

THETFORD TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HELD
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, KING'S HOUSE, THETFORD, ON
TUESDAY 2ND JUNE 2015, STARTING AT 5.00 P.M.

Present:

Councillors

Mrs S J Armes	R F W Brame
M Brindle	J C Moorman
Mrs B J Canham	T J Jermy
M S Robinson	M Taylor

Officer in attendance:
Maurice Howard Town Clerk

Minutes

- 46/15 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE MAYORAL YEAR 2015/16
RESOLVED that Councillor M Brindle be elected Chairman for the Personnel Committee for Mayoral year 2015/16.
RESOLVED that Councillor R F W Brame be elected Vice Chairman for the Personnel Committee for Mayoral Year 2015/16.
- 47/15 DECLARATIONS OF ANY DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS
None.
- 48/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE
Apologies were received from Councillor R G Kybird.
- 49/15 MINUTES
RESOLVED that the minutes of the Committee's meeting held on the 7th April 2015 received by Council on 28th April 2015 be confirmed as a true record and that they be signed/initialled by the Chairman.
- 50/15 REVIEW OF FOLLOW UP ACTIONS
 - Places had been reserved on the initial CiLCA 2015 induction course for both the Town Clerk and Deputy. The induction had taken place on 28/29 May 2015 and will be discussed under item 53/15 below.
 - Two further Town Council policies were presented by the Town Clerk and these will be discussed under item 54/15 below.
 - The Allotments Course for the Finance Assistant had been booked and had since been attended.
 - The Member/Officer Training Course from NALC had been booked and had since taken place. The Town Clerk had received many laudatory comments on the training package.
 - The Town Clerk updated the Committee on the staff issues concerning cleaning of King's House and the Carnegie Complex. All had now been resolved and the Kings House Cleaners hours had been reduced accordingly at her request. A sessional cleaner based on 24 hours per month had been employed for the Carnegie

Complex. The Town Clerk had provided a draft contract for this person to the solicitor for checking.

- Update was provided on eventual implementation of Sickness Policy following HR Solicitor advice. This would follow the resolution of current issues. Bolt on to Staff Handbook to be provided by HR Solicitor.

51/15

HEALTH & SAFETY

Councillor Mrs B Canham stated that there had been no further update since the last Personnel Committee meeting but that the next Health and Safety meeting will take place on 17 June 2015.

52/15

COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

An e-mail had been received from ex-Councillor Miss C Fulford who requested that thanks be passed from the Shadwell Estate Manager to two members of the Works Team. This was for assistance given in the transfer and movement of the Shadwell Festival Horses.

Miss C Fulford had also received complimentary remarks from a Mr Petersen who had visited the Town Council Offices and the Cemetery in an attempt to track down Foster Parents who had looked after him as a young child. Assistance had been provided by the Town Clerk, Civic Secretary and Cemetery Attendant and Mr Petersen was extremely grateful for the time and attention that had been given.

A card and letter of thanks had been received from a Mrs Muir who had written in to thank the Civic Secretary for an enjoyable evening at the Mayor Making and Annual Town Meeting.

A further card had been received thanking the Civic Secretary for her part in the interment arrangements for her mother's ashes and also thanking the Cemetery Attendant for his part in the service. This had been a long running issue which had required liaison with many parties, but had run to a satisfactory conclusion.

The Town Clerk had received a letter thanking him for the time taken to research the material used for the King Street Benches with the manufacturers (Irish Blue Limestone). She also applauded the Town Council for taking the interest and having the taste to select such beautiful material which she found to be a visual and intellectual delight.

The Town Clerk stated that he would pass on the compliments as requested.

Councillor Mrs S J Armes stated that she had received compliments on the fact that the Town Council continued in its tradition of carrying out the ceremonial aspects related to Mayor Making. However, she commented on the wearing of hats by female Councillors at Mayor Making and that they had not been worn correctly. Discussion ensued surrounding the protocol at civic events and it was decided that the Town Clerk would look to put together a brief for councillors for future events.

53/15

TRAINING REQUESTS

The Town Clerk briefed on the CiLCA Induction that he and the Deputy Town Clerk had attended. He pointed out that there would now be a requirement for significant time to be spent building a portfolio and in carrying out research (up to 200 hours). He stated that the new CiLCA 2015 now had to be completed within one year rather than the two years previously allowed. As the booking of this course had been a long standing agenda item and the course had been offered, and

therefore booked, at very short notice, he now needed retrospective approval for the fees. It was proposed by Councillor Mrs S J Armes and seconded by Councillor Mrs B J Canham that the fees for the CiLCA Induction Course for the Town Clerk and Deputy be approved at a cost of £450 per place.

RESOLVED: the fees for the CiLCA Induction Course for the Town Clerk and Deputy be approved at a cost of £450 per place.

The Town Clerk stated that he had received information about a new course that was being introduced for managing 'Common Land, Village Greens and Open Spaces'. He consequently requested that the Deputy Town Clerk be considered for this course. Information suggested that again this was likely to be offered at short notice. Costs for these types of course normally ranged between £35 to £50 + travel.

It was proposed by Councillor J C Moorman and seconded by Councillor Mrs S J Armes that the Town Clerk book the Deputy Town Clerk on the Common Land, Village Greens and Open Spaces course as and when it becomes available.

RESOLVED: The Town Clerk is to book the Deputy Town Clerk on the Common Land, Village Greens and Open Spaces course as and when it becomes available.

54/15

UPDATE ON TOWN COUNCIL POLICIES

The Town Clerk presented a revised Model Publication Scheme. Changes had been made following issuance of the Local Government Transparency Code 2015 and the slightly revised guidance from the Information Commissioners Office. There were only slight changes to the Council's previous version and these centred more on formatting and readability rather than directional changes. It was requested that Councillors review the subject document, submit requests for changes to the Town Clerk, and come prepared to approve the document at the next meeting.

The Town Clerk also presented the updated 'Mobile Phone Safety and Usage' Policy. Updates were mainly as a result of the Health and Safety requirement to warn users of the risks of prolonged use of such devices. A query was raised over the security aspects of using devices that could now potentially contain confidential Town Council information within e-mails. The Town Clerk was not sure that the Policy addressed this aspect and would therefore look to include this prior to approval at the next meeting. Again councillors were asked to take the Policy away, check for any further amendments and be prepared to approve this policy at the next meeting.

The next policies under review were the Health and Safety Policy which had been placed on the H&S Agenda for the meeting on 17 June 2015. In addition the Staff Handbook needed a comprehensive review as it appeared to be at least four years old and contained HR information that the Town Clerk knew to be outdated. It was also to include the bolt on element of the Town Council's Sickness Policy. The Town Clerk commented that this was a major review to a substantial document as a result it was unlikely that this would be presented at the next meeting. He promised to give an update and potentially a draft of the Policy by the August meeting.

The Town Clerk was asked to ensure that the Council's Smoking Policy was placed on the Agenda for the next H&S Meeting. Councillor Mrs B J Canham (H&S Chair) noted this request.

The Town Clerk was asked if the Town Council had a Compassionate Leave Policy in place. The Town Clerk commented that he would bring

any potential request to committee on a case by case basis as had been done in the past (he referred to a request placed before the committee in November 2014). However, it was pointed out that there was always a chance that a short notice approval may be required. He was asked to place this subject on the Agenda for the next meeting.

55/15 TOUR OF BRITAIN – STAFF PARTICIPATION

The Town Clerk expressed concern at the timing of the Tour of Britain through Thetford which had recently been announced as 12 September 2015. In particular, the fact that this clashed with other events and as a result staff availability would be limited to non-existent. At this point he was not aware of any requirement for staff for this event (the Tour of Britain) but he asked that this be borne in mind should anything be forthcoming. Councillors commented that they may be able to assist in supporting the event should the need arise.

56/15 URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business. However, the Town Clerk was asked to give a brief on Pension Auto-Enrolment and how this affects the Council at the next meeting.

57/15 PRESS RELEASES

There were no press releases presented.

Chairman

ACTION POINTS

ACTION POINT	BY WHOM	BY WHEN
Compliments, comments and complaints to be passed on as appropriate.	Town Clerk	7 Jul 15
Further update Town Policies as and when possible	Town Clerk	As soon as possible.
Book 'Common Land, Village Greens and Open Spaces' course for Deputy Town Clerk as and when available.	Town Clerk	As soon as possible.
Town Clerk in conjunction with the Civics Officer to create briefing paper for Councillors concerning the ceremonial aspects around future Civic events.	Town Clerk/Civics Officer	7 Jul 15
Book the Deputy Town Clerk on the course 'Common Land, Village Greens and Open Spaces' as and when it becomes available.	Town Clerk	As soon as possible.
Review the revised Model Publication Scheme.	Personnel Committee	7 Jul 15

Review the Mobile Phone Usage and Safety Policy	Personnel Committee	7 Jul 15
Ensure that a review of the Health and Safety Policy is carried out at the next H&S Meeting.	H&S Committee	17 Jun 15
Town Council Smoking Policy to be on next H&S Committee Meeting	Town Clerk/H&S Committee	17 Jun 15
Staff Handbook to be reviewed and to include new Sickness Policy.	Town Clerk in conjunction with HR Solicitor	4 Aug 15
Compassionate Leave to be an agenda item for the next meeting	Town Clerk	7 Jul 15
Town Clerk to brief on Pension auto-enrolment at the next meeting	Town Clerk	7 Jul 15

DRAFT