

THAME TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 5 March 2013 at 6pm in the Meeting Room, Thame Town Hall.

Present: Cllr N Champken-Woods (Town Mayor – in the Chair), P Lambert (Deputy Mayor),
M Dyer (Chairman of Policy & Resources) and N Dixon (Chairman, Culture, Leisure & Recreation).
Officer: Mrs H Stewart (Town Clerk)

1 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr D Butler (previous engagement).

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Public Participation

There were no requests for public participation.

4 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 November 2011 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Mayor.

5 Staff Structure

The staff structure revised in June 2012 was tabled for discussion. During the Neighbourhood Planning process the demands made on various members of staff had resulted in a review of job descriptions and responsibilities. Both Mrs. Robinson and Mrs. Pinnells had assumed much more responsibility for the day to day management of the Council and had been acting as joint deputy clerks. This had enabled the Town Clerk to focus more on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Members appreciated the detailed presentation of the responsibilities for each member of staff and shared the Town Clerk's vision for the future development of roles and responsibilities as the needs of the Council changed with opportunities arising from the Localism Act. The revised structure offered the Council much more stability going forward by having two senior managers jointly able to assume the responsibilities of deputy clerk. The recommendation was that the revised structure be adopted as presented and that both Mrs Robinson and Mrs Pinnells be titled as deputy clerks to reflect their position and level of responsibility within the organisation.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the staff structure as present be adopted.*
- ii) That position of Joint Deputy Clerks be recognised for Mrs. Robinson and Mrs. Pinnells.*

6 Audit of Working Hours

The Town Clerk proposed that the Personnel Committee should be presented with an annual audit of hours worked by members of staff plus the number of hours taken as time off in lieu (TOIL). This proposal was intended to safeguard the health and safety of employees, the Council as the employer and to provide an idea of staff resource capacity against the work required.

Having staff that are conscientious and work extra hours on a regular basis can be viewed as a bonus for both the Council and the community it serves but there are some serious considerations as an employer. If working unpaid overtime the real cost of running the Council is misrepresented plus depending on the hourly rate, if there is no financial recompense, the employee may be working at below the minimum wage. This is misconduct and if allowed could bring the Council into disrepute. To work more than 48 hours in one week the law also requires most employees to have individual agreements between worker and employer to opt out of the standard 48-hour limit. These agreements have to be in writing and contain a notice clause of no more than three months, and the employer in these cases must keep records of hours actually worked by the individuals concerned.

RESOLVED:

- i) That a report on working hours for all staff must be presented to the Personnel Committee on an annual basis.*

7 Exclusion of the Public

RESOLVED: i) Pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 it is resolved that, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of

Agenda Item 8 To consider a request from the Town Clerk for two months sabbatical

8 Sabbatical

The Town Clerk was asked to leave the room during this discussion.

On being recalled to the meeting the Committee informed the Town Clerk that due to the significant number of additional hours that had been required to ensure deadlines were met in producing the Neighbourhood Plan that it would make a recommendation to Council supporting the request.

RECOMMENDATION TO FULL COUNCIL:

- i) That the Town Clerk be permitted to have two months paid sabbatical during 2013.*

9 Staff Grades and Salaries

The grade and salary for each member of staff was presented for approval. There had not been any national agreement on pay awards under the NJT agreement so far.

RESOLVED:

- i) That the grades and salaries as presented be approved for 2013-14.*

The meeting concluded at 7.05pm

Signed
Chairman