

# 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 6 March 2017

**Present:** Cllrs P Aldis, T Cole, M Hill (Chair) A Jackson (Vice Chair), C Osborne, M Pettitt, and S Sutton

**In attendance:** Chris Robson (Town Clerk)

**Absent:** None

	<u>Action</u>
<b>1 Apologies for absence (49-2016/17)</b> No apologies were received.	
<b>2 Declarations of interest (50-2016/17)</b> i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests - none</i> ii) <i>Non-disclosable Interests - none</i>	
<b>3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (51-2016/17)</b> <b>RESOLVED</b> to receive the minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the HR Committee held on Monday 6 February 2017 and to confirm them as a correct record of proceedings.	Admin
<b>4 Public Participation Session (52-2016/17)</b> No members of the public were present and no questions had been received. An email had been received from a member of the public in relation to item 8 and it was agreed that this would be addressed when agenda item 8 is discussed.	
<b>5 Health and Safety/Accident Report (53-2016/17)</b> i) Members noted that there had been no accidents or health and safety incidents since the last committee meeting.  ii) Members received a summary of the recent health and safety audit which was carried out by the Council's health and safety advisors. A Member inquired about the employee questionnaire and whether this was intrusive. The Clerk informed Members that this related to 'at work' health concerns. Members noted the report.	
<b>6 Training (54-2016/17)</b> Members received a report from the Town Clerk on completed and upcoming training.  A Member commented that it would be useful to work out the timeframe for final CiLCA completion by the Clerk so the Council could allow for potential increased workload to achieve a higher Local Council	

# Sandy Town Council

Award level.

It was agreed that the Clerk should set up a standard form for all Councillors to complete following training or attendance as representatives of the Council at seminars or meetings. This will help ensure that feedback is distributed among all Members.

Admin

## 7 Social Media (55-2016/17)

Members received a report from the Town Clerk on the use of social media by Councils and matters the Council will need to consider if it wishes to launch a social media presence.

Members discussed the matter at length and raised concerns around access, safeguarding and management of the page.

The majority of Members felt that the Council needed to embrace social media in some form and move forward as almost all town and parish councils in the area already have a Facebook page.

It was Proposed and Seconded that the Council explores launching a Facebook page and that a social media policy and guidelines be brought to the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee; that Cllr. T Cole work with the office to complete a risk assessment for a council Facebook page.

**RESOLVED** that the Clerk drafts a social media policy and draws up guidelines for consideration by Policy, Finance and Resources Committee. That Cllr. T Cole work with the office to complete a risk assessment for a council Facebook page.

Town  
Clerk/Cllr  
T Cole

**RESOLVED** that Cllr M. Pettitt, members of the office staff and another Councillor representative attend the BATPC Social media training course on 21 March 2017.

Town  
Clerk/Cllr  
M Pettitt

## 8 Recruitment (56-2016/17)

- i) Members received a draft Recruitment Policy for review.

Members commented as follows;

9.4 Shortlisted candidates should be invited to visit the office and meet the team ahead of interviews. This will be the case for all positions recruited for.

12.1 To be amended to remove the keeping of applications of all unsuccessful candidates. Retaining of personal data is no longer permitted without specific and good reasons.

# Sandy Town Council

14.3 Providing evidence of the right to work in the UK should be higher up the policy due to its importance.

**RESOLVED** that the Policy go to the Policy, Finance and Resources Committee for adoption subject to the changes outlined.

- ii) Members reviewed the job description and associated documents for the upcoming recruitment of a Grounds person/Handyperson.

A member asked if applicants could complete a soft copy of the document and email their application in. The Clerk confirmed that they could.

Members discussed an email received from a member of the public querying why the role did not require Institute of Groundsman (IOG) qualifications. Members felt that a knowledge of IOG standards and practices would be welcome, but that to make it an essential requirement of the role was not appropriate and would prevent suitable candidates applying. The role encompasses a large variety of work, including litter picking, strimming and general maintenance, of which groundsmanship is only a part. The majority of the applicants time will not be spent on groundsmanship. It was also noted that qualified IOG would be on a different payscale to this role and the Councils SLCC payscales. It was agreed that some appropriate ICO training to support the role could be relevant and that this could be looked at under staff training programmes.

Members discussed the need to build in emergency weekend cover into the contract. The hours of the role would remain at 37 hours per week, but there may be times when the employee is required to work on a weekend or evening, such as council events or especially an emergency happening. This would be for time in lieu and the applicants should be made aware of this. It was agreed that the contract will include emergency/occasional weekend/evening cover and that the job description will highlight this. Members will need to work with the outdoor team on agreeing and implementing any regular emergency/on call cover and a definitive guideline on what constitutes an emergency and who would make such a decision would need to be detailed and agreed.

Members agreed that the following changes were required;

- Inclusion of occasional weekend and evening hours in job description.

# Sandy Town Council

- The application form should specify that a Full MANUAL driving licence is required as the Council vehicles are all manual not automatic.
- That the Person Specification be amended to include a desirable knowledge of IOG standards and practice.
- The the Person Specification be amended to have general maintenance background as an essential skill and experience of dealing with people in a polite manner as a desirable skill.
- Page 31 amend typing mistake 'of'
- Page 32 amend typing mistake 'not'

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the job description, person specification and application form subject to the outlined changes.

Town Clerk

Members discussed the document 'Information for Candidates' and noted there were various spelling and grammar mistakes which required correcting before the document could be issued.

Members also agreed that the following changes were required;

- Inclusion of statement that unsuccessful applicants will be notified by telephone and in writing.
- Remove the feedback section as this has been dealt with elsewhere in the documentation.
- Remove retention of personal data paragraph as the Council will no longer be allowed to retain personal data/documents.

**RESOLVED** that the document be redrafted and circulated to committee members ahead of it going out.

Town Clerk

**RESOLVED** that the interview panel would consist of the Chairman of Human Resources, the Clerk and Grounds Team Leader.

**RESOLVED** that candidates would view the depot and equipment they would be using following the interview. Cllr M Scott will be asked to lead on this with a member of the outdoor team.

Members queried recruitment time scales. The Clerk confirmed that as soon as the documents were amended they would advertise the position for a period of two weeks and look to hold interviews at the beginning of April 2017.

# Sandy Town Council

## **9 Chairman's Items (57-2016/17)**

The Chair raised with members concerns about the Clerk's current workload and the length of recent meetings and the volume of paperwork to accompany them. This needed to be monitored closely. A couple of suggestions were made but it was agreed that each committee chair should look carefully to not overload agendas even if it meant postponing a particular item until the next meeting cycle.

## **10 Date of Next Meeting: 3 July 2017 (58-2016/17)**

## **11 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION (59-2016/17)**

Exclusion of the Public and Press

It was proposed and agreed that 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.

## **12 Ongoing Staffing Matters (60-2016/17)**

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