

Notice of a meeting of the

Personnel and Administration Committee

4th April 2022 at 7.30pm

Park Room, Didcot Civic Hall



All members of the Personnel and Administration Committee are summoned to attend this meeting for the transaction of the business on the agenda.

Admission of the public and media

The Council welcomes members of the public to its meetings in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960.

Reports and minutes

We add reports and minutes to our website.

Recording, photographs and filming

The press or public may audio-record, photograph or film meetings, or report from the meeting using social media. As such members of the public may be recorded or photographed during the meeting.

We ask that anyone wishing to record or photograph the meeting notifies the Town Clerk before the start of the meeting. **Please continue to be vigilant about wearing masks and taking lateral flow tests to protect everyone at the meeting and at the Civic Hall. Please do not attend if you feel in any way unwell.**

Public participation

The Council welcomes the public's involvement in meetings, which must be in accordance with our rules (Standing Orders 30-32 on a matter before the Committee).

At the relevant time during the meeting, the Chair will invite members of the public to present their questions and statements. To contact the Town Clerk, please email – jwheeler@didcot.gov.uk

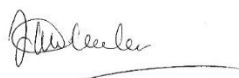
Agenda

1. To receive apologies
2. To receive declarations of interest
Members should declare any interests they may have on any item on this agenda in accordance with Didcot Town Council's code of conduct.
3. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 7th February 2022 as a true record - *minutes attached*
4. Questions on the minutes as to the progress of any item
5. To consider the organisation and manning of the Town Fayre 2022 – see *attached report*.
6. Progress Report – see *attached*.

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 the committee will be asked to exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

7. Proposal from Riverside Counselling – see *attached papers*.
8. To consider the confidential staff report – *up-date on recruitment; staffing of Willowbrook; up-date on occupational health assessments; staff illness; staff requests*.



Janet Wheeler
Town Clerk
29th March 2022

Voting Committee members:

Cllr D. Macdonald (Chair)
Cllr E. Hards (Vice Chair)
Cllr V Haval
Cllr A Dearlove
Cllr P Davies

Nominated substitute Committee members:

Cllr D Rouane
Cllr J Moody
Cllr P Siggers
Cllr J Durman
Cllr A Hudson

Didcot Town Council

Personnel and Administration Committee Monday 7th February 2022 at 7.30pm Ladygrove Room, Didcot Civic Hall



Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this committee.

Councillors

D Macdonald (Chair)
E Hards (Vice Chair)
A Dearlove
V Haval
P Davies

Officers:

Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk)

Public participation

None

48. Apologies

No apologies needed.

49. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations.

50. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6th December 2021

It was proposed by Cllr D Macdonald and seconded by Cllr E Hards and RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true record with one amendment. In minute 37, the sentence was to be changed from "It was noted" to "It was felt that Didcot residents get the best service if the staff are working in the town rather than from afar." This change is to make it an opinion rather than a factual statement.

51. Questions on the Minutes

There were no further questions.

52. To review a policy for flexible working

The last meeting of the full Council agreed for the staff to have the option of one day a week working from home if their work allows them to do this. The draft policy is an opportunity to make the conditions of the flexible working clear to staff. The content was discussed. The Town Clerk was instructed to ask South East Employers (SEE) about the following:

- Contractual rights and whether a flexible working from home arrangement can be added to holiday or TOIL or transferred from one leave year to another. The Town Clerk informed the Committee that we do not currently allow TOIL to be taken over.
- Payment for staff working from home – the Town Clerk said that the answer during the pandemic is for staff to contact HMRC direct but this was for full time working from home so it would probably not be appropriate here

The Committee asked to revisit the policy once advice had been received from SEE.

53. To review an amended Petition Policy to allow for electronic or online petitions

The draft was discussed in detail. It was AGREED that two petition policies were required – one for the tradition paper petition and another for electronic or online petitions.

54. To consider the legal right to cancel an exploratory meeting

This item was put on to the agenda by Cllr P Davies. The situation was summarised by a report by the Town Clerk with the conclusion as follows: *“Although the meeting was set up with the best intentions, it was contrary to our standing orders and disrespectful not to invite the two Chairs or at least to let them know that a meeting was happening to allow them to participate in any way possible.”*

Cllr P Davies disagreed with this interpretation of Standing Order 121 and felt that it was equally disrespectful to cancel the meeting which had been agreed by other participants. He said that he took time off from work in order to be available. It was an exploratory meeting where the options would have been fed back to the next Committee meeting. This specific meeting has not yet been re-scheduled but a similar meeting requested by the Environment & Climate Committee has been held and covered the same projects.

55. Progress report

The poor response to the opportunities on the Kickstart project has been poor. All three possible applicants had been contacted and would be invited for interview. It was noted that recruitment to cover the Sunday openings at the Civic Hall had still not been resolved.

56. Exclusion of the press and public

It was **RESOLVED** to exclude the press and public from the meeting pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

57. To consider the confidential staff report

The report covered an up-date on recruitment – once positions are filled this would lead to Sunday opening for the Civic Hall and longer opening hours for Willowbrook. A review of the training programme. Up-date on the occupational health assessment interviews and cover for the Outdoor Services Manager position.

It was AGREED that appropriate compensation would be recommended to the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm

Signed _____ Chair Date _____

Personnel and Administration Committee 4th April 2022

Report author: Janet Wheeler



To discuss the manning of the 2022 Town Fayre – before and on the day

Introduction

The last Town Fayre was organised in 2019 and the main organisers included a group of Councillors; the Play2Give team and another lady who seemed to organise a lot of the stage equipment and other important elements of the day. The Town Clerk had only just joined the Council, played no part in the organisation and was unable to attend due to a prior engagement. The Events & Communications Officer was working for the Civic Hall and also played no part in the Fayre. The two other members of staff currently on the organising team are (very) part time and had no involvement in 2019. They are limited to what they can do apart from offering administrative support.

Concerns

At the last meeting of the Town Fayre working group – the Play2Give team made it clear that they did not want to help in the organisation. The other lady also left the meeting and has indicated that she is not able to continue. This will leave the organising group very low on numbers – particularly as some Councillors have unfortunately got other events which means they will not be available on the day. The Town Clerk is more than a little concerned that the management and leadership of this event is being put on to the shoulders of our Events & Communications Officer.

This event is a large event in terms of expected visitors – numbers could be over 1,000 and more if the weather is good. This means that we will certainly need a comprehensive Event Management Plan and we will also need to have Safety Advisory Group (SAG) meetings with the Police and emergency services. The risk assessments will need to be extensive especially with the heightened risk of terror attacks in the UK. Plus we will need a large team to help assist with the event on the day.

This is a lot of responsibility to put onto one member of staff who has never had to organise an event of this size before. The Town Clerk feels that our Events & Communications Officer and DTC staff should be used as event support rather than being asked to lead and manage.

We therefore need someone with experience to take the lead; manage and take responsibility for the Town Fayre in order to deliver a safe event.

Not only do we have a duty of care to our staff but we must also ensure that all events where DTC is involved have a good number of people to organise and run the event on the day. Those of you who have been involved with events in the past will understand how there is never enough time to trouble-shoot any issues that can happen – either in the lead up or during the event. If we have any illness such as covid – this will also lead to insufficient numbers on the working group to run a safe event.

Janet Wheeler
Town Clerk

ITEM 6 - PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – PROGRESS REPORT

Meeting/minute	Item/topic	Up-date/status	Review date/meeting
2 nd August 2021 - Minute 19 and 4 th October 2021	Kickstart Scheme	Our application for two members of staff – one for buildings and one for outdoor services has been accepted.	Positions need to be filled by March 2022. We are contacting the three applicants to see if they are still interested. Applicant for outside position did not turn up to interview despite multiple emails.
1 st February 2021 Minute 69 7 th Feb 2022 Minute 53	Petition Policy	Revise policy to cover electronic petitions and consultations	Committee requests TWP petitions – one to cover paper petitions and one to cover electronic or online petitions
2 nd August 2021 Minute 20 and Minute 30 4 th October 2021	Vision and Objectives for DTC	Initial meeting held as a working group – (looked at the code of conduct consultation first)	Work has started on to revise the document but delayed by covid and unexpected recruitment work. Workload does not allow time for this project to progress at the moment.
7 th June 2021 Minute 10	Item to add to Vision and Objectives – information sharing between County; District and Town Councils	To be added to the first meeting	As above – not likely to be progressed for the moment but happy to do so when workload reduces.
2 nd August 2021 Minute 20	Vision and Objectives	Town Clerk to review the Local Council Award scheme and incorporate the criteria into the vision and objectives.	Work has started to get everything in place before applying for the Local Council Award – as above.
7 th June 2021 Minute 12	Review of job descriptions for office staff	To be carried out in the autumn when recruitment is completed	Recruitment is ongoing and once complete a review will be commenced
4 th October 2021 Minute 28	Discretionary Policy for the Local Government Pension Scheme	Review and up-dates to existing policy. Town Clerk to consult with SEE and OCC pension team.	Work has started on this document incorporating the comments from the last meeting. This needs to be finished asap.
7 th December 2021 – Minute 40	Allowance for mental health counselling	Invitation to have a meeting with Riverside Counselling to discuss.	Proposal from Riverside on agenda

ITEM 6 - PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – PROGRESS REPORT

7 th February 2022 – Minute 52	Flexible working policy	Town Clerk asked to contact SEE for advice on contractual rights to take over flexible working days as TOIL or holiday.	To be completed – but not really sure I understand what I am asking!
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