



EMERSONS GREEN
TOWN COUNCIL

Name: Cllr (Chair)

Date:

Signed:

Minutes of the Personnel Committee

held in the Council Chamber, Emersons Green Town Council,

1900hrs on Thursday 23rd March 2023.

Present: Councillors Caroline Johnson (Chair), Christopher Edwardson, Simon Jones, and Richard Nichols.

Attending: Councillor Alka Mehta-Graham.

Absent: Councillor Colin Hunt.

In attendance: Town Clerk, Ian Lyons.

Apologies: Councillor James Hunt.

Public: No members of the public attended the meeting.

Notes: The meeting began at 1900hrs. All resolutions are passed with a majority vote, by a show of hands, unless otherwise stated.

PER_2022.14 Welcome and Introductions.

Minutes: Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair) welcomed everyone present at the meeting and explained the emergency procedures.

PER_2022.15 Declaration of Interest – Localism Act 2011.

Minutes: Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair) reminded members of the requirement to declare an interest. The Town Clerk declared a potential interest in item 22 if members wished to administer the Formal Reward Scheme and asked for prior notification.

PER_2022.16 Public Participation.

Minutes: No members of the public were present.

COUNCIL ADMINISTRATION

PER_2022.17 Minutes.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), supported by Cllr Richard Nichols, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on the 11th of October 2022, copies having been circulated, be approved as a correct record, and signed by the Chair.

Minutes: The minutes were signed at the meeting by Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair).

PER_2022.18 Privacy.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), supported by Cllr Christopher Edwardson, and resolved that:

Resolved: The remainder of the meeting be conducted in a private session to the exclusion of the press and public.

PER_2022.19 Outstanding items.

Minutes: At the invitation of Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), the Town Clerk delivered a summary of the work undertaken as a result of the resolutions and action points from the previous meetings. As follows:

- The HR Consultation was agreed upon by the Full Council, completed, and reviewed. As a result, this is listed on the agenda.
- All of the recommendations made by the committee on the subject of Pay and Working Conditions were addressed at Full Council, resolved, and implemented. This included pay increases for all staff, an increase in the lodging allowance for relocation expenses, and flexible working arrangements.
- The probationary period for the Town Clerk was satisfactorily completed and approved by the Full Council.

PERSONNEL

PER_2022.20 Summary of Achievements.

Minutes: The 'Clerk's Special Report' was circulated, presenting a list of achievements since the last meeting on the 11th of October 2022. After this, on behalf of the Committee, Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair) thanked the Town Clerk for a job well done.

PER_2022.21 Appraisals.

Minutes: To start with, at the invitation of Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), the Town Clerk provided advice from the Clerk's Report, which can be found at Annex A.

After this a short discussion took place about the procedural arrangements.
Then,

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Simon Jones, supported by Cllr Christopher Edwardson, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Personnel Committee approves the outcome of the Town Clerk's appraisal dated 27/10/22.

PER_2022.22 Pay and Working Conditions.

Minutes: To start with, at the invitation of Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), the Town Clerk provided advice from the Clerk's Report, which can be found at Annex A.

After that, a lengthy debate took place about the Council's strategy and policy for leave. In particular, the annual award from NALC, and concerns that staff members had not taken their full annual leave entitlement, due to a heavy workload. Eventually, it was agreed that Cllr Alka Mehta-Graham would seek clarification from NALC about the annual leave award, and the committee would address the workload issue by considering the recruitment of more staff later in the meeting. After this,

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Richard Nichols (Chair), supported by Cllr Simon Jones, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Personnel Committee recommends that the Finance Committee approves the payment of overtime.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Richard Nichols (Chair), supported by Cllr Simon Jones, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Personnel Committee recommends that the Finance Committee approves the payment of pay in lieu of holiday above the statutory requirement.

Motion: Then, it was moved by Cllr Christopher Edwardson, supported by Cllr Caroline Johnson, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Personnel Committee recommends that the Finance Committee delegate authority to the Town Clerk to install a shower and changing room facility.

PLANNING

PER_2022.23 Human Resources.

Minutes: To start with, at the invitation of Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), the Town Clerk directed attention to a circulated report from the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC)¹, highlighting the following quote: “it is absolutely clear that the current staff capacity of about 1.75fte is woefully inadequate to meet the needs of EGTC moving forwards” (Willams, 2023).

After this, Cllr Richard Nichols shared the view that some of the recommendations in the plan were overambitious. As a result, it was agreed that the plan should be scaled back and introduced gradually, in phases.

PER_2022.24 Recruitment.

Minutes: To start with, at the invitation of Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), the Town Clerk provided advice from the Clerk’s Report, which can be found at Annex A, and presented a draft plan for the Council structure, including priorities.

However, after a lengthy debate, the priorities were amended by unanimous agreement. The preference of the committee was to prioritise the employment of a ‘Deputy Clerk & RFO’, and an ‘Environment Manager’ in the first phase. Then,

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Simon Jones, supported by Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), and resolved that:

Resolved: The Personnel Committee recommends that the Full Council delegates authority to the Town Clerk to recruit and appoint a ‘Deputy Clerk & RFO’ on a full-time contract in consultation with the Personnel Committee.

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Simon Jones, supported by Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), and resolved that:

Resolved: The Personnel Committee recommends that the Full Council delegates authority to the Town Clerk to recruit and appoint an ‘Environment Manager’ on a full-time contract in consultation with the Personnel Committee.

POLICY

PER_2022.25 Review.

Minutes: To start with, at the invitation of Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), the Town Clerk provided advice from the Clerk’s Report, which can be found at Annex A.

¹ Willams, R. (2023) *Review of the staffing structure, salary levels and future needs*. Society of Local Council Clerks.

After this, a lengthy debate took place about the merits of instructing professional Human Resources advisors. The committee explored several alternatives, most of which did not seem viable, due to the limited availability of human resources. Likewise, given the volume of policies and employment contracts to be reviewed, and the importance of the decisions, Councillors did not feel able to undertake this commitment themselves. After this,

Motion: It was moved by Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair), supported by Cllr Simon Jones, and resolved that:

Resolved: The Personnel Committee recommends that the Full Council delegates authority to the Town Clerk to instruct external Human Resource advisors in consultation with the Chair of the Personnel Committee.

PER_2022.26 Dates and Timings.

Minutes: Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair) announced that the next meeting of the Personnel Committee was scheduled to take place in September or October. However, in anticipation of a decision at Full Council, members of the Committee were invited to join a Recruitment Working Group on Thursday 20th of April at 1900hrs in the Town Council Chamber.

Finally, Cllr Caroline Johnson (Chair) concluded the formal business of the meeting at 2057hrs. An informal 'round-table' discussion did not take place on this occasion due to the length of the meeting.