

## Didcot Town Council

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### **Personnel and Administration Committee** Monday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022 at 7.30pm All Saints 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**

M Khan (Chair)  
D Macdonald (Deputy Chair)  
D Chandran  
A Dearlove  
A Hudson

#### **Officers:**

Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk)

#### **17. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr A Dearlove.

#### **18. Declarations of interest**

None declared.

#### **19. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2022**

It was proposed by Cllr M Khan and seconded by Cllr A Hudson and RESOLVED to approve the minutes as a true record. There were no amendments.

#### **20. Questions on the Minutes**

There were no questions.

#### **21. To review and agree a safe-guarding policy for children and vulnerable adults**

The Chair paged through the draft policy for comments. There were a number of thoughts and it was agreed to have a form which can be used by any member of staff who may either witness or be made aware of a sensitive issue within the DTC buildings or outside facilities. The form would be approved at a future P&A Committee meeting but would record brief facts and details of the incident. The form

would then be handed to the Town Clerk or put in an envelope marked “private and confidential”. The Town Clerk plus one other dedicated person would be the only people to receive these forms which would then be either locked away or scanned and password protected.

It was agreed to make an amendment to the first bullet point on 8.1 to include the word “gender”. Photographing of children at Civic events was discussed and signage was suggested to make people aware that photographs may be taken and give them a chance to decline.

It was proposed by Cllr M Khan and seconded by Cllr D Chandran and RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND this safeguarding policy with the amendments as discussed.

## **22. To review the Employer Discretionary Policy for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)**

LGPS employers have certain powers which enable them to choose how they apply the LGPS scheme under certain circumstances – these are called “discretions” or “discretionary policies”. Didcot Town Council must retain a written policy on how they will apply each discretion.

Some discretions are mandatory and some are recommended – other discretions apply under different regulations. The Town Council last considered amendments to the discretionary policies in 2014 but LGPS administrators require confirmation that the amendments have been formally considered and approved by full Council.

The Town Clerk presented draft responses to certain situations where the discretionary policies could be applied. Certain points were noted for next time including the fact that the Council **does** employ staff who were on the LGPS scheme prior to 2014 and the discretion to “switch on the 85 year rule” **would** have a cost to the Council.

It was agreed that legal advice would be required and that the item would come back to the next P&A Committee. Once recommended for approval, the Town Clerk would consult with staff and bring the policy plus any requests from the staff back to either the Committee or full Council – likely to be in November.

## **23. To consider budget requests for the 2023- 2024 financial year**

This was discussed and the Chair asked whether the training budget was being used. The Clerk gave some examples of the learning culture that is now being created. A report on the training achieved was requested for the next meeting.

Councillor training was discussed along with more training for the outdoor team. Additional roles and a budget for succession planning for key positions for the future such as a Deputy to the Town Clerk. The Town Clerk said that a provision would be needed in the next budget to pay for training the newly elected Councillors. Planning for an induction day after the next election was currently being considered.

The training programme would be underlined by the induction pack. The website was discussed and it was agreed that the Civic Hall needed to be brought out by a coloured tab rather than a different website. The Town Clerk was asked to bring a

report with figures back to the next meeting before making a recommendation to the F&GP Committee.

**24. Progress report**

The progress report was noted.

**25. 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.

**26. To review the staffing report**

The Town Clerk went through the report with up-dates on recruitment across the DTC properties; recruitment for the outside team; and some thoughts from individual members of staff. The Outdoor Services Manager was invited to bring his thoughts on a re-structure of the outside team with one full time position unfilled.

The issue of enforcement of allowing corkage at events in the Civic Hall was also considered. It was proposed by Cllr M Khan and seconded by Cllr A Hudson to make a recommendation to the P&F Committee to remove the option of corkage from Civic Hall events on the grounds of staff safety.

The meeting closed at 9.32pm

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Chair      Date \_\_\_\_\_