

Sandy Town Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Human Resources Committee of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 19 September 2016

Present: Cllrs P Aldis, T Cole, A M Hill (Chair), A Jackson, C Osborne, M Pettitt

In attendance: Chris Robson (Town Clerk)

Absent: Cllr Sutton

1 Apologies for absence (16-2016/17)

Apologies had been received from Cllr. S Sutton

2 Declarations of interest (17-2016/17)

- i) *Disclosable Pecuniary Interests - none*
- ii) *Non-disclosable Interests - none*

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (18-2016/17)

RESOLVED to receive the minutes of a meeting of the HR Committee meeting held on Monday 6 June 2016 and to confirm them as a correct record of proceedings.

4 Public Participation Session (19-2016/17)

No members of the public were present and no questions had been received.

5 Health and Safety/Accident Report (20-2016/17)

Members received and noted an accident report from the Town Clerk.

6 Training (21-2016/17)

- i) Members received a report from the Town Clerk on staff training. A Member asked whether the Clerks CiLCA submission was amended due to failing modules. The Clerk said this was not the case as the portfolio had not been submitted to the SLCC for marking as yet, instead the Clerk had issued modules to a mentor for comment ahead of submission.
- ii) Members received a brief report and proposed Councillor training policy from the Town Clerk. Members reviewed the policy and commented that there are certain training courses which the Committee should encourage Members to attend, especially new Councillors. A Member commented that the CBC Town and Parish Conferences were valuable networking opportunities and more Councillors should be encouraged to attend these. Members proposed the following amendments to the policy;

Action

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- That following re-election all Councillors should be 'offered the opportunity' to attend a BATPC refresher course, rather than all Councillors 'should' attend. Members were concerned about the cost implications of having to potentially send 15 Councillors on a training course in the same period. A Member suggested these could be run in-house.
- That the Vice Chair of Policy, Finance and Resources Committee should also attend the BATPC 'Financial Management for Councillors' course within 6 months of appointment.
- Wording under the Evaluation heading be amended to make clear that training reports will be for the information of other Council Members.

RESOLVED to recommend that the Policy be approved with the above mentioned amendments and that this go to Full Council for all Members' information.

7 Council Reception and Information Point Open Hours Members (22-2016/17)

Members considered the visitor data in the report provided by the Town Clerk. The overall numbers showed that visitor numbers dropped over the summer period, which was the reverse of what was expected. It was noted that a quarter of the callers to the Council's reception were still residents requesting CBC waste bags. Members discussed whether this was a service the Town Council should continue to offer if it places additional work on the office and causes issues with storage. Members considered whether other outlets in Sandy such as the library may be able to provide the service. It was commented that removing the service may have a negative effect on the other services provided by the Information Point and could discourage people from visiting. A Member commented that an alternative would have to be provided if the Council were to stop the service. Members agreed that the Council continue to offer the service.

The Chairman asked that members consider whether any patterns have emerged from the data provided which would suggest there was a need to change the opening hours at this stage. A Member commented that he could not see any compelling reason to change the opening hours. Members agreed that the opening hours remain as they are currently set and that the office continue to monitor so the matter can be revisited in the future.

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8 **Staffing Matters (23-2016/17)**

The Chairman informed the Committee that he was going to take items 8 and 9 together, as matters he wished to mention under Chairman's items would be relevant to staffing matters.

The Chair commented that he had met with the Clerk ahead of appraisals to discuss staffing and project management matters. The Chair noted that when coming on to the Council last year, he had listed all the projects the Council was working on. He carried out the same exercise again this year and found that the list had doubled without any significant items being removed. The Chair stated that we would need to consider how workloads were managed if we were going to continue to add items to the agenda. Members discussed the Clerk's role and the need to focus on the wider strategy of the Council.

A Councillor proposed that the Committee enter into Private Session as some of the discussion going forward will relate directly to employees and performance. This was seconded.

RESOLVED that the Committee enter into **PRIVATE SESSION** in terms of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, proposed and agreed that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

Members discussed employee roles within the office structure and the work of the Clerk, along with how the Council and Clerk can ensure projects are driven home and completed. Members also discussed whether there was a need for additional hours or a permanent committee Clerk role.

It was Proposed and **RESOLVED** that the Committee exit Private Session and return to Public Session.

The Chairman drew members attention to the recommendation in the Clerk's report. A Member Proposed that the the Recommendation be amended to remove the specificity of a 'committee clerk'. This was seconded.

RESOLVED that the Clerk looks to establish exact costs for additional hours and includes this in precept and budgeting calculations for futher consideration by Council.

9 **Chairman's Items (24-2016/17)**

The Chairman had raised matters regarding managing work load

Town
Clerk

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under item 8 of the agenda. There were no further Chairman's items.

10 Date of next meeting: 12 December 2016

11 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION

Exclusion of the Public and Press

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12 Ongoing Staffing Matters

Members received an update from the Town Clerk regarding long term employee sickness.

13 Management of Confidential Information

The Town Clerk explained the process of managing confidential information from internal and external sources. Members went on to discuss the most secure practice that should be adopted when dealing with confidential information.