



SHAFTESBURY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES of the HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

in the Mayors Parlour, Town Hall, High Street, Shaftesbury on
Monday 17th August 2015 commencing at 9.50am.

Members Present:

Cllr R Tippins (Chair)
Cllr A Austin

Cllr J Lewer
Cllr A Perkins

Absent:

Cllr P Proctor

In Attendance:

Stephen Holley, Town Clerk

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

HR01 Apologies

Apologies were accepted from Cllr P Proctor, who was away.

HR02 Declaration of Interests and Dispensations

No declarations of interest or requests for dispensation had been received

HR03 Minutes

It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 30th March 2015 be approved as a correct record.

The Committee also received the notes of the Informal Meeting of the Committee held on 2nd July 2015.

HR04 Apprenticeship

Officer report 0815HR04 was received. It was **RESOLVED** that the Committee recommend to the Council the appointment of an Apprentice Groundsperson, to be remunerated on the national rate. The Council would offer the scheme through Kingston Maurward College, Dorchester, which had an established programme for Horticultural Apprenticeships.

HR05 Policy on Training

Officer report 0815HR05 was received. It was noted that having a Policy on Training was a requirement for the Foundation Award under the new Local Council Award Scheme, which had been agreed by as an objective for the Council (Minute G09 - General Management Committee, 9th June 2015). It was **RESOLVED** that the draft Policy be recommended to the Council, without amendment.

The Clerk was requested to compile a matrix of Councillor and staff training needs.

HR06 Town Clerk – Record of Continuous Professional Development

Officer report 0815HR06 was received. It was noted that having a formal record of the Clerk's CPD activities was another requirement for the Local Council Award Scheme. It was **RESOLVED** that the Record of the Town Clerk's Continuous Professional Development be recommended to the Council for formal approval

HR07 Record of Training for Councillors and Staff

Officer report 0815HR07 was received. It was noted that having a Record of Training was another requirement for the Local Council Award Scheme. A small number of corrections were noted as being required. It was **RESOLVED** that, subject to the incorporation of the corrections, the Record of Training be recommended to the Council for formal approval.

HR08 Confidential Information

It was **RESOLVED** that, in accordance with Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded during the discussion of the matters referred to at Minute references HR09 and HR10 below, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of confidential information, (as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12a of Section 100a(4) of the Local Government Act 1972), and the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

Note: While the reports and discussion in respect of Minutes HR09 and HR10 contained confidential/exempt information the following Minutes are a full record of the decisions arising therefrom because they contain nothing of a confidential nature. Confidential Minutes have not been produced.

HR09 Town Clerk – Probationary Period and Future Objectives

Officer report 0815HR09 was received. The Clerk offered to withdraw from the Meeting but it was agreed that there was no need for private discussion. The Committee noted that the Agenda stated that the item of business was to consider a recommendation to the Council, whereas the Terms of Reference for the HR Committee specified that it could "consider all matters

relating to the probationary periods of all new employees". That being so, it was agreed by all that it would be appropriate for the Committee to make the final decision on behalf of the Council. It was **RESOLVED** that the Clerk had successfully completed his probationary period and his appointment could therefore be confirmed. All Terms and Conditions would remain as set out in the Clerk's Contract of Employment.

The Committee noted that the Clerk expected to be able to recommend to the Council that it resolve that it was eligible to apply for the Foundation Award under the Local Council Award Scheme in the next few weeks or months. That being so, it was suggested that one of the Clerk's objectives for the coming year should be to work on the next level, the Quality Award. However, it was recognised that whereas the Foundation Award demonstrated that a council met the minimum requirements for operating lawfully and according to standard practice these were largely basic administrative requirements that could be attended to by Officers, whereas the Quality and Quality Gold Awards would require more member 'buy-in' and development. The Clerk was requested to consider some additional objectives to be considered at the next meeting.

HR10 Benchmarking of Salaries and Salary Review

Officer report 0815HR10 was received. It was **RESOLVED** that the benchmarking information received from nine other Town Councils in Dorset be noted. It was agreed that benchmarking indicated that no further action was required in respect of the Council's Grounds Team, but the Office Team, with the exception of the Clerk, should be reviewed. (Note: the Clerk's salary had been agreed by the Council when it had gone through the recruiting process in December 2014). The Clerk would initiate the review and discuss with relevant members and Officers for input. The outcome would be considered by the Committee, for onward recommendation to the Council.

It was suggested that the Clerk make a direct approach to a neighbouring Town Council that had not participated in the benchmarking, offering to share only this Council's information (because the other Councils had supplied the information in confidence).

HR11 Housekeeping Matters

The following matters were discussed:

- (i) The Clerk was requested to compile a calendar or timetable of HR activities for staff and the Committee
- (ii) It was noted that staff performance reviews (Annual Appraisals) were overdue, the last having been done in 2013 or even 2012. The Clerk and members of the Committee would consider a 'light touch' system of appraisal
- (iii) The Clerk confirmed that the Council did have a Staff Handbook (Note: the version in current use was issued in November 2013, it had been reviewed by the Council's HR Advisers, Ellis Whittam, in April 2014 but consideration for adoption by the Committee remained outstanding)

- (iv) Terms and Conditions of Service were closely based on the NALC Model
- (v) All staff had been issued with a Contract and Job Description, but the Office Team required an update of their Job Descriptions, this update would be an outcome of the review. (Note: having current Contracts and Job Descriptions was a requirement for the Foundation Award)
- (vi) Terms of reference for all posts. The member who raised this explained that it concerned the extent of job responsibilities. On consideration, the Committee agreed that this should be tied into the update of Job Descriptions.
- (vii) Disclosure and Barring Service requirements for Grounds Team members. The Clerk informed the Committee that the Council's Health and Safety Advisers (Ellis Whittam) had advised that Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS, formerly CRB) checks were not required. However, the Clerk would ask neighbouring and benchmark Councils if they required DBS checks as a matter of good practice.

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 11.30am.

Signed

Date