

NORTHSTOWE TOWN COUNCIL - PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MINUTES of the meeting held on 10th June 2025 at The Cabin, Northstowe.

Members: 5 - Cllr Benedicic; Cllr Delip; Cllr Hodgson; Cllr Littlemore; Cllr Susarla.
Quorum: 3 Members.
Present: 3: Cllr Delip; Cllr Littlemore; Cllr Hodgson.
Town Clerk; Deputy Clerk
Members of the Public: 1.
Apologies: Cllr Benedicic; Cllr Susarla.
Absent: N/A.

In the absence of the (former) Committee Chair, the (former) Deputy-Chair, Cllr Delip, took the Chair for the meeting; they opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

12/25-26/PER ELECTION OF CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE FOR 2025-26

1) *To receive nominations for Chair of the Personnel Committee.*

Cllr Littlemore nominated Cllr Hodgson for the position.

2) *To elect the Chair of the Personnel Committee for the Civic Year 2025-2026.*

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Delip and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to elect Cllr Hodgson as the Chair of the Personnel Committee for the Civic Year 2025-2026.**

13/25-26/PER APOLOGIES *(Standing Item)*

1) *To record apologies for absence received prior to the meeting.*

Apologies had been received, and accepted, from: Cllr Benedicic; Cllr Susarla.

14/25-26/PER ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE

1) *To receive nominations for Vice-Chair of the Personnel Committee.*

No nominations were received.

2) *To elect the Vice-Chair of the Personnel Committee for the Civic Year 2025-2026.*

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Delip and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to DEFER this item until the next meeting.**

15/25-26/PER DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST *(Standing Item)*

1) *To declare any pecuniary or personal interest in any items on the agenda.*

2) *To declare any prejudicial interest in any items on the agenda and to inform the Chair if Councillors wish to speak on the matter during public participation.*

None were declared.

16/25-26/PER PUBLIC PARTICIPATION *(Standing Item)*

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 (for up to 15 minutes in total; maximum 3 minutes per person).

No members of the public were present at this point.

17/25-26/PER MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETINGS *(Standing Item)*

Draft minutes of the Personnel Committee held on 13th May 2025 are to follow.

Noted.

18/25-26/PER RECRUITMENT - ASSETS AND ESTATES MANAGER

Further to 05/25-26/PER (13th May 2025) and 44/25-26/FC (3) (27th May 2025):

1) *To receive an update on recruitment processes to date.*

The Town Clerk gave an update on the routes of advertising for the role that had been explored and executed through SLCC, CAPALC, Indeed, the Job Centre as well as on the website and social media. LinkedIn was suggested so that could be shared; the **clerk took an action**. He mentioned that some interest had already been shown in the position.

2) *To decide to form a Recruitment Panel for interviews for the position and for Councillors to come forward to join the Recruitment Panel.*

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Delip and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to decide to form a Recruitment Panel for interviews for the position and for Councillors to come forward to join the Recruitment Panel.**

3) *To allocate Members to form a Recruitment Panel.*

It was proposed by Cllr Littlemore, seconded by Cllr Delip and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to allocate the following Members – together with the Town Clerk - to the Recruitment Panel: Cllr Hodgson; Cllr Delip.**

4) *To agree for the Recruitment Panel to prepare, on behalf of the Personnel Committee, further interview processes, paperwork and logistics, in co-operation with the clerk.*

The **clerk was tasked** to seek out available dates with the other panel members.

- 5) *To approve for the Recruitment Panel to make a decision, on behalf of the Personnel Committee, on a preferred candidate, and to present its recommendations in a report to Full Council for final approval.*

A Councillor pointed out that the word 'decision' in the motion would not be appropriate, as this is about a recommendation going to Full Council who would have the final decision-making powers. This was noted; with the Chair highlighting that the second part of the motion shows the recommendation to Full Council as end-goal.

This was **agreed**, and was considered 'business as usual.'

19/25-26/PER POLICIES

Items deferred at 08/25-26/PER (13th May 2025):

- 1) *To consider the following (draft) policies:*

- a) *Further to deferral to Personnel Committee at Full Council 22nd April 2025, 14/25-26(4-5)): draft Employee Departure Policy; and Interview Questions Template (shared with Cllrs).*
- b) *Further to deferral at Personnel Committee 11th March 2025, 48/24-25(1): draft HR Handbook; and associated Action Plan for Preventing Sexual Harassment (shared with Cllrs).*
- c) *Further to deferral at Jan 2025 Personnel Committee, 33/24-25: draft Training and Development Policy – updated version, with further WorkNest comments; and WorkNest's proposed 'Agreement for refund of training fees' to go with the policy (as well as NALC Template of 'Training and Development Policy' for comparison purposes) (shared with Cllrs).*
- d) *Draft Grievance Policy (taken from NALC Template) (shared with Cllrs).*

Each of the draft documents under sub-items a) to d) were discussed in detail; any outstanding queries raised in draft versions were resolved, and various amendments were made for each policy.

- 2) *To decide to recommend above policies under sub-item 1 (a-d) to Full Council for adoption or (where relevant) to nominate Councillors to collaborate with the clerk on finalising the HR Handbook and/or pending policies.*

It was proposed by Cllr Hodgson, seconded by Cllr Delip and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to decide to recommend the policies under sub-item 1 (a-d), as amended, to Full Council for adoption.**

- 3) *To agree to update new staff contracts, using the latest NALC template as a model or using the bespoke WorkNest draft contract as a template (shared with Cllrs).*

This item was **DEFERRED** to the next committee meeting.

The **clerk was tasked** to compile a comparison overview between the NALC template contract with the current employees' contract information, which are based on an older NALC template.

- 4) *To recommend to Full Council for the Town Council to sign the Civility and Respect pledge (which is referenced in the recently adopted Dignity at Work Policy).*

It was proposed by Cllr Hodgson, seconded by Cllr Littlemore and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to recommend to Full Council for the Town Council to sign the Civility and Respect pledge (which is referenced in the recently adopted Dignity at Work Policy).**

20/25-26/PER DISABILITY CONFIDENT EMPLOYER SCHEME

Items deferred at 10/25-26/PER (13th May 2025):

- 1) *To consider joining the Government's Disability Confident Employer Scheme, with the aim to reach Level 1 (Disability Confident Committed) - see How to sign up to the Disability Confident employer scheme - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk).*
- 2) *To recommend to Full Council for Northstowe Town Council to join this scheme.*

It was **agreed** that further investigation into the scheme was needed, with the intention to identify actions that the Town Council can commit to in order to reach the required level compliant with the Disability Confident Employer Scheme.

It was also **agreed** that such an action plan should then be presented to Full Council.

Cllr Hodgson took an action to lead on the development of such an action plan.

This item was **DEFERRED** to a Full Council meeting.

21/25-26/PER WELLBEING MEETINGS

Further to 07/25-26/PER (13th May 2025):

- 1) *To decide to hold regular (monthly) wellbeing conversations for all staff: Committee Chair for Town Clerk; and Town Clerk for staff line-managed by them.*

The Chair confirmed that it should remain the regular line manager (Town Clerk) who will continue to have these meetings with any other members of staff.

It was proposed by Cllr Hodgson, seconded by Cllr Delip and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to decide to hold regular (monthly) wellbeing conversations for all staff: The Committee Chair for the Town Clerk; and the Town Clerk for staff line-managed by them.**

22/25-26/PER WORKNEST

Further to 09/25-26/PER (13th May 2025):

- 1) To receive an update on access to Worknest/PeopleNest and HR functions of PeopleNest; for awareness of all including new committee members.

This item was **DEFERRED** to a future committee meeting.

The **clerk was tasked** to provide an update on any updates to committee members by email.

23/25-26/PER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

Further to item deferred at Personnel Committee 10th Jan. 2025, 36/24-25:

- 1) To discuss opportunities for improvement to Annual Review template forms currently being used (End-of-Probation Appraisal Form; Annual Performance Reviews; Annual Training Plan form shared with Cllrs.).

This item was **DEFERRED** to a future committee meeting.

It was proposed by Cllr Hodgson, seconded by Cllr Littlemore and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to suspend standing order 3x, to allow for the meeting to extend beyond the two-hour meeting period.**

24/25-26/PER PRIORITIES

Further to item 32/24-25 deferred at Personnel Committee 10th Jan. 2025; and 07/25-26/PER (1) (13th May 2025):

- 1) To consider workload and interim priorities, risk management and mitigation needs whilst NTC has only two members of staff (data sheet as considered at 13th May 2025 meeting re-shared with Cllrs, for information)

The Clerk provided further details around the current workload and the impact on workstreams with the staff capacity having been nearly halved recently; he highlighted that certain workstreams such as further development and updates to policies and protocols, as well as further development work for taking on the Unity Centre are being de-prioritised to ensure core statutory duties can be complied with.

The **clerk was tasked** to create, from the overview of tasks shared with the committee in the report, a new list of priorities, showing: what must be done; what can be done where time is available; and which tasks/duties cannot be done, and share with the Committee, for the Committee to agree to those priorities and support staff.

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 item 25/24-25.

It was proposed by Cllr Hodgson, seconded by Cllr Delip and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **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 item 25/24-25**

25/25-26/PER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT & REVIEW (Standing Item)

- 1) To receive an update on progress against the performance framework and training plan for the Clerk for the period Oct. 2024 – Aug. 2025 (updated documents shared with Cllrs.).
- 2) To receive an update on performance framework & training plans from other members of staff (updated documents shared with Cllrs.).

In a discussion it was raised whether there are any changes that may need to happen to the performance management frameworks in use before the next Annual Performance Appraisal meetings happen in August.

This item was **DEFERRED** to a future Committee meeting.

To resolve to end the closed session.

It was proposed by Cllr Hodgson, seconded by Cllr Delip and **RESOLVED**, unanimously, **to resolve to end the closed session.**

26/25-26/PER DATES OF NEXT COUNCIL MEETINGS (Standing Item)

a) Full Council: Tue 24th June 2025, 7-9 pm; The Cabin, Northstowe CB24 1FD.

[Final versions of motions & papers to be received by 14/06 at the latest].

b) Personnel Committee: Tue 8th July 2025, 7-8 pm; The Cabin, Northstowe CB24 1FD.

[Final versions of motions & papers to be received by 28/06 at the latest].

For all NTC meetings, see www.northstowetowncouncil.gov.uk

Noted.

The Chair closed the meeting at 9:09 PM.

Signed.....

Chair of the Personnel Committee

Date.....