

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Personnel Committee
Via Video Meeting
18:00 on 24 August 2020

MINUTES

Video meeting participants: Cllrs Sue Barnard, Tara Carlton, Neil Coleby, Tracey Eastwood (Chair), Amanda Frost, Alan Green, Jacqueline Hardie, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce and Alice Taylor

Also participating: Shona Bendix (Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Committee Clerk)

1. Welcome and appointment of the Deputy Chair of the Personnel Committee

Cllr Green, as Mayor, presided for this item. The right to report and the application of the video meeting protocol were explained and noted, and the meeting was welcomed. Cllr Frost proposed Cllr Eastwood for the position of Deputy Chair and this was seconded by Cllr Hardie. There were no further nominations and the vote was taken. Nine Councillors voted in favour and one Councillor abstained from the vote. Cllr Eastwood was duly appointed and Chaired the rest of the meeting, in the absence of Cllr Parker.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Graham Parker and David Youngman. Cllr Peter Knight had not provided apologies and was absent. Cllr Coleby proposed acceptance of the apologies; seconded by Cllr Pearce; all in favour.

3. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

There were none.

4. Receipt of any comments and noting that the draft minutes of the meeting on 4 March 2020 will be considered at the next appropriate meeting

Cllr Coleby advised that he had sent apologies for that meeting but they had not been recorded.

5. Any advance comments from the public on any matters on this agenda

There were none.

6. Committee arrangements

6.1. Membership of the Personnel Committee, including noting Cllr Pitts' resignation from the Committee – Membership was confirmed as Cllrs Sue Barnard, Tara Carlton, Neil Coleby, Tracey Eastwood, Amanda Frost, Alan Green, Jacqueline Hardie, Graham Parker, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce, Alice Taylor and David Youngman.

6.2. Terms of Reference of the Personnel Committee – The Climate Emergency Committee will be reviewing the climate emergency section of all the Committees' and Sub-Committees' Terms of Reference, as these may not be strong enough based on how the Council is taking forward its climate emergency declaration. This Committee's Terms of Reference state that there will be named substitutes, whereas other Committees' and Sub-Committees' Terms of Reference allow provision for this, but do not state that substitutes must be appointed and named. Cllr Pearce proposed an amendment to the Terms of Reference to state that substitutes may be appointed, rather than will be; seconded by Cllr Green; eight Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against; one Councillor abstained from the vote. Cllr Green proposed a recommendation to Full Council to adopt the Terms of Reference as amended; seconded by Cllr Barnard; eight Councillors voted in favour; two Councillors abstained from the vote.

7. Appointing two representatives from the Personnel Committee to the Working Group to review the Town Council's conduct in relation to the Equality and Diversity Policy and Code

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Personnel Committee
Via Video Meeting
18:00 on 24 August 2020

of Conduct

Cllrs Coleby and Hardie have been appointed from the Standing Orders and Policies Sub-Committee. Cllr Frost proposed appointing Cllrs Eastwood and Taylor to the Working Group; seconded by Cllr Hardie. Cllr Pearce formally objected to Cllr Taylor's appointment, due to recent allegations made in the press and on social media, and questioned her impartiality and objectivity. Cllr Taylor advised that she is impartial and formally objected to Cllr Pearce's appointment to the Working Group for the same reasons. Cllr Coleby proposed appointing Cllr Barnard to the Working Group; seconded by Cllr Pearce. The vote was taken for Cllr Eastwood first and she received nine votes. The vote was taken for Cllr Taylor next and she received five votes. The vote was taken for Cllr Barnard and she also received five votes. Cllr Eastwood was duly appointed to the Working Group and the votes for Cllrs Taylor and Barnard were taken again. The vote for Cllr Taylor was taken first and she received five votes. The vote for Cllr Barnard was taken and she also received five votes. Cllr Eastwood used her casting vote as Chair and voted for Cllr Taylor. Cllr Taylor was duly appointed to the Working Group.

8. Progress with the recruitment of the Events and Communications Officer

The deadline for applications is 09:00 on 27 August. The candidates who originally applied earlier in the year have all been emailed and asked to confirm if they are still interested in the position. Staff are contacting those who have not yet responded. The interview dates were originally set as 14 and 15 September. As the weekly market has now been established and falls on 15 September, it is hoped that all interviews can be completed on 14 September. It is hoped that shortlisting can be completed by 12:00 on 28 August, partly due to staff annual leave and partly to give the candidates notice of their interview slot and requirements. The shortlisting panel will consist of the Clerk and two Councillors. Cllrs Breakspear, Frost, Green, Lang, Parker, Pearce, Pitts and Taylor previously expressed an interest in joining the shortlisting panel. Any Councillors from that list, who are available on 27 and 28 August, can be appointed. The interview panel will consist of the Clerk and two other Councillors. Cllrs Breakspear, Frost, Green, Parker, Pitts, Pearce and Taylor previously expressed an interest in joining the interview panel. Cllr Frost advised she would be free on 27 August but not 28 August. Cllr Green is free on both of those days, but not the interview date of 14 September. It was suggested that Cllrs Frost and Green could be appointed to the shortlisting panel and another two Councillors to the interview panel, who must be available for the entire day. It was requested that Cllr Parker, as Chair of this Committee, be given first refusal. Cllrs Pearce and Taylor confirmed their availability for 14 September. In the interests of equality it was suggested that both panels should be an equal balance of male and female Councillors. Cllr Hardie proposed to appoint Cllr Parker to the interview panel, with Cllr Pearce as substitute; seconded by Cllr Carlton; nine Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against. Cllr Hardie proposed to appoint Cllr Taylor to the interview panel, with Cllr Frost as substitute; seconded by Cllr Carlton; nine Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against.

9. Noting that staff appraisals have taken place

Staff appraisals have been completed via Zoom. Staff remain in regular contact, with daily staff meetings, and individual meetings to discuss work streams. The Clerk is making arrangements for the completion of her appraisal, which is completed after all other staff appraisals have taken place. Thanks were offered to the Clerk for conducting the appraisals.

10. An update on staff working hours

This is a standing item on the agenda. Staff are taking any time off in lieu promptly to ensure they do not accrue too much. The Committees and Sub-Committees are still functioning and there has been lots of additional meetings. The Clerk is ensuring staff still take their leave throughout the year. The Deputy Clerk works different hours during August and staff will cover one another whilst ensuring Council needs are met. It has been difficult for some staff to

Lowestoft Town Council
Meeting of the Personnel Committee
Via Video Meeting
18:00 on 24 August 2020

achieve a good work life balance but overall are coping well.

11. Date of the next meeting

It was agreed the next meeting date should be arranged for after the interviews but before the Full Council meeting.

Cllr Patience left the meeting 18:45

17 September is the Extraordinary Meeting date and it was agreed that the next meeting should be held at 17:30 on 17 September. This will be a single item agenda to make a recommendation on the appointment of the Events and Communications Officer.

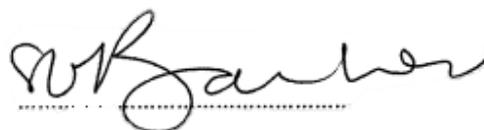
12. Items for the next agenda and close

There were no requests for specific items. The next meeting will be a single item agenda.

13. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

13.1. No confidential agenda items to consider

The Chair thanked those who had been viewing the meeting via live stream. There were no confidential matters for consideration and the Chair closed the meeting at 18:50.



Signed:

12 August 2021