

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 23rd September 2024 at 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs N Aldis, S Baker, A Lock, R Lock, and P Sharman (Chair)

Absent: Cllrs Effiong and Sutton

In attendance: Mrs. N Sewell (Clerk) and Cllr Hewitt

	<u>Action</u>
<p>1 Apologies for absence (HR -18-2024/25) Apologies were received from Cllrs Effiong and Sutton</p>	
<p>2 Declarations of interest (HR-19-2024/25) i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests - none</i> ii) <i>Non-disclosable Interests – none</i> iii) <i>Dispensations – In line with Standing Order 1 u Cllr Hewitt had written to the Clerk to request to be present during the Confidential items as it was deemed appropriate that she do so in her capacity as the Clerk’s line manager. The request was agreed and the Committee posed no objections to this.</i></p>	
<p>3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting (HR-20-2024/25) RESOLVED to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on Monday 1st July 2024 and to confirm them as a correct record of proceedings.</p>	
<p>4 Public Participation (HR-21-2024/25) There were no members of the public present.</p>	
<p>5 Health and Safety/Accident Report (HR-22-2024/25) Members were informed that no incidents had occurred since preparing the last meeting of the Human Resources Committee Agenda. RESOLVED to note the report.</p>	
<p>6 Training Report (HR-23-2024/25) Members received a training report from the Town Clerk. RESOLVED to note the report. <i>The Clerk was asked to put some dates forward to BATPC to facilitate the Civility & Respect Training. The Clerk also informed Members that at a recent Bedfordshire Branch meeting of the Society of Local Council Clerks the Monitoring Officers for Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedfordshire Borough Council had been present. The Clerk had enquired about running training on Code of Conduct and they had said that they were currently working on training and hoped to have something ready before the end of the year.</i></p>	Town Clerk

Sandy Town Council

7 Office Cleaning Contract (HR-24-2024/25)

Members received a report regarding changes to the current office cleaning contract and were asked to consider the options available, including quotes from cleaning contractors and local independent cleaners.

RESOLVED to recommend to Full Council that the £8,580, as quoted for by Company A, be provisioned for in the Budget for 2025/26 and that hiring a cleaning contractor would be a more suitable solution than employing an independent cleaner. In the meantime, the Committee requested that a member of the Outdoor Team be asked to cover the holiday of the current cleaner to enable the office space to be maintained during this period.

8 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION (HR-25-2024/25)

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.

9 STAFFING MATTERS (HR-26-2024/25)

- i. Members received the employee sick leave figures for the financial year to date.
RESOLVED to note the report
- ii. Members received a report outlining a member of staff's request to be paid sick pay for hours not worked during a phased return, which was designed to get the member of staff back to full fitness for the role following a prolonged sickness absence.
RESOLVED to agree the following recommendation
 - The Town Council approves the provision of sick pay to cover the hours not worked during an employee's phased return to work, but limit that pay to a maximum of 6 weeks' sick leave entitlement.
 - That the Town Council adopt a Phased Return to Work Policy that clearly sets out the following requirements regarding entitlement to sick pay across the Phased Return Period:
 - a) A medical professional or occupational health advisor recommend the phased return.
 - b) The duration of the phased return and sick pay coverage is limited to a maximum of 6 weeks.

Sandy Town Council

- c) The arrangement is reviewed every two weeks by the HR Committee and the employee's line manager to ensure progress and prevent unnecessary prolongation.
- d) A clear return-to-work plan with specific milestones must be agreed upon before the phased return begins.
- e) Sick pay during the phased return will be calculated in accordance with the Green Book policy, based on the employee's length of service and previous sick leave.
- f) The council reserves the right to suspend sick pay if there is evidence of abuse, as per section 10.10 of the Green Book policy.
- g) Employees must adhere to the conditions for reporting sickness and claiming benefits as outlined in the Green Book policy.
- h) Only one claim for Sick Pay under a phased return can be made in a 12 month period.

iii. Members received a report outlining updates to two staff contracts:

- a) Admin Team Leader contract update
- b) Civic Officer contract update

RESOLVED to note the reports

iv. Members received a request from the Deputy Clerk for an Extended Work from Home Arrangement.

RESOLVED to agree the recommendation to:

Aprove a modified flexible working arrangement for the Deputy Clerk, allowing one additional work from home day per week for a period of 3 months, subject to review. The Clerk and Deputy Clerk create a schedule that minimizes disruption to office operations and ensures adequate on-site coverage. The Clerk and HR Committee review the arrangement after 3 months to assess its effectiveness and impact on operations. The HR Committee and Clerk reserve the right to request the Deputy Clerk attend the office on work from home days as necessary to cover staff absence of sickness.

10 Team Capability Review (HR-27-2024/25)

Members received a report from the Clerk regarding recent staff changes and its impact on staff resourcing.

RESOLVED to agree the recommendation outlined in the report, clarify roles and that the Clerk liaise with PNC accordingly to understand next steps. A further report to come back the HR Committee's next meeting.

Sandy Town Council

11 Outdoor Team Resources (HR-28-2024/25)

No report received.

12 PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND THE PUBLIC (HR-29-2024/25)

RESOLVED that the confidential business having been concluded, the Press and Public be re-admitted to the meeting.

13 Staff Changes (HR-30-2024/25)

Members received a report regarding the temporary employment of an outdoor operative to support the Outdoor Team during a time of prolonged staff absence. This contract started on 19th August 2024 and finished on 20th September 2024.

RESOLVED to note the report.

Clerk

14 Christmas Office Opening Hours (HR-31-2024/25)

Members were informed that due to staff annual leave the offices will remain closed across the Christmas period, including Friday 27th, Monday 30th and Tuesday 31st December. The admin staff will return to work on Thursday 2nd January at 9.00am. An emergency number will be provided for use over this period and calls will also be monitored. Two of the Outdoor team will be working the period between Christmas and New Year.

Clerk

15 Chairman's Items (HR-32-2024/25)

There were none.

16 Date of Next meeting:

18th November 2024

Meeting closed at 21.44