jacqueline Hardie, Peter Knight, Peter Lang, Graham Parker, Keith Patience and Andy Pearce. It was requested that the membership details on website be updated to include those who have recently joined the Personnel Committee.
- 6.2. Appointment of a Deputy Chair of the Personnel Committee – Cllr Parker proposed appointing Cllr Eastwood as the Deputy Chair of the Personnel Committee; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour.
- 6.3. Terms of Reference – These were circulated in advance of the meeting and projected at the meeting. It was agreed that substitutes should not be required, as the Personnel Committee now has ten members, but it was agreed that this should remain in the Terms of Reference, even if no substitutes are appointed. There was a discussion about the name of the Committee and Cllr Green proposed a recommendation to Full Council to rename the Personnel Committee to the Human Resources Committee; seconded by Cllr Parker; three Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against.

Cllr Taylor arrived 17:10

Cllr Taylor proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference to include responsibility for staff wellbeing; seconded by Cllr Green; all in favour. This proposed amendment was made at the meeting. The importance of staff wellbeing was discussed. Cllr Eastwood has some material to assist the Committee with fulfilling its responsibilities regarding this, and will bring it to the next meeting. Cllr Eastwood suggested that she and another Councillor could meet

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with staff individually to discuss their wellbeing. Staff do support one another in the office, but it was agreed that this support would be welcomed. The Council has not yet adopted a Wellbeing Policy. The Clerk manages staff wellbeing with support from the Mayor and the Council. Cllr Eastwood has a model Wellbeing Policy which she can bring to the next meeting for the Committee to consider. The Clerk and Committee Clerk will be attending Mental Health First Aid courses. It was queried whether there is a process in place to support Councillors' wellbeing also. The Council does not have a defined process but East Suffolk Council should also be able to offer advice and support where necessary.

7. Review of policies and procedures relating to personnel

These policies were reviewed and adopted by Full Council in May. The following policies were circulated ahead of the meeting for review:

- Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Data Retention Policy
- Disciplinary Procedure
- Disciplinary Rules
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Lone Worker Policy
- Media Policy
- Member Officer Protocol
- Safeguarding Policy
- Social Media Protocol
- Training and Development Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy

Cllr Green proposed a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the policies and procedures relating to Personnel, as listed above; seconded by Cllr Taylor; four Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

8. Current staffing arrangements and proposals for the future (confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

9. Any matters for the Budget Working Group (next meeting 7 November) (confidential)

To be discussed during the confidential session.

10. Date of the next meeting

As soon as required to discuss personnel matters but, in any event, the requirement is no later than six months' interval.

11. Items for the next agenda and close

No matters were raised for inclusion on the next agenda.

Cllr Green proposed moving the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Taylor; all in favour.

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12. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

12.1. Any employment matters including those at 8 and 9 above as required

8. Current staffing arrangements and proposals for the future (confidential) and

9. Any matters for the Budget Working Group (next meeting 7 November) (confidential)

The Committee Clerk left the meeting 17:36 as it was agreed it would not be appropriate for her to be present during the discussion of the remainder of the items on the agenda, which could be of a sensitive or confidential nature relating to staffing arrangements

Discussions took place about charges relating to officer time within the East Coast Community Healthcare service charges. Also, current and future staffing needs were discussed and would be costed and progressed through Finance and Governance Committee. Some confidential staffing matters were also raised by the Clerk and were discussed.

Cllr Green left the room 18:00 and returned 18:04, during the discussion of these items

Cllrs Eastwood and Parker left the meeting 18:04, during the discussion of these items