

# Sandy Town Council

## Minutes of a meeting of the Human Resources Committee of Sandy Town Council held in the Council Chamber at 10 Cambridge Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire on Monday 6 June 2016

**Present:** Cllrs P Aldis, T Cole, A M Hill (Chair), A Jackson, C Osborne,

**In attendance:** Cllr P Blaine, Chris Robson (Town Clerk)

**Absent:** Cllr Pettitt

- |  | <u>Action</u> |
|--|---------------|
| 1 <b>Apologies for absence (01-2016/17)</b><br>Apologies had been received from Cllr. M Pettitt  |               |
| 2 <b>Declarations of interest (02-2016/17)</b><br>i) <i>Disclosable Pecuniary Interests - none</i><br>ii) <i>Non-disclosable Interests - none</i>  |               |
| 3 <b>Election of Vice Chair (03-2016/17)</b><br>Resolved to elect Cllr. W Jackson as Vice Chair for the municipal year 2016/17.  |               |
| 4 <b>Minutes of previous HR Committee Meetings (04-2016/17)</b><br><b>RESOLVED</b> to receive the minutes of a meeting of the HR Committee meeting held on Monday 21 March 2016 and to confirm them as a correct record of proceedings.  |               |
| 5 <b>Public Participation Session (05-2016/17)</b><br>No members of the public were present and no questions had been received.  |               |
| 6 <b>Human Resources Sub Committee (06-2016/17)</b><br>Members received the report on the Sub Committees remit and discussed its role and scope. The Town Clerk informed Members that this was separate to the Grievance and Complaints Committee and focused solely on the management of the clerk. It was commented that the clerk's appraisals are carried out by the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chair of HR and that it would be sensible for them to sit on the sub-committee with the Chair of HR as Sub-Committee Chair. |               |

It was noted that the Committee was not really a Sub-Committee of Human Resources, but a committee in its own right and as such the Scheme of Delegations should reflect this.

It was proposed and **Resolved to Recommend** that the Sub-Committee be changed to the Clerks Management Committee and comprise the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chair of HR, with the Chair of HR acting as Committee Chairman.

# Sandy Town Council

## 7 **Health and Safety/Accident Report (07-2016/17)**

Members received and noted the health and safety report. A Member pointed out that the health and safety assessment's recommendation that a competent person be appointed to assist in identifying hazardous tree stock was particularly important. The Town Clerk informed Members that CBC no longer offered this service and that alternatives were being sought. A Member suggested that tree work could be outsourced to a contractor, in the same way street lights were. The Town Clerk confirmed he would chase up contractors recommended by CBC.

Town Clerk

## 8 **Training (08-2016/17)**

Members received and noted a record of councillor and staff training. It was suggested that a policy or protocol on Councillor training be drafted. The Policy should identify training requirements and priorities for Councillors and roles (i.e Vice Chairs/Chairs) to ensure the most effective use of the training budget.

It was agreed that the office should keep a list of Councillor training completed, both through the Council and outside the Council via professional and personal training and development.

It was commented that Councillors who attend training should provide feedback to Council.

**Resolved** that the Town Clerk start a Councillor training record and draft a Councillor training policy to be reviewed by the committee at the next meeting.

Town Clerk

## 9 **Councillor Attendance Record (09-2016/17)**

The Town Clerk informed Members that he had received queries from a Councillor and member of the public as to where they could find Councillors meeting attendance figures. Sandy Town Council currently publishes Councillors attendance records in the Annual Report as part of its review of the year.

A Member commented that they would like to see a published list of attendance updated more often, CBC and Biggleswade both provide up to date records on their websites. Issuing once at the end of the year does not offer the most transparency possible. Members echoed the comments and stated that the record of attendance should show which meetings Councillors were attending as a requirement (i.e sit on the committee) and those which were additional.

Town Clerk

It was also noted that apologies should be given by Councillors directly to the Clerk, not passed on by other Councillors at a meeting.

# Sandy Town Council

It was **Resolved** to publish a record of Councillors' meeting attendance once every meeting cycle. This would be published on the Council's website.

## 10 **Council Reception and Information Point Open Hours (10-2016/17)**

Members received and discussed a report from the Town Clerk.

A member commented that the number of people using the service was good news and that it helped get the message out about the Council's work as well as local information.

Members discussed the figures provided and a Member commented that based on those figures they did not see a need to open more days at present, but would like to see the later hours continued. During the summer months there will be a benefit to being open later. The Information Point deals with a high volume of CBC inquiries on the days it is open and the closed days should remain so STC inquiries could be dealt with and progressed.

A Member asked that the information be broken down by comparable timeframes in future reports. A Member commented that they believed the office should be open 5 days a week.

Members noted that a high amount of queries dealt with were CBC related and that the committee should consider how this could be managed. Members asked that more detailed information on queries form part of ongoing monitoring and that the results come back to the next committee meeting for review.

**Resolved** to keep the office opening hours as they are and continue to record and monitor queries received by the Reception and Information Point for review at the next meeting of the committee.

Admin

## 11 **Financial Matters (11-2016/17)**

The Chairman informed Members he would move agenda item 15 up the agenda into the public session. The information relating to the item was in the public domain and discussion would not disclose information relating to establishment or contractual matters that would be exempt.

The Town Clerk informed Members that the 1% increase had been allowed for by the Council's accountants in the 2016/17 budget. Members noted the briefing documents.

## 12 **Chairman's Items (12-2016/17)**

The Chairman informed Members that he felt the committee should

# Sandy Town Council

start to consider how the amount of active projects will be managed as we move forward. There are various secondary level outstanding items which are on-going and have been overshadowed by larger scale projects. Many of these should now be moved towards completion. Members and staff will need to consider the best way to manage the matter and it may involve additional hours, staff or reviewing roles.

Members discussed the matter briefly. A Member supported the Chairman's comments stating there were various items where progress had not been made and work risked being overshadowed by large scale items such as CBC's Local Plan and the call for sites. It was commented that the matter should be revisited in September and that Recommendations should be made to Full Council.

**13 Date of Next Meeting: 19 September 2016 (13-2016/17)**

**14 COMMITTEE IN PRIVATE SESSION (14-2016/17)**

Exclusion of the Public and Press

It was proposed and agreed that in terms of schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972, the following items will be likely to disclose exempt information relating to establishment and contractual matters and it is, therefore, proposed and agreed that pursuant to the provisions of the Public Bodies (admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 the public and press be excluded.

**15 Staffing (15-2016/17)**

Members received a report from the Town Clerk on staffing matters. Members noted that the overall attendance of Council employees had been very good with few sick days. Members noted their appreciation and asked that this be minuted.

The Town Clerk informed Members there was currently one Member of the grounds team on long term leave due to health grounds and that the matter was being addressed with the Human Resources advisor and employee.

The Chairman informed Members that he had agreed with the Town Clerk that a temporary member of the outdoor team was required to ensure the summer workload was met. Members stated they would not like to see the grounds work slip and that our priorities are met and that if this meant there was a need for a temporary agency worker this should be approved.

**Resolved** that a temporary agency worker be brought in to ensure

# Sandy Town Council

the team was full complement when needed during the busy summer months. The Town Clerk and grounds team leader will manage the teams workload and engage a temporary worker when necessary.