



## PEASEDOWN ST JOHN PARISH COUNCIL

Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John, Bath BA2 8SN  
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### Minutes of the Staffing Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 at 7.00pm held at Beacon Hall, French Close, Peasedown St John

#### Present:

**Councillors:** Jo Davis; Gavin Heathcote; Simon Kidd (Chair); Andy Larcombe; Conor Ogilvie-Davidson. Cllr Jonathan Rich was also present at the meeting, in his capacity as Chair of Full Council. As the Committee was quorate, he did not utilise his voting rights.

Cllr Kathy Thomas, who was a non-committee member, was also present at the meeting. She had asked the Chair if she could speak to the Committee, on behalf of the Amenities & Facilities Committee, regarding agenda item SC041 and the outside services workload. There were no objections from the Committee members in Cllr Thomas being present for the entire meeting, therefore Cllr Kidd invited Cllr Thomas to take part in the discussions at the meeting but as she was not a committee member, she was unable to vote.

#### In attendance:

Tanya West – Parish Clerk & RFO

**Public Session:** No members of the public were present.

Minute Ref.	Agenda Item	Action
SC030 – 03/09/2024	<b>Attendance Roll Call and Declarations of Interest</b> The attendance roll call was undertaken (those present are detailed above). No additional interests, to those already disclosed to the Monitoring Officer, were declared.	
SC031 – 03/09/2024	<b>Apologies for Absence</b> With all committee members present, there were no apologies for absence.	
SC032 – 03/09/2024	<b>Election of Vice-Chair</b> It was noted that Cllr Howard Hartley had recently resigned and so the position of Committee Vice-Chair was vacant. One nomination for the position of Vice-Chair had been received and so it was resolved to elect Cllr Conor Ogilvie-Davidson as the Vice-Chair of the Staffing Committee.	
SC033 – 03/09/2024	<b>Minutes &amp; Actions</b> i. The minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2024 had only been published earlier that day and so councillors had not had sufficient time to read them. It was agreed their approval be postponed to the September Full Council meeting. ii. The minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 20 <sup>th</sup> June 2024 had not been published. It was therefore agreed their approval be postponed to the September Full Council meeting. iii. The combined Planner board had not yet been completed. It was agreed that the Clerk would work with Cllr Kidd to complete this task.	Clerk  Clerk  Clerk & SK
SC034 – 03/09/2024	<b>Items for Urgent Report</b> Cllr Kidd advised that some issues had been raised to him from a member of the public and a councillor, but due to the nature of them this agenda item would need to be considered under closed session. In accordance with Standing Order 10.a.vi, it was <b>resolved</b> to amend the order of the agenda to defer this agenda item to it takes place after item SC037 – 03/09/2024 once the meeting has been put into confidential session.	

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SC035 – 03/09/2024	<b>Staffing Related Policies &amp; Procedures</b> It was reported that neither the revised Staff Appraisal Policy & Document, nor the updated Employee Handbook had been published as pre-reading. The Clerk advised that due to workload she had unfortunately not had time to update the documents prior to the meeting. The approval of the documents to be deferred to a future meeting.	Clerk
SC036 – 03/09/2024	<b>HR and H&amp;S</b> The Clerk was continuing to update the Health & Safety documents following the last audit. It was noted that if the Clerk requires any additional support to complete this work, then WorkNest or other contractors can be contacted for assistance or a quotation to undertake any works necessary.	Clerk
SC037 – 03/09/2024	<b>Resolution Relating to Confidential Nature</b> In accordance with Standing Order 3c and in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was <b>resolved</b> that the press and public be temporarily excluded from the meeting.	
SC034 – 03/09/2024	<b>Items for Urgent Report cont.</b> Cllr Kidd reported he had been contacted regarding the lack of minutes on the website and about works being undertaken unnecessarily and possibly against the will of the Council. The Clerk to ensure the remaining draft minutes are completed and uploaded to the website as soon as possible. Facts and details are being obtained and any necessary resultant action will be followed up accordingly.	Clerk
SC038 – 03/09/2024	<b>Review of Finances 2024/25</b> A report on expenditure for the 2024/25 financial year for those budgets specifically linked to the Staffing Committee was reviewed at the meeting. It was requested that the budget monitoring report should have a date included on it to which it refers. It was noted that there is excess in the staffing budgets, but this is because there had not yet been any decision on the annual national salary increases, also there were funds allocated for the new RFO and Caretaker, neither of which were yet in position.	
SC039 – 03/09/2024	<b>Payroll, Salaries and Pensions</b> Councillors received updates on salaries, pensions, and monthly payroll. It was noted that the unions had not yet accepted the national pay offer and were considering their next steps. For the pay offer to be confirmed the majority of the unions need to accept it. The pay offer was for a flat rate increase of £1,290 for SCP 2 – 43 or 2.5% for SCP 44 upwards. The Clerk advised that if this rate was accepted there would be sufficient budget allocated to cover it.	
SC040 – 03/09/2024	<b>Staff Absence, Leave and TOIL</b> Councillors received an update on staff absence, leave and time off in lieu. The holiday and sickness absence calendar had been updated by the Clerk, although it was still to be published in the private channel on Teams to enable members of the Staffing Committee to view it. It was reported that a member of staff continued to be signed off as unfit to work. There was also intermittent sickness absence. The Clerk is continuing to liaise with the staff and HR support via WorkNest accordingly. It was <b>resolved</b> that going forward, this agenda items includes a Bradford Factor report for all staff based on a rolling year.	Clerk  Clerk  Clerk
Workload was discussed and concerns were raised regarding some tasks being actioned when they were only requested a week ago, yet others were still outstanding although they were requested over two months ago. It was suggested that the Clerk should leave the meeting to take some time to consider the workload, why some things are delayed, and what things could be done to improve matters. 7.51pm – The Clerk left meeting. 8.12pm – The Clerk returned to the meeting.		
SC041 – 03/09/2024	<b>Staff Retention &amp; Recruitment</b> Councillors received an update on the recruitment of a Responsible Finance Officer. The Clerk had typed up the notes from the candidate interviews and these had been circulated as pre-reading for the meeting. These were reviewed and it was <b>resolved</b> to make an offer of employment to Joy Luxford to be appointed as	Clerk

Minute Ref.	Agenda Item	Action
	<p>the Parish Council's Responsible Finance Officer. The Clerk to contact her the following date and to respond to the other candidates accordingly.</p> <p>As the Clerk's workload was currently heavy, additional hours for the new RFO was raised to help provide additional support on governance and allow the Clerk to focus on obtaining her CiLCA and morphing into more of a Chief Executive role. It was <b>resolved</b> to allow up to an extra five hours per week to be available for the new Responsible Finance Officer, to be reviewed at the end of the probation period.</p> <p>Subject to acceptance of the role, it was agreed for employment to start during week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> September 2024.</p> <p>It was noted that the new employee will require a laptop and possibly other items. It was <b>resolved</b> to authorise spend of up to £1,000+VAT to purchase any necessary equipment, the Clerk to arrange with input from Cllr Simon Kidd. The Clerk to ask the new RFO what equipment they think they might need and discuss with Cllr Kidd prior to anything being purchased.</p> <p>As the new RFO will be working closely with Finance &amp; Governance Committee, Cllrs Andy Larcombe and Jo Davis advised that once she is in post, they would contact her to offer additional support, in their capacity as Chair and Vice Chair of that committee.</p> <p>Following the above decisions, the Clerk was asked to advise on the points she had made a note of whilst she had been out of the room. These were discussed and it was considered that in order to move forward, the Staffing Committee should work together with the Office Staff regarding the workload. It was agreed that a fortnightly Advisory Panel be booked in to review the workload, to consider priorities, and make sure the actions are progressing correctly. Being an Advisory Panel, nobody is mandated to attend and so whoever is available can join the meeting. They will be held via Teams, every other Thursday at 6pm. The Clerk to issue a calendar invitation. Once the momentum is up and running, their frequency can be reviewed.</p> <p>It was also agreed that Planner needs to get back up and running, so there is a better overall picture of the workload and priorities. Cllr Kidd and the Clerk to work together on getting this sorted prior to the Advisory Panel meeting.</p> <p>The Clerk was asked to write up the points she had raised so they could be considered again at these Advisory Panel meetings.</p> <p>Cllr Kathy Thomas explained the situation regarding the outside services workload and the lack of staff/casual labour to undertake all the tasks the Amenities &amp; Facilities Committee would like actioned. Cllr Thomas and the Clerk had been working on a spreadsheet detailing the tasks required to be actioned up to the end of the year, on a week-by-week basis. The report listed the amount of time to undertake each task versus the staffing hours available. Any weeks there is a shortage on hours, items that are not so urgent are rolled onto future weeks or not actioned. A printout of this document for September was tabled at the meeting. It was noted that most weeks were understaffed, which will result in things that the Committee would like to be actioned are not.</p> <p>The report was reviewed, and a brief discussion was held about whether a full time Caretaker or a full time Caretaker Manager would be more suitable. It was <b>resolved</b> to recruit a Grounds &amp; Maintenance Manager, with all advertising, job description and specifications to be fully completed and published by 20<sup>th</sup> September 2024. The Clerk to action in conjunction with the Chair of the Staffing Committee.</p> <p>Councillors considered Cllr Thomas' request to continue with the existing temporary</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk &amp; SK</p> <p>AL &amp; JD</p> <p>Clerk &amp; SC Cllrs.</p> <p>Clerk &amp; SK Clerk</p> <p>Clerk &amp; SK</p>

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	<p>contracted labour for outside services duties to help cover due to being understaffed. It was therefore <b>resolved</b> to continue to appoint Toby Millar as temporary self-employed labour for 3 days a week from September 2024 and to review the situation after a new Grounds &amp; Maintenance Manager had been appointed.</p> <p>It was suggested that the Amenities &amp; Facilities Committee review the outside services tasks and identify anything that could be actioned in a more effective or efficient manner and what of the tasks could be outsourced if required.</p>	<p>Clerk</p> <p>Clerk &amp; AF Cllrs</p>
<p><b>SC042 – 03/09/2024</b></p>	<p><b>Staff Appraisals &amp; Objectives</b>  Councillors discussed staff appraisals and objectives. It was felt there should be a focus to improve the performance of all employees and the Clerk should be assisted with the appraisal process and setting of objectives. It was therefore <b>resolved</b> to review the current and previous two appraisals of all staff at the Advisory Panel meeting due to be held in two weeks' time. The Clerk was instructed to make this information available to the Staffing Committee for discussion at this meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p><b>SC043 – 03/09/2024</b></p>	<p><b>Staff Training &amp; Development</b>  Due to time limitations at the meeting, it was agreed that the update on staff training and development, including consideration of a training plan would be included for discussion at the next Advisory Panel meeting.</p>	<p>Clerk &amp; Cllrs</p>
<p><b>SC044 – 03/09/2024</b></p>	<p><b>Resolution to Revert to Public Session</b>  It was <b>resolved</b> to put the meeting back into public session.</p>	
<p><b>SC045 – 03/09/2024</b></p>	<p><b>Date and Time of Next Meeting</b>  The date of the next Staffing Committee meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024 at 7pm at Beacon Hall.</p>	

The meeting closed at 9.31pm.

Signed..... Date.....