

Report of the Organisation, Methods and Personnel Committee

The Committee met at 7.30 pm on **Thursday 9th April 2015** in the Shaw Room at the Bell Centre, Bell Street, Great Baddow. Councillor Mrs J Sosin chaired the meeting.

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

In attendance: Clerk of the Council
Liz Rymell from Vine HR

1/15 Apologies for Absence

There were apologies for absence from Cllr Mrs D Ronaldson, who had substituted Cllr Mrs M Miller

2/15 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interests.

3/15 Public Question Time

There were no members of the public present.

4/15 Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting held on 2nd February 2015 and continued on 3rd February 2015, which had been signed by the Council on 16th February 2015, were agreed and signed. Proposed by Cllr Mrs J Sosin and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw.

5/15 Managing Attendance Policy and Procedure

The draft policy and procedure had been circulated to all members of staff, as part of the consultation. Some comments had been received and following discussion of these, it was agreed that an amendment will be made to Section 2, 3.0 and then the document will be recommended to full Council for adoption on 20th April 2015. This was proposed by Cllr Mrs J Sosin and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw.

6/15 Complaints and Compliments Procedure and Policy

A second draft of the procedure and policy had been circulated and the Clerk had submitted comments to the committee. These were discussed, along with suggestions from Cllr A Sosin and Cllr Mrs S Young. Cllr K Ronaldson said that he would e.mail South Woodham Ferrers Town Council's policy to everyone, as he had found this to be a very clear and transparent process. It was agreed that the Clerk will re-draft the paperwork, taking all these points into consideration and the third draft will be considered by the Finance and General Purposes committee on 27th April 2015.

7/15 Staffing Review

As requested, the Clerk had circulated comments on the Phase 1 and 2 reports submitted by Vine HR to the Council during the Clerk's absence on sick leave and on the job profiles that had been drafted as a result of the reports. These were discussed. It was agreed that some small amendments will be made to the job profiles. It was then proposed that the committee recommends to the full Council on 20th April 2015 that:

1. The Council resolves to adopt the proposed staff structure of Option 1, as presented in the Vine HR reports on the Staff Review
2. That once amended, the draft job profiles will be given to each member of staff for consultation

Proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr Mrs C Shaw.

8/15 **Staff Handbook**

The Clerk told the meeting that the draft handbook submitted by Northgate Arinso (now Moorepay) cannot be amended by the Council's staff and that all amendments have to be made by the company. It is probable that this is because the handbook is the intellectual property of the company and that they do not want clients making their own amendments.

There was discussion about the handbook and it was agreed that the matters of finalising the staff contracts and the policies should be made a priority and that then the drafting of a new handbook should follow from the introduction of up to date contracts and policies. The Clerk was asked to examine the contracts again in consultation with Moorepay and then a meeting of the working group can be arranged to consider them.

9/15 **Health and Safety Policy**

The Clerk was asked whether a date had been set for a meeting of the Health and Safety at Work Committee and she replied that this was being done.

9.02 pm - Liz Rymell from Vine HR left the meeting

10/15 **HR Support**

It was confirmed by the committee that ongoing external support for HR issues relating to the Council is a necessary requirement and that monies will be needed from the budget to support this. A specification needs to be drawn up so that quotes can be obtained for HR Support because the contract with Moorepay finishes in September 2015. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs S Young and seconded by Cllr G Jarvis that the requirement for the money should be noted by the Council but that an actual figure will be proposed once the End of Year accounts have been agreed and once more is known about the actual requirement of some other budget headings for 2015/2016.

9.07 pm - Liz Rymell from Vine HR returned to the meeting

11/15 **Volunteer Policy**

The Clerk told the meeting that further to the agreement of the Council to appoint the Environmental Group (teg) to work on Luxfield, the Council's insurance company had been contacted and had advised about the actions that the Council should be taking and the policies that should be in place when using volunteers. Part of this advice was that the Council should have a written volunteer policy, so that the requirements for volunteer workers is clear. A draft policy was started by the Clerk but due to the events of last year, was not completed. It was agreed that the Clerk should finish the draft and that once completed, the draft policy should be put on the agenda for the next appropriate Finance and General Purposes committee to consider.

12/15 Internal review of the Grounds service

It had already been agreed by the Council that an internal review of the Grounds service should be undertaken but it was felt that this would be too much to implement at the current time and that it should be postponed until the new staff structure is resolved.

There were also some other issues raised relating to the Grounds service and it was agreed that a working group should be set up to consider whether a wider general review of the Grounds service is required and what the implications of doing that would entail. The working group should be set up as soon as possible.

13/15 Appointment of a Weekend Caretaker/Cleaner

The Clerk told the meeting that a previous decision had been made to employ a new weekend caretaker/cleaner on a zero hours contract. However, advice had recently been taken from Springfield Parish Council about these types of contracts and how they work in practice in similar situations. Having considered the advice, the Clerk is now suggesting that instead of a zero hours contract, the new post should be advertised as a temporary contract on 3-4 hours a week. Until the weekend hiring business builds up, the post holder would be required to undertake other work, for instance, some additional cleaning duties. Liz Rymell from Vine HR asked whether the Council had looked at using current staff to undertake the work and it was confirmed that this had been considered but that the decision had been taken against that course of action. It was agreed that the job profile could be amended to bring it in line with the other draft job profiles and that a new advert should be drawn up.

14/15 Matters for Information

1. Cllr Mrs S Young told the meeting that a piece of land In Dorset Avenue that had been the subject of a planning application is now to be sold at auction.

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

15/15 Staff Absence

The Clerk reported that one member of staff remains on long term sickness absence and that an appointment has been arranged with the Occupational Health Service. Another member of staff is away from work on sick leave but is expected to return shortly and the condition of a third member of staff who had been on sick leave is improving.

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