



Minutes of the Town Council Staffing Committee Meeting held on  
Tuesday, 18 June 2024 at 6.00pm in The Meeting Room, Berwick-upon-  
Tweed Town Council Office, Unit 1, 82 – 88 Marygate, Berwick-upon-  
Tweed

**PRESENT:**

Councillors: L Hawken (Chair)  
J Bowden  
G Brown  
R Mackenzie  
J Turton

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Gareth Davies, Town Clerk  
Stephen Cozens, Assistant to the Clerk  
0 members of the public

MINUTE NO.	TITLE AND DESCRIPTION OF ITEM	Mover	Second	Decision
<b>BA007/24</b>	<b>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</b>			
	To receive apologies for absence.	N/A	N/A	There were no apologies for absence.
<b>BA008/24</b>	<b>MINUTES</b>			
	To sign as a correct record the minutes of the Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council Staffing Committee meeting held on 07 May 2024.	RM	JB	The Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> that the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 07 May 2024, were agreed and signed as a correct record.
<b>BA009/24</b>	<b>DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS</b>			
	(i) Unless already entered in the Council's Register of Members' interests, members are required to disclose any personal interest, (which includes any disclosable pecuniary interest), they may have in any of the items included on the agenda for the meeting in accordance with the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council on 9 July 2012, and are reminded that if they have any personal interests of a prejudicial nature they must not participate in any discussion or vote on the matter and must leave the room.	N/A	N/A	i. There were no disclosures of interests.
	(ii) To receive and consider requests from members who have a Disclosable Pecuniary	N/A	N/A	ii. There were no requests for dispensation.

	Interest in any items on the agenda an application for dispensation under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 to enable members to participate in discussions and voting.			
	<b>Committee RESOLVED that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was appropriate to exclude the media and public from the discussion of the following items of business on the basis that public discussion might prejudice the Council's position and staffing or personal issues might be discussed.</b>	Nem con		
<b>BA010/24</b>	<b>ACTION PLAN</b>			
	To receive an update.	Nem con		Updates included that the Staffing section be removed from the general action plan and treated as a confidential item for future meetings of this Committee, that the Staffing Review actions (42) have been implemented and the process for job descriptions (43) was ongoing and lessons learned from the staffing review (44) is the subject of a report to Council. An interview date was agreed for the Operations

				<p>Manager post with the panel to comprise Cllr G Brown, Cllr J Bowden, Cllr L Hawken and the Town Clerk. The Committee then discussed the need for separate Training Plans for staff and councillors and it was noted that a specimen program would be brought to a future meeting of this Committee.</p> <p>After which, the Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to note and agree the updates.</p>
<b>BA011/24</b>	<b>HOME WORKING</b>			
	To review policy and existing arrangements.	Nem con		<p>A draft specimen policy was produced by Cllr R Mackenzie and an update was provided on current arrangements.</p> <p>After which, the Committee <b>RESOLVED</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That Cllr R Mackenzie would distribute the policy for comment, along with the ACAS version for comparison, and an amended version would be brought to the next meeting of this Committee, and</li> <li>2. That affected staff to re-apply for home working arrangements within 14 working days of this meeting.</li> </ol>

<b>BA012/24</b>	<b>EXTERNAL WORKING</b>			
	To review contracts and existing arrangements for all staff as relevant.	Nem con		<p>The Town Clerk provided an update on the definition of external working and the current situation of employees.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Town Clerk advised the Committee that if staff are to write to Council then advice should be sought from the HR Consultant contracted by Council due to potential risk of breaching employment contracts and no action should be taken until advice has been received.</p> <p>After which, the Committee <b>RESOLVED</b>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. That employees of the Council write to the Chair of the Staffing Committee setting out what outside work they undertake, who for, and for how many hours,</li> <li>2. To note the advice of the Town Clerk, and</li> <li>3. That the Chair / Vice Chair seek advice from the HR Consultant contracted by Council.</li> </ol>

BA013/24	OTHER STAFFING ISSUES			
	Operations Manager post			
	<p>i. Review and agree on the salary scale for the Operations Manager post, and</p>	Nem con		<p>i. The Committee noted that the salary scale had previously been agreed by Council and discussed providing different pension options, including the Local Government Pensions Scheme (LGPS) to new employees or flexibility in pay scales. After which the Town Clerk updated the Committee that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. The Town Council doesn't have the scope in the budget to join the LGPS,</li> <li>b. The Town Council doesn't have a Medium-Term Financial Plan that would allow joining the LGPS, and</li> <li>c. If defined contribution and defined benefit is to be changed then it is strongly advised that external advice is sought.</li> </ul> <p>After which, the Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to note the update and advice of the Town Clerk.</p>

	<p>ii. Note the recruitment timeline and interim arrangements.</p>	<p>RM</p>	<p>JB</p>	<p>ii. The Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Note the Town Clerk’s update on the recruitment timeline,</li> <li>b. Agree the Town Clerk’s recommendation that additional admin support be provided to the Local Services team in the interim paid for out of shortfalls created by the delay in appointing an Operation’s Manager with the amendments that the admin team be asked to work overtime of no more than 6 hours per week at their current rate of pay, with the situation to be reviewed on 30 July 2024.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Job role difficulties</b></p>			
	<p>Consider the problems expressed and possible interim solutions.</p>	<p>Nem con</p>		<p>It was <b>RESOLVED</b> that the Town Clerk have a review meeting after 13 weeks to clarify if the problems expressed and possible interim solutions have been successfully concluded.</p>

	<b>Appeals process</b>			
	Update on the ongoing appeals process.	Nem con		<p>Updates included that the process provided by the Town Clerk had been shared with the HR Consultant contracted by Council and amended and agreed, the appeals team would comprise Cllr J Bowden, Cllr R Mackenzie and Cllr T Stewart, the date and venue have been agreed and letters have been sent appropriately.</p> <p>After which, the Committee <b>RESOLVED</b> to note and agree the updates.</p>
	<b>Confidential staffing issues</b>			
	Consider problems experienced and possible interim solutions.	Nem con		After a discussion, no decisions were taken or way forward agreed.
<b>BA014/24</b>	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING</b>			
	The next meeting of the committee will be held on Tuesday 17 September 2024, at 6:00 pm.	N/A	N/A	Noted along with a provisional date of Monday 05 August 2024 at 5pm for an extraordinary meeting of this Committee.