

Minutes of the Meeting of the **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE** held on the Zoom platform on **TUESDAY, 3rd NOVEMBER 2020** at 11.00 a.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor W.S. Trite – Chairman
Councillor M. Bonfield
Councillor T. Foster
Councillor A. Harris
Councillor C. Moreton

Also Present:-

Dr. M. Ayres	Town Clerk
Miss A. Spencer	Finance Manager
Mr C Milmer	Visitor Services Manager

Public Participation Time

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

1. **APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies to record on this occasion.

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members were invited to declare their interests and consider any requests for Grants of Dispensations in accordance with paragraphs 9 – 13 of the Council's Code of Conduct and regulations made under chapter 7 of the Localism Act 2011.

There were no declarations to record on this occasion.

3. **TO CONSIDER PRELIMINARY EMPLOYEE BUDGET FOR THE 2021/22 FINANCIAL YEAR**

It was reported that for the current financial year, it was projected that employee costs would be £96k under budget, owing to three vacancies and a delay in employing seasonal staff due to the spring lockdown.

The Finance Manager outlined the assumptions that had been made in estimating the provisional employee costs budget for 2021/22. It was noted that a 2.5% increase had been applied to the annual pay increase across the board. Employer pension contribution costs were already known, being 22%.

It was reported that no changes had been made to the agreed staffing structure in the preliminary budget, however, there were a few posts that required clarification.

It was reported that the Sports Park Attendant posts had been given permanent status for the 2020/21 budget purposes only. In reviewing the year, and given the problems encountered during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Visitor Services Manager recommended that these posts revert to a seasonal basis.

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

That posts BG1, 2 and 3 revert to seasonal status.

The Town Clerk reported on a vacant receptionist post at the Town Hall, TH6/2. It was noted that this post remained in the staffing structure for the 2021/22 budget and that it would be reviewed in the near future.

Consideration was given to the Seafront Advisor/Town Ambassador post OPS19 which was approved for the 2020/21 budget on a 12-month trial basis. It was noted that, due to the coronavirus pandemic, this had not proven possible and had only been appointed as a Seafront Advisor on a seasonal basis. The Visitor Services Manager requested that this post remain in the staffing structure for a trial period, as planned for the current year.

It was proposed by the Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Harris and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the post OPS19, Seafront Advisor/Town Ambassador be employed on a 12-month trial period in 2021/22.

It was reported that during the 2020/21 season, a Seafront Advisor had been utilised as a Market Attendant. It was explained that the Council had taken the operation of the market in-house at short notice and that one seafront advisor had been deployed accordingly. It was noted that a budget would need to be approved for 2021/22 with the Council expected to continue to operate the market for that financial year.

It was proposed by Councillor Foster, seconded by the Chairman and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That a Seafront Advisor post be allocated the duties of Market Attendant in the staffing structure and that a budget be allocated to this department accordingly.

Following consideration of the overall draft staffing structure and salary costs it was further proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Harris and
RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That the staffing structure and budget estimate, incorporating all of the decisions approved at this meeting be taken forward to the next meeting of the Policy, Finance and Performance Management Committee on 9th December 2020 for further consideration as part of the budget setting process for 2021/22.

4. TO CONSIDER EMPLOYEE HOLIDAY ENTITLEMENT

The Town Clerk outlined a briefing note detailing the current holiday entitlement for council employees, giving a comparison to other authorities in the South West region. It was noted that the current allocation for Swanage Town Council employees with less than 5 years' service was 22 days plus 2 statutory days and those employees with 5 years or more service were entitled to 25 days plus 2 statutory days. It was further noted that the 2 statutory days had to be taken during the Christmas closedown period.

The Town Clerk reported that the Christmas shutdown period required council's approval to gift an additional day's holiday on an annual basis. It was stated that should Council approve any increase in basic holiday entitlement this approval would not be required in future years, with employees being required to take 3 days at Christmas and this would give certainty during this period.

It was reported that other local authorities offered additional holiday to those employees on management grades and that, comparatively, Swanage Town Council holiday entitlement was below average for the basic, 5 years and management grade entitlements.

Some concern was raised that increasing the holiday allowance for management grades may be divisive with managers being entitled to more holiday. However, it was noted that this was in recognition of both the greater responsibility of the posts and the significant unpaid overtime worked by management.

Following further discussion, it was proposed by the Town Mayor, seconded by Councillor Harris and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

That the Committee approves in principle increasing the basic holiday entitlement for all employees and enhanced holiday entitlement for management grade posts.

Officers were instructed to work up a draft policy to be brought to a meeting of the Personnel Committee prior to 31st March 2021.

5. CHRISTMAS ARRANGEMENTS 2020

The Town Clerk outlined the procedures in place for the Council's Christmas shutdown period, which is traditionally midday on Christmas Eve to the first working day after New Year's Day, with members of the operations department on standby for emergency call outs.

As reported under Minute 4 above, it was stated that Council employees are entitled to two statutory days holiday which are used during the compulsory closure. It was recognised that in order to cover the Christmas shutdown employees would be required to take an additional day's holiday. It was noted that this day had been given in past years by the Council to its employees as a gesture of goodwill.

It was proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Harris, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

To grant additional holiday to all permanent employees to cover the Christmas 2020 shutdown period.

6. APPOINTMENT OF PANEL TO CONSIDER FLEXIBLE WORKING REQUEST

The Town Clerk stated that he would be submitting a request to formalise his future working from home arrangements. It was reported that section 8 of the Council's Flexible Working Policy required any request made by the Town Clerk to be heard by a panel of the Personnel Committee.

It was proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Foster, and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That a panel consisting of the Chairman, Town Mayor and Deputy Mayor convenes to hear a request from the Town Clerk to formalise flexible working arrangements.

7. ITEMS OF INFORMATION AND MATTERS FOR FORTHCOMING AGENDAS

The Town Clerk raised the possibility of making a payment to those employees that the Council had asked to work from home during the Covid-19 pandemic. It was agreed that this matter should be placed on the next agenda.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was noted that the next meeting of the Personnel Committee was scheduled to be held on 13th January 2021.

The meeting concluded at 11.35 a.m.
