

**NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL - PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
**MINUTES of the committee meeting held**  
**On 31<sup>st</sup> January 2023 at Northstowe Secondary College.**

Members: 6 - Cllr Susarla (Chair); Cllr Delip (Vice-Chair); Cllr Bros Sabria; Cllr Castelino; Cllr Kinnera; Cllr Nikoro.  
Quorum: 3 Members.  
Present: 5 – Cllr Bros Sabria; Cllr Castelino; Cllr Delip; Cllr Susarla; Cllr Nikoro (from 19:29).  
Town Clerk.  
No members of the public.  
Apologies: N/A  
Absent: Cllr Kinnera.

The meeting started at 19:00; Cllr Susarla took the Chair.

**26/22-23 APOLOGIES** (Standing Item)

*To receive any apologies for absence received prior to the meeting.*  
No apologies had been received.

**27/22-23 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** (Standing Item)

- a) *Councillors to declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any items on the agenda.*
  - b) *Councillors to declare any prejudicial interest in any items on the agenda and to inform the Chairman if they wish to speak on the matter during public participation.*
- No interests were declared.

**28/22-23 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** (Standing Item)

- a) *To adjourn the meeting for up to 15 mins. to allow members of the public and Councillors declaring a prejudicial interest to address the meeting in relation to business to be transacted at this meeting.*
  - b) *To reconvene the meeting.*
- No member of the public was present. The meeting was reconvened.

**29/22-23 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETINGS** (Standing Item)

- 1) *To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022 as a true record of that meeting (attached).*

It was proposed by Cllr Delip, seconded by Cllr Castelino and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to approve the minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022 as a true record of that meeting.**

**30/22-23 UPDATES ON ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

*To receive an update from the Clerk on previous resolutions and tasks:*

- i) *21/22-23, Performance Review: Update on:*
  - *Performance Review meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022;*
  - *Steps taken thereafter.*

*[NB: see also item 31/22-23 on this agenda].*

The Clerk highlighted that the annual performance review meeting had taken place with the Chair of the Personnel Committee in October 2022, covering the period Feb. – Sep. 2022. The paperwork agreed at that meeting has been presented to the Committee for item 31/22-23 on today's agenda. He added that the Action Plan discussed at that meeting has already been guiding the Clerk's prioritisation of his work since the meeting took place.

- ii) *22/22-23, CiLCA Qualification (Committee meeting 4<sup>th</sup> Oct. '22): Update on:*
  - *CiLCA Portfolio progress made to date;*
  - *Steps taken regarding portfolio submission deferral sought as a result of ongoing work requirements having taken priority;*

- *Impact of ongoing limited staffing capacity to address Council work requirements (further to report shared with Cllrs. at 4<sup>th</sup> Oct. '22 Committee meeting).*

The Clerk provided an update in which he explained that, following previous information presented to the Council around the need to obtain an extension to finalise the portfolio that is part of the CiLCA qualification training, this has indeed happened before the deadline expired on 3<sup>rd</sup> December. He expanded that two options had been given: either extending for 3 months, or freezing the training programme for either 6, 9 or 12 months following which a further 12 months extension is given to finalise the portfolio. The former would not give sufficient time, as the Clerk still has just over half of the portfolio units to finalise, and that he had opted for the second option, with a freeze for 6 months requested and which has been approved. He clarified that in this period he will still continue drafting units where time permits and have those checked by CAPALC, but that the formal assessment done externally, online, will not be available to him until 1<sup>st</sup> June onwards. In response to a question, he explained that each portfolio unit takes about 4-4.5 hrs. on average to produce and that it continues to be very difficult to find 'spare time' considering the many other work duties.

He continued, explaining that the portfolio portal for submitting the portfolio work will be reopened before the 1<sup>st</sup> of June on receipt of payment of £75. The Clerk proposed to pay this himself, as he had not been made aware of this cost until the very last moment. On this last point, several Committee Members expressed that this cost is to be covered by the Town Council; the Clerk was **tasked** to bring this payment to the Council when it would become relevant later in spring.

Cllr Nikoro joined the meeting at 19:29 pm.

The Chair asked whether Cllr Nikoro, under item 27/22-23 would have any declarations of interest to make; none were declared.

- iii) *23/22-23, Recruitment of Deputy Clerk (committee meeting 4th Oct. '22): Update on:*
  - *Progress made regarding recruitment procedures, further to information provided at the 24th January 2023 Full Council meeting.*

*[NB: see also item 33/22-23 on this agenda].*

The Clerk summarised the latest developments regarding the recruitment, and explained that the offer as corresponded back to the preferred candidate following the discussion on the employment conditions at the Full Council meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023 (item 224/22-23) had resulted in the candidate declining the position, with that information received a day earlier by the Clerk. This information had been shared with the Interview Panel, and alternative options are being explored.

The Clerk was **tasked** to work with the Interview Panel, including in this also the Chair of the Committee, to consider alternative recruitment options and present those back to the Committee where relevant.

- iv) *24/22-23, Budget financial year 2023-'24 (Committee meeting 4th Oct. '22): Update on:*
  - *Relevant budget items included in the approved annual budget for '23-'24 (Approved at the Full Council meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> Dec. '22), regarding new staffing positions, staff training and staff equipment costs.*

The Clerk highlighted all items included in the agreed annual budget for the Council for 2023 – '24 relevant to the remit of the Personnel Committee. With this, he requested the Personnel Committee to consider in particular the timeline for recruitment of a Market Manager and a Facilities Manager included onto the budget, considering the lengthy process to date for the Deputy Clerk position to be filled.

***To resolve to move into a closed session and exclude the public and press, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, due to the sensitive or commercial nature of business to be discussed under items 31/22-23, 32/22-23 and 33/22-23.***

It was proposed by Cllr Susarla, seconded by Cllr Bros Sabria and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to move into a closed session and exclude the public and press, due to the commercial or sensitive nature of business to be discussed under items 31/22-23, 32/22-23 and 33/22-23.**

### 31/22-23 PERFORMANCE REVIEW

- 1) *To receive a report on the Annual Performance Review that took place on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022 between the Chair of the Personnel Committee and the Town Clerk (document shared with Cllrs.).*  
[NB: this document is in draft form and had, therefore, not yet been shared with the committee, as awaiting finalisation and return of section 2 of the document, to be completed by the appraiser; the report's conclusions can, therefore, also not yet be approved by resolution].

The Clerk explained that this document is not yet fully finalised, as the form's sections 2 and 3 are to be filled in and signed by the appraiser, following which the Clerk will be in a position to counter-sign section 3. He explained that the information contained in the document had, nevertheless, been discussed with the Chair of the Personnel Committee at the meeting in October and that the document had at that stage been approved, verbally; the Chair confirmed this. The Chair **agreed** to fill in the remainder of the form as soon as possible, in order that it can be shared with the Committee in a finalised format.

### 32/22-23 EMPLOYEE ACTION PLAN OCTOBER '22 – SEPTEMBER '23

- 1) *To receive a report setting out an Action Plan for the period Oct. 2022 – Sep. 2023, which includes Objectives and Priorities for the Town Clerk for this period and which, in addition, includes recommendations for increased Council/Councillors' involvement in Council work (as per the Committee's recommendation made under item 22/22-23(2), Committee meeting 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022). (document shared with Cllrs.).*

[NB: this report was finalised following the Annual Performance Review that took place on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2022].

Noted.

- 2) *To approve the employee's Objectives and Priorities for the period Oct. 2022 – Sep. 2023, as detailed in the Action Plan.*

It was observed that on the Annual Performance Review form (discussed under item 31/22-23) in section 2 asks a question whether the appraiser agrees with the proposed list of Objectives and Priorities, and that the Action Plan would be dependent on the content of the information provided by the appraiser against this question.

It was proposed by Cllr Castelino, seconded by Cllr Susarla and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to amend the motion to include 'subject to the content of section 2 of the Annual Performance Review form not resulting in a need to change the Action Plan's content.'**

It was proposed by Cllr Susarla, seconded by Cllr Castelino and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to approve the employee's Objectives and Priorities for the period Oct. 2022 – Sep. 2023, as detailed in the Action Plan, subject to the content of section 2 of the Annual Performance Review form not resulting in a need to change the Action Plan's content.**

The Clerk was **tasked**: 1. To share the Action Plan for the Clerk's work for the period Oct. '22 to Sep. '23 with the Mayor and Deputy-Mayor, and obtain input from them whether and where any of the suggestions for further Council and Councillors' input, could be taken forward; and 2. To consider where options highlighted in the Action Plan for potentially more active involvement of committees in activities is to be brought to the attention of the relevant committees.

### 33/22-23 RECRUITMENT OF DEPUTY CLERK – EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

[Following resolutions passed at Full Council meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> January 2023, item 224/22-23(5), and [resolution passed at the 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022 Personnel Committee meeting, item 23/22-23\(6\)](#)].

- 1) *To receive a draft employment contract, which includes terms of conditions of employment (shared with Cllrs; developed with input from the interview panel).*
- 2) *To approve the employment contract as prepared.*
- 3) *To refer the employment contract to Full Council for final approval.*

the Chair declared that this agenda item had now become irrelevant, considering the update on the recruitment process provided under 30/22-23(iii).

**To resolve to end the closed session.**

It was proposed by Cllr Susarla, seconded by Cllr Castelino, and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to re-open the meeting.**

**34/22-23 FUTURE ITEMS**

*[NB: includes items deferred from the non-quorate Personnel Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> Feb. '22].*

*To consider the following items to be considered by the Personnel Committee at future meetings:*

- a) Review of organisational structure and staffing levels, with development of staffing structure over next five years.*
- b) Recruitment of Market Manager.*
- c) Recruitment of Facilities Manager.*
- d) Review of Performance Management Framework.*
- e) Review of Conditions of Service.*
- f) Further development of Employment Policies and Procedures, and an Employee/HR Handbook;*
- g) Further development of Health and Safety Policies and Procedures.*
- h) Development of a Grievance Policy and Procedures; and a Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.*
- i) Development of the Council's training policy and needs (staff and Councillors).*
- j) Developments of the Council's approach to apprenticeships, job creation and training programmes.*

The Clerk highlighted that all sub-items listed for this agenda item need doing to fill in gaps in policies and procedures and to ensure timely recruitment of new members of staff when these become needed. As most items would take a certain amount of preparatory time, he requested the Committee's input in identifying items that may need prioritising.

Following a discussion, in which Committee Members agreed that the items on this list are all relevant and needed, the Clerk was **tasked** to organise a meeting with the Chair (and Vice-Chair if available) to discuss the prioritisation needs in more detail.

**35/22-23 DATES OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETINGS (Standing Item)**

*To note;*

- a) Personnel Committee: Tue 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023, 8-9PM, at Pathfinder Primary School*  
*[Finalised motions to be received by 11/03].*
- b) Full Council: Tue 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023, 7-9PM, Pathfinder Primary School (Main Hall).*  
*[Finalised motions to be received by 18/02].*

*For all NTC meetings, see [www.northstowetowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.northstowetowncouncil.gov.uk)*

The meeting was closed at 19:58 pm

Signed.....

Chair of the Personnel Committee

Date.....