Chard Town Council

The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard, Somerset TA20 1PP

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Mayor: Councillor Victoria Bates

HR Committee

Minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on Tuesday 5th November 2024 at 7pm in the Mayor's Parlour, The Guildhall, Fore Street, Chard TA20 1PP.

PRESENT: Councillors Shortland (Chair), J Kenton (Vice Chair), Watson, Webb, A Kenton and Bates

APOLOGIES: Councillors Shortland and Williams

ALSO PRESENT: Helen Nathanson (Locum RFO), Kevin Dyer (Operations Manager) and two members of the public

Public Participation Time

A member of the public spoke to councillors about an issue related to a confidential item on the agenda.

A member of the public drew councillors' attention to a confidential item on the agenda.

AGENDA

The Chair opened the meeting and proposed that the first three items were taken as public matters and that, thereafter, the public would be excluded in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 as certain items were expected to include the consideration of exempt information. as defined in the respective paragraph of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton Seconded: Councillor V Bates
It was resolved unanimously to accept the proposal.

2024/34 Apologies for absence
The apologies were accepted from Councillors Williams and Shortland for personal reasons.

2024/35 Declarations of interest
There were no declarations of interest.

2024/36 Committee meeting minutes
To confirm and sign the minutes of the HR Committee meetings held on 3rd March 2024, 13th March 2024,14th June 2024, 15th July 2024 and 23rd September 2024.

It was agreed unanimously to accept and sign the minutes of 3rd March 2024, 14th June 2024, 15th July 2024 and 23rd September 2024. It was noted that the meeting on 13th March 2024 was not a Committee meeting and therefore no minutes were taken.

Proposed: Councillor V Bates Seconded: Councillor Watson

2024/37 Christmas pay arrangements.
To note that, according to Town Council practice, the staff payroll will be run one week earlier in December so that funds can clear before the Christmas holidays. The actual pay date will therefore be 20th December 2024.

This was noted.

2024/38 Local Government Pay Claim 2024/25 Update
To note the update on the 2024/25 pay offer and to approve the adoption as recommended by NALC.

The Committee recommended unanimously to Full Council that the pay offer was accepted for all staff as directed by NALC.

Proposed: Councillor J Kenton Seconded: Councillor V Bates

2024/39 Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023
To note the new statutory duty to prevent Sexual Harassment at Work which takes effect from 26th October 2024. Officers will arrange appropriate training.

This was noted.

The Committee now moved in to confidential session as agreed at the opening of the meeting.

2024/40 Staffing Matters

Recruitment of a permanent Town Clerk

Councillors considered the NALC guidelines for setting Town Clerk pay and agreed that the Chard Town Clerk would sit in LC4, with further discussion required to determine the appropriate level within that sector. The level would also depend on whether or not the Town Clerk would become the RFO again, as was previously the case.
Councillors noted that a Town Clerk recruitment pack exists from recent times and that previous clerks had been recruited using the services of external recruitment agencies.
Councillors also acknowledged that cultural issues in the council needed to be addressed in order to make recruitment more successful.
Officers were asked to contact possible agencies for further information and it was agreed that this item would be discussed at another meeting of the HR Committee to be held in December, after which a recommendation would be presented to Full Council.

Proposed: Councillor Bates Seconded: Councillor A Kenton

The remaining discussion is recorded in the Confidential Notes attached to the Minutes of this meeting.

2024/41 Date of next meeting
The next meeting will be arranged for an evening in early December.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 9.23pm.