

Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE** held at the **TOWN HALL, SWANAGE** on **WEDNESDAY 23rd OCTOBER 2024** at 11.15 a.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor W.S. Trite – Chairman

Councillor M. Bonfield

Councillor T. Foster (Town Mayor)

Councillor S. Vile

Also Present:-

Dr M. Ayres

Town Clerk

Mr C. Milmer

Visitor Services & Business Development
Manager (to 11.40 a.m.)

Miss A. Spencer

Finance Manager

Public Participation Time

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for his inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillor Moreton.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations in accordance with Section 9 and Appendix B of the Council's Code of Conduct.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

3. **TO CONSIDER PRELIMINARY EMPLOYEE BUDGET FOR THE 2025/26 FINANCIAL YEAR**

Members considered a briefing note summarising the estimated employee costs for 2025/26, in order to agree an employee budget to present to the Finance & Governance Committee on 11th December 2024. It was noted that an increase of 4% had been factored into the preliminary budgets for 2025/26 for gross pay. The budget provision required for 2025/26 was noted as £1.375m, an increase of £75k on 2024/25, comprising inflationary and incremental increases. It was noted that anticipated changes in employer's NICs would increase the required budget.

Members considered the departmental budgets: Central Services, Operations, Enforcement and Visitor Services. The Visitor Services & Business Development Manager outlined proposals for the staffing of the Visitor Services department in 2025/26. The only proposed addition to the 2024/25 budget was an increase of 116 hours (0.06 FTE) allocated to Beach Gardens, being hours to cover October opening. A further change was requested, with the introduction of a permanent post incorporating beach warden, boat park and market hours, with 900 hours allocated for the full year being proposed, the hours being a repurposing of one Seafront Advisor post. This proposed change was noted as being a result of difficulties encountered with recruitment and retention of seasonal employees.

Members discussed at length the requirement and job description of the Seafront Advisors/Beach Wardens and proposed changes, during which the problems encountered with recruitment to this role was recognised. The job title was also discussed at length. It was recognised that further discussion of the potential changes would be required, with the job description needing to be refined. It was noted that only the budget allocation needed resolution at this meeting.

The Visitor Services and Business Development Officer left the meeting.

Members discussed the role of a Communications Officer in Central Services. It was noted that this post had not been allocated a budget for 2024/25 and was not included in the preliminary budget for 2025/26. It was reported that this had been discussed at the Communications Working Party, held prior to the Personnel Committee meeting and a budget request for a communications officer would not be forthcoming, with the activities to be undertaken internally.

There were no suggested changes to the Operations or Enforcement posts. Members also considered the proposed staff training budget. After some discussion it was agreed to retain the Central Services training budget at £5,000 resulting in a staff training budget of £17,000 in total. It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by the Town Mayor and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -**

That the staffing budget as presented and a training budget of £17,000 be taken forward to the next meeting of the Finance and Governance Committee for consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2025/26.

4. **TO REVIEW THE STATEMENT OF POLICY ON THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME 2014 DISCRETIONS**

Members considered the Council's 'Statement of Policy on the Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 Discretions'. It was noted that it was best practice to review the document periodically, every 5 years as a minimum, and a briefing note outlining suggested changes to the document was discussed.

It was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Trite, and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: -**

TO RECOMMEND

That Council adopts a revised 'Statement of Policy on the Local Government Pension Scheme 2014 Discretions', amended as follows:

Part A: To update the APC figure to £8,344 in relation to Regulation 16.

Part B: To delegate the calculation of APP to the Town Clerk and Finance Manager in relation to Regulation 21.

5. **ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING AGENDAS**

a) **Cycle to Work Scheme**

It was reported that the possible introduction of a cycle to work scheme had been previously raised. It was reported, following informal enquiries from departmental managers, that there had been very little appetite for the introduction of a scheme amongst existing employees at the current time.

6. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting had been scheduled for 11.00 a.m. on Wednesday 23rd April 2025.

The meeting closed at 12.00 p.m.
