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MINUTES FROM EXTRAORDINARY HUMAN RESOURCES MEETING

Held on Tuesday 21st September 2021 at 7.00pm. Held at The Council Chamber, Mendip District Council Offices

Attendance: Councillors D Crisfield, G Mayall, A McGuire (Chair), T O'Connor. Cllrs M Harrison as Ex-Officio

Present: Liz Evans, Assistant Town Clerk/RFO & Becky Kingston-Wood, Democratic Support Assistant

Public: No members of the public

HR3.1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors Hale

HR3.2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

HR3.3 Chair's Announcement

Cllr McGuire gave a brief update on the position of Town Clerk. Their resignation was received along with a request for an early termination of their contract, which was accepted and granted.

The Marketing, Communications and Community Engagement Officer's (MCCEO) probation comes to an end in January 2022. In the absence of the Town Clerk, Chair of this Committee will carry out the end of probation meeting and set objectives.

A discussion was had within the Local Government Reorganisation working party to appoint a new employee to work at Mendip District Council on the devolution of assets.

SIGNED: (CHAIR) DATE:.....

Resolved that

Cllr McGuire will carry out the end of probation meeting and set objectives for the Marketing, Communications and Community Engagement Officer.

The proposal of an appointment of an employee to work at MDC on the devolution of assets to be brought to the next Human Resources Committee meeting.

HR3.4 To consider the minutes from the meeting held on 30th June 2021 and the extraordinary meeting held on 31st August 2021.

In the absence of a Town Clerk the minutes from the meeting held on 30th June were written from notes taken from councillors. The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 31st August 2021 were accepted as a true record and accurate record.

Cllr O'Connor proposed using the services of Southwest Councils to carry out a Wellness audit for staff and councillors at a cost of £1,560.

Resolved that

The minutes of the meeting held on 30th June were accepted and signed, subject to having a disclaimer added to the minutes 'In the absence of a Town Clerk these minutes were produced by the councillors sometime after the meeting'

The minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on 31st August 2021 were agreed and signed.

The Southwest Wellness audit be carried out in the new financial year and an allowance made in the budget for this.

HR3.5 Training update

Councillors received a written report on the training undertaken by the office staff.

Resolved that

Councillors noted the report.

HR3.6 Staffing update

Councillors received a verbal update from the Responsible Financial Officer in relation to staffing matters; the office opening hours, Christmas opening hours, staff meeting and staff wellbeing.

Communication is positive between the team and all are supporting and working closely with each other. In the absence of the Town Clerk, all of the team are having input on the agenda/meetings and consulting with committee chairs. Staff wellbeing is good and morale is high.

Preparations for the budget setting will be taking place, between the Responsible Financial Officer, Assistant Town Clerk (Planning & Amenities) and Project Officer as well as committee chairs.

Office opening hours have been increased to 9.00am - 4.30pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. By appointment on Monday and Friday.

Annual leave requests are to be sent to the chair of this committee and the chair of the council. It was proposed that the office is closed between Christmas and New Year. With the Info email address being monitored daily on a rota basis.

It was proposed by Cllr Crisfield that the office staff would receive a good will gesture from this committee to have the 29th December as a concession day.

Resolved that

The office new opening hours will be 9.00am till 4.30pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. By appointment on Monday and Friday

The office will be closed from 24th December 2021 till 4th January 2022 with the Info emails monitored daily. The office staff will receive 29th December as a concession day and will take the remaining time off as annual leave or toil.

HR3.7 Staffing Expenditure at Month 5 and budget requirements for 2022/23

Councillors received a written report on the month 5 position of the staffing budget and to consider the base line budget for staff for 2022/23

Councillors discussed the need for a Grants Officer as a separate role, which would be contracted out to a consultant.

Resolved that

Councillors noted the report and agreed that the budget proposal as presented, is the base line staff budget. It was agreed that there might be additions if the council agree to employ more staff.

Councillors make a recommendation to the P&R committee of its budget requirement for the financial year 2022/23.

Cllrs O'Connor, Harrison and Crisfield to research a Grants Officer Job description and bring to the next meeting of this committee.

HR3.8 To consider the resolution to exclude the public and press in order to consider confidential matters in relation the following business

Resolved that

Councillors agreed to exclude public and press from the meeting for the purpose of discussing a confidential matter.

HR3.9 Town Clerk Contract

Councillors received a written report from the Responsible Financial Officer on the changes to any future Town Clerk's contract and recruitment.

There was a discussion to remove the 'additional hours' Item on a future Town Clerk's contract and to review the staff handbook regarding toil hours.

It was proposed to employ the services of a locum town clerk for one day a week to begin with to lead the team, assist with budgeting, legal practices and recruitment. It was discussed not to give the appointed locum an email address, so that they can work efficiently with the tasks assigned.

Councillors would review the job description and person specification of the town clerk before publishing the vacancy.

Resolved that

Councillors agreed to a recruitment process for the Town Clerk.

Councillors delegated responsibility to the responsible Financial Officer to manage the recruitment process, when the Job description and the person specification have been reviewed and agreed by councillors of this committee.

Councillors agreed that the need for the recruitments services from the LCC was not required at this time.

It was agreed by councillors to publish the vacancy on 8th October 2021.

Councillors agreed to remove the 'additional hours' from the future Town Clerk's contract and to review the staff handbook regarding toil hours.

The services of a locum town clerk for one day a week to begin with to lead the team, assist with budgeting, legal practices and recruitment. An email address will not be given to the locum town clerk, so that they can work efficiently with the tasks assigned in the one day a week they have.

HR3.10 Temporary Project Officer job description

Councillors received a written report from the Responsible Financial Officer on the changes to the temporary Project Officer job description.

Councillors reviewed the job description and it was agreed that the 'fundraising responsibilities' be removed, also that 'marketing and community engagement' be amended to 'community engagement' only.

Resolved that

Councillors agreed that the 'fundraising responsibilities' be removed. also that 'marketing and community engagement' be amended to 'community engagement' only.

Councillors noted and agreed to the recruitment process and delegated responsibility to the Responsible Financial Officer to manage the recruitment process.

Councillors agreed all members of this committee will assist with the shortlisting process.

Cllr Harrison, Cllr McGuire, Cllr Mayall and Cllr Crisfield will assist with the Interviewing process.

HR3.11 Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Human Resources committee will be held on 14th December 2021.

Meeting concluded at 9:00pm