

LYME REGIS TOWN COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 FEBRUARY 2023

Present

Chairman: Cllr G. Stammers

Members: Cllr M. Ellis, Cllr B. Larcombe, Cllr P. May, Cllr C. Reynolds, Cllr D. Sarson, Cllr G. Turner

Officers: A. Mullins (support services manager), J. Wright (town clerk)

Absent: Cllr R. Smith

22/60/HR Public Forum

There were no members of the public present.

22/61/HR Apologies

None.

22/62/HR To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 4 January 2023

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr P. May, the minutes of the meeting held on 4 January 2023 were **ADOPTED**.

22/63/HR Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

There were none.

22/64/HR Dispensations

There were none.

22/65/HR Matters arising from the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting held on 4 January 2023

Pay review

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if there were any updates on the appeals and if there was a sense of the nature of the appeals.

The town clerk said the appeals had been sent to South West Councils the previous week and officers had hoped the process would be completed by the end of February but this was now unlikely as the person managing the process was on leave this week. He said the nature of the appeals were varied and

adding during the appeals' process, South West Councils had been more transparent about how the scoring criteria was constructed.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if any of those who had appealed had reached or were close to reaching the top of their pay band.

The town clerk said at least two were. He said he hoped the outcome of the appeals would be confirmed within a week.

22/66/HR Update Report

Gardener/maintenance person

Cllr B. Larcombe noted there were a lot of applications and asked how widespread the role had been advertised.

The support services manager said it had been advertised in the local newspapers, on the council's website and social media and employment websites. She said applicants had come from Lyme Regis and the surrounding areas, including Axminster, Chard and Bridport.

The town clerk said he believed the recently increased level of pay had encouraged more applications as previous recruitment rounds for these types of roles had attracted far fewer candidates.

22/67/HR Human Resources Committee – Objectives

The town clerk said the council's objectives had been delegated to him and he was now delegating them down to committees and lead officers. He said a version of this report would go to each committee and that the report would hold officers to account, along with committees and chairmen, so there was a greater shared accountability.

Members asked for more details about the Civility and Respect project.

The support services manager said it related to good governance, undertaking training to promote civility and respect, signing up to a pledge to demonstrate high standards of conduct, and supporting the introduction of sanctions. She said a report would be brought to the next meeting with further details.

22/68/HR Town Clerk's Annual Appraisal

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential information relating to an individual within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

22/69/HR Deputy Town Clerk, Spinal Column Point Progression

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential information relating to an individual within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

22/70/HR Operations Manager, Performance Appraisal Summary

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential information relating to an individual within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

22/71/HR Support Services Manager, Spinal Column Point Progression

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential information relating to an individual within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

22/72/HR Finance manager, Performance Appraisal Summary

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential information relating to an individual within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

22/73/HR Spinal Point Column Progression and Pay Arrangements for Other Employees for 2023-24

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the

meeting for this item of business as it included confidential information relating to an individual within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

22/74/HR Overtime Threshold

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential information relating to an individual within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

22/75/HR Finance Assistant, Six-Month Probation Review

Proposed by Cllr G. Stammers and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members **RESOLVED** that under Section 1, Paragraph 2 of The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for this item of business as it included confidential information relating to an individual within the meaning of paragraphs 1 and 8 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (see Section 1 and Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985), as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

22/76/HR Exempt Business

The town clerk left the meeting at 7.18pm.

a) Town Clerk's Annual Appraisal

Cllr P. May asked for clarification over why the town clerk had said in his appraisal there was an issue with member behaviour but had also said an away day to improve member behaviour wasn't needed.

The support services manager clarified that the town clerk had said member behaviour was an issue but he felt there wasn't an appetite among members to employ a consultant to address the issues.

Cllr G. Stammers said efforts had been made to try and find a consultant and two had been interviewed, one of which was appointable, but they didn't want to take up the work.

Cllr B. Larcombe said the issue of poor member behaviour was at its height a year ago and it was now too late to address. He said if it wasn't being pursued, this needed to be explained to all members.

It was noted the town clerk had said in his appraisal that he could go back to the council to establish if his assumption was correct and members agreed this was

should be done. It was agreed this would be discussed with the town clerk when he returned to the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to note the town clerk's annual appraisal summary and approve his progression to spinal column point 46 on 1 April 2023.

The town clerk returned to the meeting at 7.28pm.

The town clerk explained his position on member behaviour. He said it hadn't been possible to find a consultant and he had also sensed at council meetings there was no appetite to proceed. He said the exercise would cost around £15-20k and asked members to consider if was the right investment with only one year left in this administration.

Cllr P. May said his concern was the council would drift on and the town clerk's next internal audit report would state members' behaviour was a big risk, so he felt the council needed to find a way of moving on from this impasse.

As there was already a decision in place to engage a consultant, members agreed there didn't need to be another formal debate. Instead, it was agreed there would be a member-only discussion following the Strategy and Finance Committee meeting on 22 March 2023 to determine the appetite for an away day.

b) Deputy Town Clerk, Spinal Column Point Progression

It was noted the deputy town clerk dealt with some of the council's most difficult issues, particularly the time spent dealing with issues surrounding the chalet and caravan park. It was also noted there was some crossover with the work the operations manager did.

The town clerk agreed the time the deputy town clerk spent on issues around the chalet and caravan park was a concern. He agreed there was some crossover between the deputy town clerk and operations manager; this was due to the deputy town clerk having specific expertise in some operational issues.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr D. Sarson, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to note the deputy town clerk's annual appraisal summary and approve his progression to spinal column point 37 on 1 April 2023.

c) Operations Manager, Performance Appraisal Summary

Members praised the operations manager for his work with environmental groups in the community, specifically those working to clean up the River Lim. Members also noted there was a good working relationship between the operations manager and operations supervisor.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to the operations manager's annual

appraisal summary and approve his progression to spinal column point 33 on 1 April 2023.

The support services manager left the meeting at 7.50pm.

d) Support Services Manager, Spinal Column Point Progression

Members praised the support services manager for the work she undertook on the council's behalf.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr C. Reynolds, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to note the support services manager's annual appraisal summary and approve his progression to spinal column point 27 on 1 April 2023.

The support services manager returned to the meeting at 7.54pm.

e) Finance manager, Performance Appraisal Summary

Members acknowledged the finance manager had stepped up to the role when the council needed it and agreed the standard of her reports to committees was very good.

Proposed by Cllr B. Larcombe and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to note the finance manager's annual appraisal summary and approve her progression to spinal column point 27 on 1 April 2023.

f) Spinal Point Column Progression and Pay Arrangements for Other Employees for 2023-24

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if there was anyone's performance that had not reached the level to allow them to progress on their pay scale.

The town clerk said he had had conversations with all managers and there were no employees whose performance was unsatisfactory and would therefore not progress through their pay scale.

Cllr M. Ellis asked if there was anything that came out of the appraisals that the members as employers could do to help employees in their jobs.

The town clerk said issues in the council chamber affected employees so it was important members demonstrated they were doing their best to improve behaviour.

Cllr M. Ellis asked if there were any courses or training employees would like to do to progress through the organisation.

The town clerk said he was very keen to see people progress through the organisation and he would particularly like to see more people in the external works' team doing a level 3 qualification, which would attract another grade on

their pay scale. He said he would also like the operations supervisor to do a management course.

Cllr B. Larcombe asked if there were any staff who had a poor attendance record that the members should be aware of.

The town clerk said several employees had reached or were near the trigger points in the sickness absence policy to warrant review and conversations had taken place with those employees.

It was noted Covid-19 accounted for a large proportion of the sickness absence as the council's approach was employees should not come to work while they were testing positive. This approach was more flexible in the external works' team because an employee could work alone outdoors and not have contact with colleagues.

Cllr M. Ellis said perhaps the council should review its approach as the guidance now stated people could continue as normal if they had Covid-19.

The town clerk advised members to continue with the current approach so people were not put at risk. He said office staff could and did continue to work from home when they had Covid-19 and employees appreciated this approach.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr B. Larcombe, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to note the spinal column point progression, detailed in paragraph 6, for post holders 217, 216, 203, 205, 206, 202, 210, 218, 107, 106, 104, and 109.

g) Overtime Threshold

Cllr M. Ellis said she would be in favour of increasing the maximum threshold at which overtime could be paid as it was critical to the council as a business to have staff available out-of-hours.

Cllr B. Larcombe said it should be noted overtime to any employee should be paid for the unforeseen and extra commitment and if it was foreseen work, it should be contracted.

Cllr G. Stammers was concerned increasing the overtime threshold would only benefit one employee.

The town clerk said the suggested threshold meant that managers wouldn't benefit, so this felt like the right level to set it at. He said increasing the threshold would benefit one employee, but that employee was normally the person who came in at weekends and to support events, which was essential for the good running of the council. He added the amount of overtime claimed was very low so the impact would not be significant.

Proposed by Cllr P. May and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to increase the overtime threshold to spinal column point 25, inclusive.

h) Finance Assistant, Six-Month Probation Review

Proposed by Cllr C. Reynolds and seconded by Cllr M. Ellis, members agreed to **RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL** to approve the finance assistant's (post holder 107) continued employment with the council, effective from 11 January 2023.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm.