

## Didcot Town Council

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### **Personnel and Administration Committee** Monday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021 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**

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

#### **Officers:**

Mrs J Wheeler (Town Clerk)

#### **Public participation**

None

#### **35. Apologies**

No apologies needed.

#### **36. Declarations of interest**

There were no declarations.

#### **37. To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 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 two amendments. In minute 25, the words "with those amendments" should be deleted. On minute 33, the text should be amended to make this a factual statement rather than an opinion. The text to read: It was also noted that Didcot residents get the best service if the staff are working in the town rather than from afar.

#### **38. Questions on the Minutes**

There were no further questions.

**39. To recommend an expenditure limit for the new Outside Services Manager and the current Property & Facilities Manager**

It was proposed by Cllr D Macdonald and seconded by Cllr P Davies and **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND** to the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee the following:

- Authorised expenditure of up to £600 on everyday items for the Property & Facilities Manager and the new Outside Services Manager. The expenditure may only be for budgeted items within the appropriate cost centre. The Town Clerk to receive regular up-dates as the RFO.
- Authorised emergency and day-to-day expenditure for the Town Clerk increased from £1,000 to £1,500 with the approval of the Leader or the Chair of the relevant Committee.

It was noted that the current Financial Regulations would need to be amended to reflect these changes if approved.

**40. To consider in principle making an allowance for mental health counselling to all employees**

It was agreed in principle and the Town Clerk was asked to gather some quotes and present these to the next meeting of the F&GP Committee. This item will be on the agenda of the January F&GP as long as the quotes are received in time.

**41. To note the DTC policies which require up-dating**

The Committee noted the list circulated by the Town Clerk. This list would be sent to South East Employers for an up-date on any legal changes which should be incorporated into the revised policies.

**42. To allow one day a week for flexible working for office-based staff who can do part of their jobs from home**

It was proposed by Cllr D Macdonald and seconded by Cllr P Davies to allow one day a week for flexible working for office-based staff who can do part of their jobs from home. The proviso was that this arrangement could be withdrawn on a temporary basis when staff levels were low. The Town Clerk will draw up a policy and bring this to the next meeting for consideration.

**43. Progress report**

It was noted that the response to the Kickstart positions had been very poor. A decision on whether to continue to advertise the positions would need to be taken in the new year. There was a call for better communication regarding Willowbrook Leisure Centre and its opening. It was confirmed that there is a Willowbrook Facebook page that has been set up but recruitment was proving to be challenging.

**44. 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.

**45. To consider the confidential staff report**

The report gave the Committee an up-date on the recruitment for the new Outside Services Manager; staffing at Willowbrook; the request for an incremental scale for the Civic Hall staff and an up-date on the occupational health assessments.

Following the resignation of the Reception & Finance Officer, it was RESOLVED to approve in principle the two replacement part time positions in the Staff Report: the Administration Assistant to help with bookings and reception and a Meetings Officer to help with the running of Council and Committee meetings including the preparation of agendas and minutes. The proposed salary ranges would be included on the next meeting of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

It was RESOLVED not to introduce an incremental scale for the staff working primarily at the Civic Hall. Staff would be considered for promotion on merit by their line manager.

It was agreed that occupational health assessments would be offered to all members of the Outside team and some office-based staff.

**46. To consider the confidential salaries and budget request and recommendations for 2022 – 2023**

The report was noted and would be included as part of the budget recommendation to go to the Finance & General Purposes Committee and full Council.

**47. To consider recent legal advice**

The confidential minute 34 regarding recent legal advice was approved.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm

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