

PUBLIC Minutes of the Meeting of the Staffing Committee, St Ives Town Council, 5.30pm 2021 held at the Guildhall, Committee Room

PRESENT

Chairman – Councillor K Arthur

COUNCILLORS

Dale

Harris

Wells

OFFICERS

Town Clerk

ST.18 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Hynes

ST.19 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the Chairman signs as a true and correct record the Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

ST.20 DECLARATION OF COUNCILLOR / OFFICER’S INTEREST

None

ST.21 EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED – “that in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meeting) Act 1960 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following matters due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed.

ST.22 UPDATE ON STAFF RESOURCES AND SICKNESS ABSENCE IN THE FACILITIES AND AMENITIES TEAM

The Committee considered a status report on the Facilities Team with the Clerk providing details on current staff resources. In positive news, one member of the team had returned following a long term sickness absence. Their phased return to work was being monitored.

Three temporary staff members remained in post doing some facilities and some amenities work. On good weather days, two were focussing on footpath work to provide cover during staff sickness. As a result, there would be a delay in the completion of this work. Their temporary contracts have been extended until December. At which point it was hoped there would be greater clarity about returns from sickness absence.

It was determined that at this stage in a current grievance hearing process, no further or additional actions were necessary.

The Clerk also highlighted the need to review some provisions of the grievance (and disciplinary) policy in two respects. Firstly, greater clarity on the role of the head of service / and or service managers in undertaking investigations up to and including issuing written warnings for staff, without the need for a formal Staffing Committee process, as is required currently. Secondly, the timing of the interaction between grievance and disciplinary proceedings to ensure they were compliant with the ACAS statutory code. A report would be brought on this to a future meeting, together with any other recommendations arising from the on-going grievance and disciplinary processes.

RESOLVED – that the Committee

- i) Note the report
- ii) Continue to monitor the performance of the temporary team members
- iii) Determine that no further action in relation to staff sickness was required at this stage.
- iv) Note the need to review the grievance policy with a report brought to a future meeting.

ST.23

TO CONSIDER A REPORT ON CONFIDENTIAL STAFFING MATTERS

The Committee discussed a report, giving an update on staff appointments and resignations. It noted the impact of two recent resignations on staffing capacity which were due to be considered as part of the report on wider staffing resources on the agenda for decision. Temporary / short term measures had been put in place or were being explored, for example scope to outsource some of the work, giving additional hours to other members of the LIS team and re-allocating responsibilities within the management team, for example the Clerk was taking on the Planning Committee and the RFO would play a greater role in the F&GP Committee.

The Clerk reported on the recent appointment of a digital apprentice and that they had begun their college induction and started work this week. She advised that they were also keen to have an apprentice in the Facilities team, although it was very short notice in order to secure the registration and funding.

RESOLVED – that the Committee note the report and support the recruitment of a maintenance apprentice if timescales permitted.

ST.24

TO CONSIDER A REVIEW OF STAFFING RESOURCES

The Committee considered a report from the Clerk, setting out work which had begun to inform a restructure of the Council's staffing. She explained that there were a number of drivers for this, recent staff departures and requests for reduced hours, long term staff sickness which had highlighted gaps. Also, the Council was taking on more services (and more were planned in the light of devolution).

The Senior Management Team had spent some time considering staffing resources and trying to future proof the organisation. As a result, they had produced some proposed team structures. The structures, as set out, did result in some additional staffing resource for the organisation. The Clerk advised that managers were mindful of a number of budgetary pressures to which the Council was subject and had not taken the decision lightly to request additional staff resources. However, staff departures provided an opportunity to resolve some of the structural issues and build capacity in the organisation. It should be noted that the Council had an aging workforce and the danger that it would lose critical skills and experience without developing staff. The exercise had also sought to secure value for money as far as possible, for example relying on income and revenues to support additional staffing and use external grant funding.

The Committee reviewed the proposed structures and welcomed them as a positive next step. Members then went through the services individually and considered the proposals in detail. Their comments and views were as follows:

**Town Clerk:** the Committee supported the principle of two project posts, being externally funded. It requested more work and information on one of the proposed posts prior to a decision.

**Corporate Services:** There was general agreement on the proposed posts as set out

**Facilities and Amenities** – There was general agreement on the proposed structure as set

out. There was still some uncertainty about the length of temporary staffing contracts. It was agreed that, if possible, the service should support a Maintenance Apprentice, given the financial support available from Government. The Clerk was investigating timescales and potential.

**LIS** – There was general support for the proposed structure. It was recognised that a new post, focused on income generation in the revenue part of the business was critical to bridging the funding gap. The Clerk confirmed that additional staff for the bar would need to be recruited on a casual basis for specific events and would be reflected in the budget line for bar overheads.

The Committee discussed the future role of weddings. It was agreed that the Council should continue to develop the weddings service with greater resource and professional marketing skills. The Clerk explained that for the short term, weddings could be delivered on a freelance basis to free up staff capacity but that longer term this could be part of the Venues team.

**RESOLVED** – that the Committee support the proposals in principle, subject to roles being costed, and job roles developed, where necessary with details to be included in the budget setting process.

**Date of the Next Meeting**

TBA

Meeting closed at 18.35 pm

Chairman