



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

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Chair: Cllr Bernard Arscott | **Vice Chair:** Cllr Sandra McCurdy

Town Clerk: Clare Milligan



Minutes of the Staffing Committee Meeting

The Committee met at 10.30am on Tuesday, 8th October 2024, in Committee Room 8, Leigh Community Centre, 71-73 Elm Road, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 1SP.

Election of Chair for the meeting in the absence of both the Chair and Vice-Chair

Cllr B Arscott was proposed by Cllr J Lloyd and agreed unanimously to Chair the meeting. The Chair welcomed Cllr C Willoughby as a newly elected member of the Council.

Present: Cllrs B Arscott, Dr D Bowry, P Gilson, J Lloyd and C Mulroney (in the absence of the Town Clerk Cllr Mulroney acted as Minute taker).

In Attendance: Cllr C Willoughby.

STA24-18 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received and agreed from Cllrs S McCurdy and C Watt. Cllr P Gilson substituted for Cllr S McCurdy.

STA24-19 Decorations of Members' Interest

There were no declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Registrable Non-Pecuniary Interests.

STA24-20 Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 24th September 2024 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

STA24-21 Public Participation

No public were in attendance.

STA24-22 Job Descriptions and Person Specification for Office Roles

The Committee received and considered the job descriptions, person specifications and draft advertisements for the following positions –

1. Allotments and Planning Officer.
2. Events and Bookings Officer.
3. Finance Officer.

The Committee also considered the need for two part-time Caretakers (previously one post had been proposed) and a part-time Receptionist/Marketing Assistant.

The information packs supplied to applicants will include more information on the key roles.

Cllr C Willoughby queried whether previous staff could apply for these roles even if they had outstanding litigation and grievances with the council. The Chair undertook to investigate the position.

Cllr C Willoughby queried the wage bill accruing from the revised staffing restructure. The staff hours have reduced significantly, whilst the cost per staff hour has increased significantly. On a like for like basis, the estimated cost for the new staff is c£20,000 higher than for the old staff, both at 3.4 FTE adjusted for pay rises. She noted that the difficulty with this is that if it becomes apparent that the new hours do not meet the demands of the work required then the additional time needed will be bought in at a much higher rate and

that will have an adverse impact on future salary budgets.

Any increase would need a budget adjustment in the current budget and it was recommended to council that the Town Clerk review the adjustments needed and recommend any changes necessary to the staffing budget for 2024/25 and where it is to be taken from and that it be noted for the staffing budget in 2025/26.

1. Allotments and Planning Officer

It was agreed that this description should refer to Town Planning for the sake of clarity and some experience in town planning would be a distinct advantage.

Cllr C Willoughby queried whether the allotments societies had been consulted on the content of the job description and should be on the interview panel. The Chair responded that the allotments societies had a role and input at the regular in-Council allotment meetings. Cllr C Willoughby also asked about the issue of arbitrating disputes. The Chair clarified that the Town Clerk would act as arbiter, if necessary, with a panel of councillors.

Town planning was the more substantive role of the work involved and it was agreed that not only did the officer need to take necessary training, if experience was not forthcoming, but also Councillors need to be more knowledgeable regarding planning policy and regulation.

Some amendments were made to the person specification to focus on the local community aspect of the work.

It was **resolved unanimously** that the amendments be made and that the salary level be agreed, and after receiving a proposal from Cllr C Mulroney, seconded by Cllr P Gilson, that the interviewing panel be organised by the Town Clerk and (after discussion with Cllr Sc McCurdy) includes one representative representing MDAS/MS who would be permitted to ask questions, but not vote.

2. Events and Bookings Officer

Some amends were made to the person specification to focus on the local community aspect of the work.

It was **resolved unanimously** that the amendments be made and that the salary level be agreed.

3. Finance Officer

This was not a role for a bookkeeper but required an understanding of local government financial regulation and experience. It was agreed that the officer appointed would be required to 'prepare and assist' in the documentation under the supervision of the Town Clerk and to undertake payroll and bank reconciliations.

It was **resolved unanimously** that the amendments be made and that the salary level be agreed.

4. Part-time Caretaker.

After discussion and at the request of the Town Clerk, it was **resolved unanimously** that two part-time Caretakers be sought commencing at point 6 on the salary grade £23,893 FTE. The Council would support the posts with payment for DBS certification and that it be made clear to applicants that the job involved some heavy elements such as set up and break down of room layouts.

5. Part-time Receptionist/Marketing Assistant.

The proposal was for three days a week, a total of fifteen hours. However, Cllr C Mulroney proposed that in the interests of running an efficient service to the public and to fulfil the role

insofar as website and social media marketing on a day to day basis was concerned, it would be more appropriate to spread the work over the full five days at three hours per day. It was **resolved unanimously** that the amendments as proposed by Cllr C Mulroney be agreed.

STA24-23 Private and Confidential

In accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public and press were excluded from the following item of business due to the confidential nature.

STA24-24 Staffing Matters

The Committee received a confidential report in respect of various outstanding staffing matters.

Cllr C Mulroney requested a full breakdown (currently the information is spread over many documents or not at all) of the cost incurred in all Human Resources, Occupational Health, legal, temporary and Locum staff since May 2023. Cllr C Mulroney pointed out that any [REDACTED] must be the subject of public report to Full Council.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.45pm.