

## **Report of the Organisation, Methods and Personnel Committee**

The Committee met at 7.30 pm on **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016** in Committee Room 1 at the Parish Hall, Great Baddow. Councillor Mrs S Young chaired the meeting.

Present: Councillors Mrs S Young, Mrs J Sosin, Mrs C Shaw, A Sosin, G Jarvis, Mrs D Ronaldson and K Ronaldson

In attendance: Clerk of the Council

### **650/15 Apologies for Absence**

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Mrs V Chiswell.

### **651/15 Declarations of Interests**

There were no declarations of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, Other Pecuniary Interests or Registerable Non Pecuniary Interests.

### **652/15 Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015, which had been signed by the Council on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2015, were agreed and signed with the following amendments: Item 480/15, final sentence, the words 'The Clerk was asked to look at the' and 'figure before' to be deleted and replaced by 'The Committee recommended extra' and 'councillor training modules to';

Item 480/15, the following sentence to be added at the end of the item:

'It was agreed that the Clerk would circulate details of the modules that can be delivered at the Parish Hall'. Proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw.

Cllr K Ronaldson asked whether the copy of the minutes displayed on the website are the amended minutes agreed at meetings or the draft minutes that are circulated. The Clerk said that it was that draft minutes that are on the website and then any amendments made are detailed in the minutes of the next Council meeting and the next committee meeting. The Clerk said that she would check what best practice is at the moment and report back on the matter.

### **653/15 Public Question Time**

There were no members of the public present.

### **654/15 Clerk's Report**

Cllr A Sosin asked whether there is any procedure to recognise long service with the Council as there is at the City Council. The Clerk said that there was not, although as requested, a letter had recently been sent to Nigel Smith congratulating him on 25 years' service with the Council. The Clerk was asked to find out what other Parish Councils do and report back to the committee. The matter of the Allotment representative was also raised and it was agreed to seek further information on the matter.

### **655/15 Staff Review**

The Clerk informed the meeting that Vine HR has been notified of the appeals against the Job Evaluations that have been received.

Unfortunately, Liz Rymell is currently away and attempts are being made to arrange a meeting for the week commencing 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016.

The Clerk told the committee that a letter had also been received from a member of staff and it was agreed that this should be copied to Cllrs Mrs S Young and Mrs C Shaw and once they have looked at it, they will speak to the Clerk and it will be discussed about how best to deal with it.

#### **656/15 Health and Safety Policy**

A further meeting of the Health, Safety and Welfare at Work Committee took place on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and the next one will be on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2016. A report of the meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> January was presented to the Council on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016.

#### **657/15 Internal Review of the Grounds Service**

It has been agreed that given the personnel issues that are being experienced by the Council at the present time and the demand that the additional work is placing on the Clerk, the Review has been postponed for a short while, until the issues can be resolved.

#### **658/15 Training**

- i) The Clerk reported that the following training courses have been arranged for members of staff, which will take place at the EALC offices in Great Dunmow:

Fire Safety Level 2 – 26<sup>th</sup> January 2016

Procurement Regulations – 11<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Health & Safety at Work Level 2 – 8<sup>th</sup> March 2016

Cllr K Ronaldson was asked whether he wished to attend the Health & Safety at Work course and he said that he would confirm to the Clerk as soon as possible whether or not he would be attending.

The Clerk raised the issue of the training budgets and told the meeting that as the Finance & General Purposes committee had borne the whole cost of recent unbudgeted training, the budget was now running low. As it is intended to combine this and the Grounds Training budget in the new financial year, the Clerk recommended that some of the monies currently required are taken from the Grounds Training budget. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs J Sosin that this committee recommends to the Finance & General Purposes committee that this should be done.

- ii) The arrangements for councillor training at the Council's venue in Great Baddow were discussed and suggestions for modules were made. The Clerk was requested to obtain some further information about the objectives of the modules and also the times and days for the training.

#### **659/15 First Aid**

Various issues had been raised by one of the staff First Aiders for consideration by the committee.

- i) Insurance – The Clerk had spoken to the insurance company, who had confirmed that staff First Aiders are covered to respond to members of staff and members of the public. This information has been communicated to the staff First Aider.

- ii) Response – The question that had been raised was whether the staff First Aiders should respond to facility users/members of the public. It was confirmed that neither of the staff First Aiders have been formally appointed and that this should be done formally as part of an agenda item at an appropriate meeting.
- iii) Holiday Cover – If necessary, this will be addressed by the policy.
- iv) Policy – It was agreed that the Council should adopt a policy on first aid provision. This would look at what the Council is legally required to do and best practice. This matter will be queried with Wirehouse. The Clerk was authorised to take any urgent action that may be required.

#### **660/15 Contracts and Handbook**

The receipt of the draft employment contracts, draft and amended policies and information for inclusion in the Staff Handbook was noted. The policies include: Equal Opportunities, Dignity at Work, Confidential Reporting, Disciplinary and Dismissal, Grievance, Capability, Internet and E.mail, IT Security and Managing Attendance.

It was agreed that Cllrs Mrs S Young, G Jarvis and Mrs C Shaw will meet on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2016 at 10.30am to make an initial consideration of the documents. Hard copies will be sent out to these councillors and Cllrs A Sosin and Mrs D Ronaldson.

#### **661/15 Health & Safety Support**

The receipt of the draft Health & Safety Strategy from Wirehouse was noted.

It was agreed that Cllr Mrs S Young and the Clerk will take an initial look at the document and collate comments from other councillors. Once this has been done, the matter will be reported back to an appropriate committee.

#### **662/15 Matters for Information**

- Cllr Mrs D Ronaldson reported that the road surfaces in Crescent Road and Jeffrey Road are breaking up again and that this is now also happening in New Road. It was agreed that the matter should be reported to County Councillor Jenny Chandler.

#### **663/15 Private and Confidential**

It was resolved that the meeting would be closed to the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted in the following item. Proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw.

#### **664/15 Staff Absence**

The Clerk reported that the Deputy Grounds Manager will be retiring on ill health grounds on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2016 and his last day of work will be Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016. An afternoon tea has been arranged and all are welcome.

The Clerk reported that the Grounds Manager has been placed on medical suspension, pending a report from Occupational Health. The appointment with Occupational Health is on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2016 and it is hoped that a phased return to work can commence on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2016. However, this will be subject to the report's findings.

The Clerk reported that as the Deputy Grounds Manager is retiring and having taken advice from Wirehouse, a letter and application form has been sent out to the Groundsmen asking whether any of them wishes to be considered for the temporary position. The closing date is on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and the interviews will take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2016. In the meantime, prioritisation of the work has already been taking place and the Clerk will pick up some of the management functions. The Clerk will also be speaking to an outside contractor about taking on ad hoc work.

The Clerk reported that one of the litter pickers is away on sick leave.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.09 pm

Signed.....Chairman..... Date