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9 am to 4 pm Mondays to Fridays



TOWN HALL
FELIXSTOWE
SUFFOLK
IP11 2AG

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Cllr D Rowe (Chairman)

Cllr C Franklin (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr S Bennett

Cllr M Deacon

Cllr M Sharman

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **PERSONNEL COMMITTEE** to be held at **TOWN HALL, FELIXSTOWE**, on **Wednesday 2 April 2025 at 6pm**.

Public Attendance

Meetings of the Town Council and its Committees are open to the press and public who are welcome to attend. Members of the public are invited to make representations or put questions to the Committee during the public session.

There is a limit to the number of public attending in-person. If you wish to attend in person, please email townclerk@felixstowe.gov.uk to confirm capacity.

Public are very welcome join via Zoom using the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82769486775>

Alternatively, you may join via the meeting ID 828 9251 3980 or over the telephone by calling 0131 460 1196.

Council has a duty to pay due regard to preventing crime and disorder and to conserve biodiversity in its decision-making and Members are reminded to consider the Council's commitment to climate action.



The Council kindly asks that anyone planning to attend the meeting in-person to consider car-sharing or low-carbon modes of transport to the Town Hall.

Ash Tadjrishi
Town Clerk
26 March 2025

For information (via email): All Town Councillors.

A G E N D A

- 1. Public Question Time**
Up to 15 minutes is set aside to allow members of the public (up to one minute each) to make representations or put questions to the Committee on any relevant matters.
- 2. Apologies for Absence**
To receive apologies for absence.
- 3. Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations of interest and to consider requests for dispensations from Members on matters in which they have a disclosable pecuniary interest, other registerable or non-registerable interest.
- 4. Confirmation of Minutes**
To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2024 as a true record.
(Pages 3-5)
- 5. Staffing Policies**
To review the staffing handbook and other associated policies.
(Pages 6-7 and Appendices A-E)
- 6. Exclusion of Press and Public (Staffing Matters)**
In accord with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 s.1 (2), 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 are instructed to withdraw.
- 7. Staffing Matters**
To consider a report on Council staffing matters and make any decisions deemed necessary.
(Confidential Report)
- 8. Town Clerk's Appraisal: Six Month Review**
To review progress against agreed objectives.
(Confidential Report)
- 9. Closure**
To close proceedings and confirm the date of the next meeting scheduled for Wednesday 1 October 2025 at 6pm.

It was **RESOLVED** that the **Press and Public** be excluded and instructed to withdraw.

216. TOWN CLERKS APPRAISAL

The Annual Appraisal for the Town Clerk was carried out and several objectives were discussed and agreed.

It was **RESOLVED** that the **Town Clerk’s Appraisal document** be finalised by the **Mayor** to include those objectives discussed and agreed for the following year.

217. STAFFING MATTERS

Committee considered a confidential report on staffing matters.

RESOLVED that:

- i. **The report on Staffing Matters be noted; and,**
- ii. **Committee would consider a review of the wider appraisal process and objective setting for the Council’s staffing team; the Town Clerk and Mayor would discuss this and bring a report to the next meeting.**

218. STAFFING AND TRAINING BUDGET 2025/26

Members considered estimates for the Council’s 2025/26 staffing and training budget. Salary scale point changes were approved as presented and the budgets were recommended as follows:

Cost Centre	Budget 2025/26		
	Salaries (£)	Employer National Insurance (£)	Employer Pension Contributions (£)
Administration	260,712	27,188	52,142
Town Hall	28,252	2,266	5,650
Walton	5,650	453	1,130
Broadway House	9,562	767	1,912
Cemetery	129,147	12,548	25,829
Allotments	27,674	2,689	5,535
Parks	27,674	2,689	5,535
Total	481,819	48,600	97,735

Training budget

	Budget 2025/26 (£)
Administration	2,000
Town Hall	500

Cemetery	1,500
Totals	4,000

It was RESOLVED that Council be recommended to approve the salaries and training budgets for the financial year 2025/26.

219. CLOSURE

The meeting was closed at 5.35pm. It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 2 April 2025 at 4.30pm.

AGENDA ITEM 5: STAFFING POLICIES

Committee is requested to review the following staff-related documents

- Appendix A - Staff Handbook (April 2022)
- Appendix B - Member/Officer Protocol (April 2021)
- Appendix C - Lone Worker Policy (2024)
- Appendix D - Safeguarding Policy (new)
- Appendix E - Sexual Harassment Policy (new)

Committee is requested to note that the existing policies are presented as current for review, with two new policies drafted for consideration.

The Safeguarding Policy is based on a recent policy of another Town Council in East Suffolk.

Council is also required to adopt a formal Sexual Harassment Policy in accordance with the latest guidance from the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) and to outline the benefits and responsibilities associated with this policy. This includes compliance with the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023, which came into effect on 26 October 2024.

Sexual harassment in the workplace is a serious issue that can have legal, reputational, and operational implications for any organisation. The Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 places a legal duty on all employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of employees, including harassment from third parties such as customers and service users.

ACAS has issued clear guidance for employers on steps to prevent sexual harassment, including implementing a robust policy that sets out expected standards of behaviour, reporting mechanisms, and support for affected individuals. While Felixstowe Town Council already maintains general policies on dignity at work, harassment and equality, a standalone Sexual Harassment Policy would provide greater clarity and compliance with best practices.

The ACAS guidance outlines the following critical steps for employers:

- **Legal Duty to Prevent Harassment:** Employers must proactively assess risks and put measures in place rather than reacting only after incidents occur. Failure to take reasonable steps may result in enforcement action from the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) or higher compensation payments in employment tribunal cases.
- **Risk Assessment:** Employers should assess risk factors specific to their sector, working environment, and roles, including situations involving third parties.
- **Clear Policy:** Establishing a comprehensive Sexual Harassment Policy that defines unacceptable behaviour, explains reporting procedures, and sets out consequences for breaches.

- **Training and Awareness:** Ensuring that all staff and councillors receive appropriate training on recognising and preventing sexual harassment, as well as understanding their responsibilities.
- **Effective Reporting Mechanisms:** Providing confidential and accessible ways for individuals to report concerns, including options for anonymous reporting.
- **Creating the Right Culture:** Clearly communicating that sexual harassment will not be tolerated, encouraging staff to report incidents, and ensuring managers are accountable for preventing and addressing misconduct.
- **Review and Monitoring:** Regularly reviewing policies, conducting staff surveys, and keeping records of complaints to identify patterns and improve prevention measures.

Benefits of Adopting the Policy

- **Legal Compliance:** Aligning with the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023 and meeting ACAS recommendations.
- **Improved Workplace Culture:** Creating a safer, more respectful environment for employees, councillors, and members of the public engaging with the Council.
- **Risk Mitigation:** Reducing the risk of legal claims, reputational damage, and staff grievances.
- **Demonstrating Best Practice:** Reinforcing the Council's commitment to high ethical standards and good governance.

The adoption of a Sexual Harassment Policy will strengthen Felixstowe Town Council's commitment to a safe and respectful workplace, ensuring compliance with new legal obligations and best practices. The Personnel Committee is invited to review the draft Sexual Harassment Policy at Appendix E.

Committee is recommended to review and update the Staffing Handbook, Member/Officer Protocol and Lone Worker policies; review and approve the adoption of formal Safeguarding and Sexual Harassment policies; and, ensure that all staff and Councillors are made aware of their responsibilities in relation to the new and revised policies, and be offered training as appropriate.