

Lowestoft Town Council
Extraordinary Meeting of the Personnel Committee
First Floor, Hamilton House, Battery Green Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk, NR32 1DE
10:00 on 3 July 2024
MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Nasima Begum, Wendy Brooks, John Murray, Christian Newsome (Chair), Graham Parker, Keith Patience, Andy Pearce, Bernadette Rappensberger and Nick Webb

In attendance: Sarah Foote (Acting Town Clerk) and Lauren Elliott (Project and Committee Clerk)

Public: There were no members of the public in attendance

14. Welcome

The fire evacuation procedure and public right to report were explained, and the meeting was welcomed.

15. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs Sonia Barker, Connor Blowers, Jen Jones and Elise Youngman, with reasons provided. Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the apologies received; seconded by Cllr Begum; all in favour.

16. Declarations of Interests and dispensations

- 16.1. Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary, Other Registerable and Non-Registerable interests from councillors on items on the agenda – There were none.
- 16.2. Written requests for dispensations for interests and note dispensations granted – There were none.

17. The draft minutes and confidential note of the meeting on 6 June 2024, and the confidential notes of the meetings on 7 March and 16 April 2024

Cllr Pearce proposed approval of the minutes and confidential notes as listed in the agenda item; seconded by Cllr Webb; all in favour.

18. Public forum

No advance comments had been received and there were no members of the public in attendance.

19. Monitoring expenditure from the staffing contingency budget

The Acting Town Clerk had requested an updated budget position from the Finance and Information Officer. It was agreed to return to this agenda item later in the meeting.

20. A recommendation from the interview panel on appointments to the following roles:

- 20.1. Facilities and Contracts Manager – This item and item 20.2 required discussions about salary levels, and it was therefore agreed they should be considered during the confidential session.
- 20.2. Sports Development Officer – To be considered during the confidential session.

21. Redundancy terms and policy wording (confidential)

To be considered during the confidential session.

22. Recovery of pension payment (confidential)

To be considered during the confidential session.

23. Matters relating to staff absence (confidential)

To be considered during the confidential session.

24. An update from the Acting Town Clerk (some aspects may be confidential), including the following:

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- 24.1. Recruitment – To be considered during the confidential session.
- 24.2. Staff terms and conditions (confidential) – To be considered during the confidential session.
- 24.3. Training and development (confidential) – To be considered during the confidential session.

25. Date of the next meeting

Thursday 1 August 2024 – 10:00.

26. Items for the next agenda and close

Members were advised to email any requests to the office.

Cllr Rappensberger proposed to move the meeting into confidential session; seconded by Cllr Begum; all in favour.

27. Resolution to close the meeting to the public:

27.1. Any employment matters relating to items on this agenda, including those above as required:

20.1. Facilities and Contracts Manager – An overview of the interviews and the recommendation of the interview panel regarding the appointment to the role and the salary were given. Cllr Pearce proposed to approve the recommendations from the interview panel on the appointment of the Facilities and Contract Manager and their salary; seconded by Cllr Brooks; eight Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor voted against.


20.2. Sports Development Officer – An overview of the interviews and the recommendation of the interview panel regarding the appointment to the role and the salary were given. Cllr Brooks proposed to approve the recommendation from the interview panel on the appointment of the Sports Development Officer and their salary; seconded by Cllr Pearce; eight Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

19. Monitoring expenditure from the staffing contingency budget – The Finance and Information Officer had advised the spend to date between April to June had been £222,605 (pre-uplift), against a budget of £913,377 and reserve/contingency of £53,162.

21. Redundancy terms and policy wording (confidential) – Cllr Brooks proposed to follow the advice of the Acting Town Clerk and HR adviser, to follow the legal path for redundancy, rather than having a standalone policy, which should be withdrawn with immediate effect. Cllr Brooks further proposed there should be no blanket commitment to offer terms above the statutory obligations, but the Town Council would instead ensure any redundancy process was compliant with the prevailing statutory requirements; seconded by Cllr Pearce; eight Councillors voted in favour; one Councillor abstained from the vote.

22. Recovery of pension payment (confidential) – The situation had been explained in a confidential meeting paper provided by the Acting Town Clerk. There had been no response to the Acting Town Clerk's original email or the follow-up email. The Acting Town Clerk was asked to seek a view from the lawyer or financial adviser on whether there would be any tax implication if the Town Council had to write this off as a bad debt. Cllr Pearce proposed to take all reasonable steps before asking Full Council to write this off as a bad debt, including attempting to send a hard copy letter via a tracing service (the Suffolk Pension Service may be able to advise which tracing service they use); seconded by Cllr Rappensberger; all in favour.

The Project and Committee Clerk left the meeting 10:32 for the remainder of the agenda items

Signed:  1 August 2024