

8. Staffing Matters

To consider matters relating to the structure and terms and conditions of the Town Council's staff. **(Page 8 & Restricted)**

9. Staffing Structure and Budget 2015/16

To consider the staffing structure and associated budget for 2015/16 and make any necessary recommendations to Council. **(Page 8 & Restricted)**

10. Closure

To close proceedings and confirm the date of the next meeting.



Ash Tadjrishi
Town Clerk
16 October 2014

For information (via email): All Town Councillors.

AGENDA ITEM 4: MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on Monday 26th June 2014 at 4.00 p.m. at Felixstowe Town Hall.

Present: Councillors : Deacon, Jan Garfield, Newman (items 135/136 only), Savage and Williams (Vice Chairman)

Minutes

In the absence of Councillor Newman Councillor Williams took the Chair.

130. Apologies.

No apologies for absence had been received.

131. Declarations of Interest.

No Members declared an interest in items on the agenda.

132. To Consider Any Requests for Dispensation.

No Members requested a dispensation.

133. To Agree the Minutes of the Meeting held 17th March 2014

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held 17th March 2014 as a true record.

134. Exclusion of Press and Public

The Committee agreed that, in accord with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

Councillor Newman joined the meeting, Councillor Williams remaining in the Chair.

135. To Conduct a Disciplinary Hearing

The Committee considered the allegations and agreed that:-

- a) no further action be taken against the individual concerned
- b) all staff be reminded not to use Council resources for their personal use

136. Closure

The meeting was closed at 4.40 p.m.

Date: _____

Chairman: _____

AGENDA ITEM 5: MEMBER/OFFICER PROTOCOL



Felixstowe Town Council

Member/Officer Protocol

1. Background

- 1.1 This protocol is intended to assist Councillors and the Clerk, in approaching some of the sensitive circumstances which arise in a challenging working environment.
- 1.2 The reputation and integrity of the Council is significantly influenced by the effectiveness of Councillors, the Clerk and other staff working together to support each other's roles.
- 1.3 The aim is effective and professional working relationships characterised by mutual trust, respect and courtesy. Close personal familiarity should be avoided.

2. Roles of Councillors and Employees

- 2.1 The respective roles of Councillors and employees can be summarised as follows: Councillors and Officers are servants of the public and they are indispensable to one and other, but their responsibilities are distinct. Councillors are responsible to the electorate and serve only so long as their term of office lasts. Officers are responsible to the Council. Their job is to give advice to Councillors and to the Council, and to carry out the Council's work under the direction and control of the Council and relevant committees.

Councillors

- 2.2 Councillors have four main areas of responsibility:
 - To determine Council policy and provide community leadership;
 - To monitor and review Council performance in delivering services;
 - To represent the Council externally; and
 - To act as advocates for their constituents.
- 2.3 All Councillors have the same rights and obligations in their relationship with the Clerk and other employees, regardless of their status or political party, and should be treated equally.
- 2.4 Councillors should not involve themselves in the day to day running of the Council. This is the Clerk's responsibility, and the Clerk will be acting on instructions from the Council or its Committees, within an agreed job description.

Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Committees

- 2.5 Committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs have additional responsibilities. These responsibilities mean that their relationships with employees may be different and more complex than those of other Councillors. However, they must still respect the impartiality of Officers and must not ask them to undertake work of a party political nature, or to do anything which would prejudice their impartiality.

Officers

- 2.6 The role of Officers is to give advice and information to Councillors and to implement the policies determined by the Council.
- 2.7 In giving such advice to Councillors, and in preparing and presenting reports, it is the responsibility of the Officer to express his/her own professional views and recommendations. An Officer may report the views of individual Councillors on an issue, but the recommendation should be the Officer's own. If a Councillor wishes to express a contrary view they should not pressurise the Officer to make a recommendation contrary to the Officer's professional view, nor victimise an Officer for discharging his/her responsibilities.

3. Expectations

- 3.1 All Councillors can expect:

- a commitment from Officers to the Council as a whole, and not to any individual Councillor, group of Councillor's or political group;
- a working partnership;
- Officers to understand and support respective roles, workloads and pressures;
- A timely response from Officers to enquiries and complaints;
- Officer's professional advice, not influenced by political views or personal preferences;
- regular, up to date, information on matters that can reasonably be considered appropriate and relevant to their needs, having regard to any individual responsibilities or positions that they hold;
- Officers to be aware of and sensitive to the public and political environment locally;
- Respect, courtesy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality from Officers;
- training and development opportunities to help them carry out their role effectively;
- not to have personal issues raised with them by Officers outside the Council's agreed procedures;
- that Officers will not use their contact with Councillors to advance their personal interests or to influence decisions improperly;
- that Officers will at all times comply with the relevant code of conduct.

- 3.2 Officers can expect from Councillors:

- a working partnership;
- an understanding of, and support for, respective roles, workloads and pressures;
- leadership and direction;
- respect, courtesy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality;
- not to be bullied or to be put under undue pressure;
- that Councillors will not use their position or relationship with Officers to advance their personal interests or those of others or to influence decisions improperly;

- that Councillors will at all times comply with the Council's adopted Code of Conduct.

3.3 Some General Principles:

- Close personal relationships between Councillors and Officers can confuse their separate roles and get in the way of the proper conduct of Council business, not least by creating a perception in others that a particular Councillor or Officer is getting preferential treatment.
- Special relationships with particular individuals or party political groups should be avoided as it can create suspicion that an employee favours that Councillor or political group above others.

4. Political Groups

- 4.1 The operation of political groups is becoming more of a feature within Town Councils, but it is worth repeating that it is National Association Of Local Councils policy that party politics should have no place in Town Councils. Town Councillors are there to serve their community as Members of the community, and should not be sidetracked by party political issues. Party politics within a Town Council can pose particular difficulties in terms of the impartiality of the Clerk and other employees, and the relationship between Councillors and the staff generally.
- 4.2 Party political groups have no power to require the Clerk or any other employee to attend group meetings or to prepare written reports for them, and employees can legitimately refuse to do so. The Clerk and other Officers are responsible to the Council as a whole and should not take action under instructions from any individual Councillor, even if he/she has been styled as 'Leader' of the Council.
- 4.3 If your Council has adopted party political groupings, the Clerk should ensure that any reports or advice offered to a political group are statements of relevant facts, with an appraisal of options and do not deal with the political implications of the matter or options, or make any recommendations. It is not the Clerk's job to make recommendations to a political group.
- 4.4 If a report is prepared for one political group, the Clerk should advise all other political groups that the report has been prepared, or that advice was given.
- 4.5 Any Clerk needing advice or guidance on matters relating to party groups or how to operate within a political environment, should seek advice from their County Association of National Association Of Local Councils, or from the Society of Local Council Clerks.

5. When things go wrong

Procedure for Officers

- 5.1 From time to time the relationship between Councillors and the Clerk (or other employees) may break down or become strained. Whilst it is always preferable to resolve matters informally, through conciliation by an appropriate third party, it is important that the Council adopts a formal grievance protocol or procedure.

- 5.2 The district or unitary Council's Monitoring Officer may be able to offer a mediation/conciliation role or it may be necessary to seek independent advice. For example, the Society of Local Council Clerks may be able to provide an independent person. The Mayor should not attempt to deal with grievances or work related performance or line management issues on their own. The Council should delegate authority to a small group of Councillors to deal with all personnel matters.
- 5.3 The law requires all employers to have disciplinary and grievance procedures. Adopting a grievance procedure enables individual employees to raise concerns, problems or complaints about their employment in an open and fair way.
- 5.4 For an example grievance procedure, contact your district or unitary Council's Personnel or HR Department or the County Association of National Association Of Local Councils.

Procedure for Members

- 5.5 If a Councillor is dissatisfied with the conduct, behaviour or performance of the Clerk or another employee, the matter should be raised with the Clerk in the first instance. If the matter cannot be resolved informally, it may be necessary to invoke the Council's disciplinary procedure.

Date Policy brought into Force: 9 October 2013

Authority: Personnel Committee

Meeting: 9 October 2013 (Minute 258n)

Review Body: Personnel Committee

Review Period: Annually

Next Review: October 2014

This protocol was approved by the Personnel Committee on 9 October 2013. Changes are not necessarily required, however as this was first implemented a year ago, Committee is requested to review the protocol and consider an appropriate review period.

AGENDA ITEM 7: TOWN CLERK'S APPRAISAL

Committee is requested to conduct an Appraisal for the Town Clerk, agree objectives for the following year and authorise the Town Mayor to complete the attached Appraisal document.

(Confidential report attached)

AGENDA ITEM 8: STAFFING MATTERS

At the Ordinary Meeting of 24 September 2014, Council resolved that the Personnel Committee be requested to consider and decide any proposal to revise terms and conditions, including contracted weekly hours, for staff members as it deems appropriate within the current year budget. (Minute 303iii refers).

Committee is therefore requested to consider the attached report which proposes changes to weekly contracted hours for three staff members and permanent arrangements for the currently temporary part-time administrator post.

(Confidential report attached)

AGENDA ITEM 9: STAFFING STRUCTURE AND BUDGET 2015/16

Committee is requested to consider the attached report which gives an overview of proposed staffing structure salary budget estimates for 2015/16 and make any appropriate recommendations to Council.

(Confidential report attached)