

Minutes of a Meeting of the **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE** held at the **TOWN HALL, SWANAGE** on **WEDNESDAY 17th APRIL 2024** at 9.30 a.m.

PRESENT:-

Councillor W.S. Trite – Chairman

Councillor M. Bonfield

Councillor C. Moreton

Also Present:-

Ms E. Kadoch

Wessex Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association (remotely)

Mr F. Roberts

Swanage Army Link

Dr M. Ayres

Town Clerk

Mr C. Milmer

Visitor Services & Business Development Manager

Miss A. Spencer

Finance Manager

Public Participation Time

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

1. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for their inability to attend the meeting were received from Councillors Foster and Harris.

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 HOW THE TOWN COUNCIL CAN IMPLEMENT THE DEFENCE EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME IN CONNECTION WITH SIGNING UP TO THE ARMED FORCES COVENANT**

The Chairman introduced Emily Kadoch of the Wessex Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association who made an informative presentation, introducing the principles of the Armed Forces Covenant and potential pledges that the Town Council could make in support of the armed forces community. Information was also provided regarding the Defence Employers Recognition Scheme, and the requirements that the Town Council would need to meet to achieve bronze, silver or gold accreditation. Frank Roberts highlighted the opportunity for Swanage Railway and Swanage Army Link to sign up to both the Armed Forces Covenant and the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. It was noted that there was a shared aspiration to organise an event later in the year to promote the Armed Forces Covenant.

Members thanked Ms Kadoch for her presentation and were supportive of a detailed proposal about the steps that the Town Council could take to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant and gain accreditation under the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme being brought before a future Council Meeting.

Ms Kadoch and Mr Roberts left the meeting.

4. **TO NOTE AMENDMENTS TO STAFF HANDBOOK IN RESPONSE TO RECENT LEGISLATIVE CHANGES**

Consideration was given to the content of a briefing note which set out a number of changes that had been made to the Staff Handbook in response to recent legislative amendments. The principal changes related to the handling of flexible working requests, carer's leave and paternity leave. The Staff Handbook had also been updated to include the revised Members and Officers Protocol, adopted in September 2022, and the Bullying and Harassment Policy, adopted in March 2024. The Council's Social Media Policy had also been incorporated into the Handbook for the first time.

The revisions and additions to the Staff Handbook were noted.

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:-

That, under Standing Order No. 1 c), in the public interest, the press and public be excluded from the Meeting in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted under agenda items 5 and 6 (due to data protection requirements).

5. **TO APPROVE CHANGES TO STAFFING STRUCTURE AND ALLOCATION OF HOURS WITHIN THE VISITOR SERVICES DEPARTMENT FOR SUMMER 2024**

The Visitor Services and Business Development Manager introduced proposals to address a recruitment shortage in respect of Beach Warden roles, which had been advertised during February and March. Consideration was given to a briefing note which set out a plan to advertise to existing Town Council staff an opportunity for a secondment to the role of Seafront Advisor between early May and mid-September. If this secondment were to be from the Visitor Services team it was noted that various arrangements could be put in place to ensure that this did not have a significant impact on service levels across the department.

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

That one of the budgeted Beach Warden roles should be replaced by a Seafront Advisor role, to be filled through an internal secondment.

The Visitor Services & Business Development Manager left the Meeting.

6. **FINANCE DEPARTMENT – TO CONSIDER OUTCOME OF JOB EVALUATION IN RESPECT OF POST TH3 AND POTENTIAL REVIEW OF RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT**

The Finance Manager left the Meeting prior to consideration of this matter. In recognition of changes to the job description for post TH3 the role had been referred to South West Councils (SWC) to carry out a re-evaluation. Members considered a briefing note setting out the key changes together with the recommendation received from SWC. In light of this, it was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Moreton and RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:

To accept the recommendation of South West Councils to regrade post TH3 from Grade 8 (SCP 26 to 29) to Grade 9 (SCP 30 to 33).

Consideration was then given to the date from which the regrading would be effective. It was noted that this was difficult to determine given the incremental and cumulative manner in which changes to the job role had taken place. Whilst it was noted that earlier dates had merited some consideration, it was proposed by Councillor Moreton, seconded by Councillor Bonfield and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

That the regrading of post TH3 be implemented as from 1st April 2023.

In recognition of the varied and complex financial activities of the Town Council, attention was drawn to the need to review the roles within the finance team to ensure that there was adequate capacity and resilience within the department. It was proposed by Councillor Bonfield, seconded by Councillor Moreton and **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

That a review of the requirements of the finance team be undertaken and that determination of next steps be delegated to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairman of the Personnel Committee.

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting had been scheduled for 9.30 a.m. on Wednesday 16th October 2024, although it was anticipated that a meeting was likely to be required before then to further consider matters arising from Minute No. 6.

The meeting closed at 10.45 a.m.
